



Terms of Reference for Consultations on Future Artistic Leadership of Opera Australia

Background

Opera Australia (OA) is responsible for sustaining and developing opera in Australia. Each year it presents over 220 mainstage performances at the Sydney Opera House and The Arts Centre, Melbourne. In fulfilling its mandate as the country's national opera company, it also gives performances throughout regional Australia and has developed educational programs and schools performances throughout New South Wales and Victoria. OA's productions are seen regularly in other Australian Capital Cities and overseas.

OA employs over 1,000 artistic and technical people each year, including Australia's only full-time professional chorus and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra. It also has a very close collaboration with Orchestra Victoria. OA's current operating budget is in excess of \$70 million.

It is the largest theatrical and musical performance company in Australia.

OA's mission is to enrich Australia's cultural life with exceptional opera. As well as sustaining and developing Australian artists and investing in associated theatrical support structures, Opera Australia must connect with the widest possible audience.

Following the untimely death of its musical director, the late Richard Hickox CBE, Opera Australia must now design and establish its future artistic leadership and we would like to consult you as part of this process.

In our discussions, we ask that you consider the following key questions:

What is the best artistic leadership structure for Opera Australia?

OA is led by a Chief Executive Officer who reports to a Board of Directors. All senior executive positions, including artistic leadership report to the CEO. Members of the senior leadership team are invited to all Board meetings.

Historically within OA, and internationally, there are a number of models for the artistic leadership of an opera company. For example:

1. **Artistic Director** – full-time: having overall responsibility for the Company's artistic direction and operatic values (musical, theatrical, etc) and primary responsibility for casting. (To ensure strong musical leadership it could involve the appointment of a **Chief Conductor or Principal Guest Conductor** of international standing).
2. **Musical Director as Artistic Director** – resident here for up to 6 months of the year; (unlikely to get a conductor of real international standing for more than this period) having overall responsibility for the Company's artistic direction and operatic values (musical, theatrical, etc) and primary responsibility for casting.
3. **Shared Artistic Leadership** – an international conductor as Music Director (likely no more than 6 months presence annually), a Director of Productions (responsible for all aspects of the company's theatrical life) and General Manager (responsible for sustainable program). A 'triumvirate' of shared responsibility.

These structures are not definitive.

Are there any other models, or variations on these, that should be considered?

How do we best ensure both the musical and theatrical development of OA?

What are your thoughts on the most appropriate model for OA at this time?

Note: any reflection on the structure should keep in mind Tony Legge's appointment as Assistant Music Director and Michael Black's role as Chorus Master, both leading musicians with a proven record of success in leadership.

What are the attributes required of the person(s)?

For example:

- Deep knowledge of operatic repertoire, from pre-Baroque to the present day
- Background and/or qualifications;
- Australian or international;
- Age and/or experience

What other attributes are important?

How would you rate their relative importance and why?

What then become the main elements of the job description which will guide the recruitment process?

What considerations should apply to recruitment?

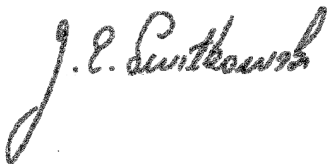
Are there any constraints on finding and securing an appropriate person that has these desired attributes, within a reasonable time-frame? (For example, how long can OA 'wait' in order to find exactly the right person/people?)

Any other comments?

What suggestions might you make?

Are there any names that spring to mind, of someone who would appear to meet these criteria?

These are questions designed to stimulate discussion. We look forward to discussing any other matters that arise as part of our consultation.



Ziggy Switkowski
Chairman



Adrian Collette
Chief Executive

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