

VICTORIAN
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VICTORIAN OPERA YOUTH CHORUS ENSEMBLE
(VOYCE)

The VOYCE (Victorian Opera Youth Chorus Ensemble) Youth Opera Program re-imagines the potential of opera and music theatre for young, aspiring singers through regular training and a range of performance opportunities. VOYCE brings together like-minded and equally passionate young people to take part in a program that rehearses a range of operatic repertoire and develops skills essential to opera chorus roles.

Throughout the school year, participants have the opportunity to work with professional singers, répétiteurs, and directors from the performing arts industry, receiving educational and performance-based expertise of a state-company calibre. Participants also have the chance to perform in mainstage productions and often are invited to perform at events.

Run by music educator Angus Grant, VOYCE provides regular training for secondary school and tertiary students between the ages of 14-20 years old, focusing on dramatic works and singing, with heavy emphasis applied to the delivery of text and expression of dramatic intent and movement.

WELCOME

It is always a pleasure to work through classical vocal repertoire with a group of young people who have a ferocious appetite for the complexities and beauty this genre has on offer. And as such, I am glad to welcome you all to view this new performance concept designed for the cohort. One of the biggest challenges of being the director of VOYCE is constantly finding new and appropriate repertoire. Opera is written for adult voices to sing and often for adults to watch, so finding work that can be sung by teen voices and acted by them convincingly is tricky. Finding a complete opera for them to be able to perform is almost impossible. Presenting a program of 'bleeding chunks' like this, however, provides a range of acting and musical challenges similar to those they will face as professional singers.

The reason we need to stage scenes like this is that the musical demands I make of the students (language, diction, cutoffs, quality of sound, dynamics, musicality etc.) must be maintained while carrying out often demanding stage directions. It is an extremely difficult thing to do but I think you will find they are managing to walk and chew gum at the same time....and they certainly are having a ball doing so.

Angus Grant
Director of VOYCE

OPERABOX

Thalia the muse of comedy and Melpomene the muse of tragedy debate the merits of the different types of opera people are watching. Four excerpts from well known, and much-loved operas and operettas, will have their entertainment value weighed by these eternal theatre patrons in this new production from Victorian Opera.

Join the Victorian Opera Youth Chorus Ensemble (VOYCE) as they perform excerpts from Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Verdi's *La Traviata*, Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* and Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*. Lead roles will showcase the exceptional talent of the young people in this leading ensemble in the beautiful Melba Hall.

THE SCENES IN MORE DETAIL

Prince Igor – Polovtsian Dances

First performed in 1890 in St Petersburg, *Prince Igor* recounts the tale of a 12th Century Russian Prince who was defending his country from the invading Polovtsian tribes in 1185. This excerpt from the opera is a magnificent score, however the libretto is somewhat outdated. When asked to stage it, I found inspiration from the Matilda's soccer match where they won 10 – 0 to qualify for the Olympics. Sport and opera have much in common and like every good sports team, they have a club song and generally a team hero. In this case, we have two, the coach and the striker. Come with us, as we chant our theme song, and draw inspiration from this glorious score.

Elizabeth Hill-Cooper

Director of *Prince Igor* excerpt
Victorian Opera CEO

La Traviata – Avrem lieta di maschere la notte

La Traviata is one of the most popular operas in the cannon, with some reports estimating it's performed somewhere in the world every 7 minutes. It tells the story of Violetta, a courtesan, who falls in love with Alfredo, only for the couple to be torn apart by social expectations. It's a wonderful and heart-breaking piece. Our excerpt is one of the party scenes, thrown by Flora, Violetta's close friend. It opens with Flora, Marchese and the Doctor discussing Violetta and Alfredo's recent break up and descends into the merriment of the party, with different party guests performing as fortune tellers and matadors.

Kate Millett

Director of *La Traviata* excerpt

La clemenza di Tito – Dei conservate, oh Dei

La clemenza di Tito is Mozart's "final" stage work. It is a beautiful, serious work with profoundly deep music, dealing with political machinations, love, betrayal, and the power of mercy. Our scene comes after Vitellia has asked Sextus, who is deeply in love with her, to assassinate the Emperor Titus. He agrees, horrified, but fails, setting fire to Rome in his attempt. It opens with Sextus, wracked with guilt, as he attempts to wrestle with his actions and what it means for the continuation of the city he loves so much.

