



Wesfarmers Arts

SYNOPSIS & CASTLIST

A co-production of West Australian Opera, ThinIce,
Perth International Arts Festival and Opera Australia.

Elektra

His Majesty's Theatre

8, 11, 14 February 2012

Opera in one act by Richard Strauss.

Libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, after Sophocles.

Elektra was first performed at the Semperoper in Dresden on 25 January 1909.
This production premieres at His Majesty's Theatre in Perth on 8 February 2012.

Conductor	Richard Mills
Director	Matthew Lutton
Set and Costume Designer	Zoë Atkinson
Lighting Designer	Paul Jackson
Elektra	Eva Johansson
Chrysothemis	Orla Boylan
Klytämnestra	Elizabeth Campbell
Orest	Daniel Sumegi
Aegisth	Richard Greager
Orest's Tutor	James Clayton
Confidante	Sarah-Janet Brittenden
Trainbearer	Lucy Mervik
Young Servant	Samuel Sakker
Old Servant	Ryan Sharp
Overseer	Merlyn Quaife
First Maid	Bernadette Lucarnus
Second Maid	Donna Friedl
Third Maid	Fiona Campbell
Fourth Maid	Harriet O'Shannessy
Fifth Maid	Jennifer Barrington
Agamemnon	James Berlyn
Sacrificial Victim	Shirley van Sanden

WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Concertmaster Giulio Plotino

Duration approximately one hour and forty minutes, no interval.
Sung in German with English surtitles. Surtitles provided by Symphony Australia.
Casting correct at time of publication but may be subject to amendment.

This project is assisted by the Western Australian Government through the Department of Culture and the Arts' **Major Production Fund**.

This season is sponsored by **Allens Arthur Robinson**.

The Conductor position is sponsored by **NAB**.

The Director position is sponsored by **PwC**.

The Principal Female Artist is sponsored by **Hollywood Private Hospital**.

The West Australian Opera Chorus is sponsored by **Hawaiian**.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts



Australian Government



Australia Council for the Arts

West Australian Opera is supported by the State Government through the Department of Culture and the Arts and Lotterywest, and the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

SYNOPSIS

In a secluded courtyard five maids gossip about the disturbing behaviour of Elektra and the bloodshed occurring in the house. They leave, as darkness descends, and Elektra emerges from the shadows – it is the hour in which she wails for her father, the King Agamemnon, who was murdered by her mother Klytämnestra. She calls on her father's spirit, vowing vengeance.

Elektra's nightly ritual is interrupted by her younger sister, Chrysothemis, who urges Elektra to give up her obsession with revenge so they can both be released from this nightmare. But noises are heard from within the house and Chrysothemis rushes off as their mother Klytämnestra approaches, searching for a blood sacrifice.

The queen is tormented by horrific dreams and appeals to Elektra to tell her what kind of sacrifice to the gods will give her peace. Her nightmares will cease, Elektra responds, when the blood of an impure woman is shed. Challenged to name the victim, Elektra screams it is Klytämnestra herself and that she, and her banished brother Orest, will wield the axe.

Klytämnestra is terrified, but when her Confidante runs in and whispers in her ear, the Queen's mood changes abruptly. Laughing maniacally, Klytämnestra leaves her puzzled daughter. The mystery is explained when Chrysothemis reappears with news that Orest has been reported dead.

Stunned, Elektra attempts to persuade her sister that together they must now kill their mother and their mother's lover, Aegisth, but Chrysothemis pulls away in terror and runs off. Elektra, once again alone, begins to search for the axe. She is interrupted by a stranger who has come to report on the details of Orest's death. When Elektra reveals her name, the stranger tells her that Orest lives. Elektra is startled as servants from the house recognise the stranger and bow down to him. The dogs of the house know me, he says, but not my own sister.

Crying his name, Elektra is reunited with her brother Orest and tells him she has lived only for his return. But their reunion is cut short when Orest is summoned to see Klytämnestra. Hardly has he entered the palace when a scream is heard and Elektra, anxiously waiting, knows he has killed their mother. Aegisth arrives and Elektra joyfully lights his way up the stairs, where he too meets his doom. While the halls resound with tumultuous confusion and then celebration, Elektra begins a demented dance. Her sole vengeful purpose now complete, she is consumed by a state of ecstasy before collapsing to the ground, lifeless.

Synopsis courtesy of Opera News, modified by Matthew Lutton.