



OPERA SOCIETY
Newsletter

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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

The one question all our Members are asking is when will we have opera in the theatre again. How long is a piece of string? In his media release on May 11th 2020 announcing the cancellation of all performances for 2020, the CEO of Opera Australia, Rory Jeffes said: "The impact on the whole sector is simply heartbreaking for everyone for whom the arts are a vital part of their lives. We are working hard behind the scenes to ensure we keep the national opera company intact for both our staff and patrons for when we emerge on the other side of this crisis. Inspiring audiences is in the DNA of Opera Australia and we are determined to be ready for when we are able to do so again." Many Opera Society Members have already donated their refunds from cancelled events and we appreciate their generosity and understanding. The Committee decided to match the amount already donated by our Members and has sent a cheque for \$10,000 to Opera Australia to be used to support young artists.

Please let us know if you would like to donate any refunds you are due for cancelled performances or if you would like a refund. If possible please send an email to operasociety@bigpond.com with your instructions or otherwise contact the Treasurer, Pauline Cleary, on 0413 330 232. Tax deductible receipts will be sent for all donations made to the Donation Fund.

Members are advised that the Committee intends to extend all current membership subscriptions until December 31st 2021 as there will be no performances in 2020. Once we know what is happening in 2021 Members will be sent replacement dress rehearsal vouchers or drink vouchers in the case of Premier Pass Members.

The new home of Opera Australia at City Road Southbank is not yet ready for occupancy but the lease on 45 William Street expires on May 31st 2020 so everything is temporarily going into storage. This means that we have no venue for our Annual General Meeting so we have obtained an extension of time from Consumer Affairs Victoria and Members will be advised in due course of the details for this Meeting.

Alas our lunches have also been put on hold but we are monitoring the health situation with a view to possibly holding a lunch later in the year if it is safe to do so. We may also be able to organise an information night by the end of the year with Opera Australia to hear about their plans for 2021.

There is good news from Melba Opera Trust regarding our Eleanor Blakemore scholarship. The current restrictions presented a new set of challenges but they also presented the chance to explore and embrace a new way of learning and program delivery and a considerable part of their planned program has been delivered online. Well done Melba!

I want to thank each and every Member for your continued support during these unprecedented coronavirus times. We have all been through so much in these last three months and there is still further to go but at least there is light at the end of the tunnel. I hope you all stay safe and well until we can enjoy opera together again.

Best wishes,

Valma Allaway

PRESIDENT

