



MEDIA RELEASE

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CARMEN TO BE PERFORMED ON SYDNEY HARBOUR

Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris last night launched the upcoming production of Handa Opera on the Harbour, the world-acclaimed Carmen, which opens on March 22, 2013, for an exclusive three-week season.

“The resounding success of the inaugural and spectacular Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour La Traviata, which was awarded 2012 Australian Event of the Year, has proven that both established audiences and those new to opera have an appetite for this event and its unique format,” Mr Souris said.

“More than 41,000 people attended La Traviata, with more than 5,000 from interstate and overseas. Its enormous appeal was recognised last night when La Traviata won four Helpmann awards – Best Special Event, Best Female Performer in an Opera (Emma Matthews), Best Scenic Design (Brian Thomson) and Best Sound Design (Tony David Cray).”

“I am thrilled that locals and visitors to our Harbour City will again have the chance to be captivated by one of the world’s most popular operas; the unforgettable Carmen...with the world’s most breathtaking backdrop.

“Bizet’s Carmen is a spectacular production, with great characters, a gripping storyline and superb music that will appeal to both opera enthusiasts and those experiencing opera for the first time.

“Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour is a key cultural event on the NSW Events Calendar, and the NSW Government is delighted to support such productions through Destination NSW.

“I congratulate Opera Australia’s CEO Adrian Collette and Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini in remaining true to their objective of delivering three seasons of the greatest operas ever written, all staged in one of the most spectacular settings on earth – Sydney’s magnificent harbour.

“Dr Haruhisa Handa deserves special recognition for his generous sponsorship of the event’s namesake through his charitable organisation, the International Foundation for Arts and Culture.

“Opera Australia has again assembled a world class creative team and cast for Carmen, including internationally-renowned director, Gale Edwards, and celebrated designer Brian Thomson, who was responsible for the spectacular La Traviata set.”

Mr Souris said the upcoming season of Carmen was poised to build on the success of La Traviata, and would remind audiences both here and overseas why Sydney is Australia’s global events city and home of the performing arts.

“Carmen will attract huge levels of interest, showcasing our creative talent to local and international audiences.

“The economic benefits of Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour resonate far beyond the final curtain call.

“Based on 18 performances and a capacity of 54,000, Destination NSW expects that \$20 million in new money will be driven into the NSW economy throughout Carmen’s season.

“Investing in events that have such a bold vision is a priority for the NSW Government and through Destination NSW, to ensure our State is the number one events destination in Australia.”

Chief Executive of Opera Australia, Adrian Collette, said he was thrilled that the inaugural Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour had met with such success and he anticipated an even greater triumph next year.

“The opera Carmen provides an absolute feast for the senses and will make for a sensational Spanish-flavoured event next year. Opera Australia is grateful to Dr Haruhisa Handa for his philanthropic support through the International Foundation for Arts and Culture, and to the NSW Government through Destination NSW,” he said.