Kate Millett

Director of *La clemenza di Tito* excerpt

Iolanthe – Act 1 finale, When Darkly Looms the Day

They used to say the sun never set on the British Empire, but it can probably only be said of Shakespeare and Gilbert and Sullivan that somewhere in the English-speaking world, one of their works is being performed every night. So tonight, at Melba Hall, we present the Act 1 finale of *Iolanthe*, the most romantic Victorian valentine in the list of fourteen operas penned by the pair.

A fantastic (in the true sense of the word) melange of Victorian pantomime and the British legal establishment, *Iolanthe* is a satire on the power of hereditary rule and the class system, that classic Victorian sacred cow. And wherever the Victorians had their sacred cows, there was W.S. Gilbert ready to milk them for all the laughs he could get. The operas are, of course still relevant today because those sacred cows are still with us, they are just fatter! *Iolanthe* also showcases Sullivan at his best; spirit, wit, melody with a whiff of Mendelssohn and Wagner.

In this finale, arguably the most inventive of the Gilbert and Sullivan canon, the Queen of the Fairies takes on the Lord Chancellor, finally decreeing that the British parliament will be led by a representative of the Fairy kingdom, and in addition that 'a Duke's exalted station will be attainable by competitive examination'.

Stuart Maunder AM

Director of *Iolanthe* excerpt
Victorian Opera Artistic Director

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor	Angus Grant
Directors	Elizabeth Hill-Cooper Stuart Maunder Kate Millett
Additional material by	Kate Millett
Head of Music	Phoebe Briggs
Repetiteur	Tom Griffiths
Lighting Designer	Robert Brown

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager	Robert Brown
Stage Manager	Jenny Le
Surtile Operator	Shakira Dugan

CAST PRINCIPALS

	ROLE	COVER
Anderson Mokyiu	Thalia	Sylvia Grant
Tabitha Plummer	Melpomene	

<i>Prince Igor</i>	ROLE	COVER
Santrix Redston	Khan	Ruben Fitton
Claire Leibel	Striker	

<i>La Traviata</i>	ROLE	COVER
Tabitha Bourakis	Flora Bervoix	
Alec McMichael	Dottore Genvil	
Lucas Calzado-Yubero	Marchese D'Obigny	
Chris White	Gastone	

La clemenza di Tito

	ROLE	COVER
Isabella Hincksman	Sextus	Lucy Nieuwesteeg
Leah Stange	Annius	Zoë Brunsdon
Genevieve Gray	Servilia	Zinaida Campigli
Ruby Streit	Vitellia	Zoë Brunsdon
Callum Orr	Publius	

Iolanthe

	ROLE	COVER
Oliver Clarke	Strephon	
Caleb Jarcevic	Lord Mountararat	
Lauren Ryan-Green	Iolanthe	
Martyn Arends	Lord Tolloller	
Alexis King	Phyllis	Hannah Simos-Garner
Xavier Grindlay	The Lord Chancellor	
Eliza Walker	Leila	
Hannah Simos-Garner	Celia	
Sophie Cowall	Queen of the Fairies	

VICTORIAN OPERA YOUTH CHORUS ENSEMBLE

Madison Adams	Catrina Guthrie	Hannah Simos-Garner
Martyn Arends	Isabella Hincksman	Joshua Simos-Garner
Tabitha Bourakis	Martha Ickeringill	Paola Sita
Zoë Brunsdon	Caleb Jarcevic	Leah Stange
Lucas Calzado-Yubero	Alexis King	Ruby Streit
Zinaida Campigli	Claire Leibel	Zara Tonon
Maxwell Chao-Hong	Yvette Lipovetsky	Thanh Vu
Oliver Clarke	Alec McMichael	Eliza Walker
Sophie Cowall	Anderson Mokyiu	Zoe Walter
Miliah Dee	Lucy Nieuwesteeg	Chris White
Connie Degnen	Callum Orr	Norah Xia
Ruben Fitton	Tabitha Plummer	
Sylvia Grant	Santrix Redston	
Genevieve Gray	Lauren Ryan-Green	
Xavier Grindlay	Tess Shilson-Josling	

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