



**WEST
AUSTRALIAN
OPERA**

THE NIGHTINGALE

Presented in association with the AWESOME Festival,
Co3 Contemporary Dance, WA Youth Orchestra
and WA Young Voices.



Wesfarmers Arts

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THE IMPOSSIBLE
POSSIBLE

Pia Harris, Soprano



THE NIGHTINGALE

**Presented in association with the AWESOME Festival,
Co3 Contemporary Dance, WA Youth Orchestra
and WA Young Voices.**

Composer **Imant Raminsh**
Librettist **James Tucker**
Conductor **Leanne Puttick**
Director & Designer **Matt Reuben James Ward**
Lighting Designer **Michael Rippon**
Movement Director **Alice Kell**
Chorus Master **Perry Joyce**
Chorus Master **Katie How**
Repetiteur **Adrian Soares**
Emperor **Matthew Dixon**
The Nightingale **Zoe Wozniak**
Kitchen Maid **Brianna Louwen**
Counsellor/Death **Chelsea Kluga**
Featuring **WA Young Voices**
Featuring **WA Youth Orchestra** Production
Manager **Mandy Farmer**
Producer **Terasa Letizia**
Stage Manager **Hugo Aguilar Lopez**
Deputy Stage Manager **Jacinta Wajon**
Head of Wardrobe **Sue Kerr**
Wardrobe Assistant **Mandy Elmitt**
Wardrobe Assistant **Nora Stelter**
Head of Hair/Wigs **Virginia Hawdon**
Head of Make Up **Sharon Krywood**
Surtitle Operator **Katja Webb**
Child Chaperone **Rachel Sait**
Digital Content **Roly Skender**
Moon **Creative Plastics**
Scenery constructed
by **Black Swan Arts Workshop**

This season of The Nightingale is supported by



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Conductor's Notes



"One shouldn't underestimate the capabilities of young musicians" is what Imant Raminsh had learned working with children's choruses, an experience he described as the hardest thing he had ever done in his life. Choruses are typically used to speak on the action in opera, used as thematic support for the main cast. Raminsh wanted to do something different, where the chorus instead of playing a supportive role in the production, plays a central role as the narrators, and as the voice of the main character. The tender and innocent notion of a children's chorus taking the lead role as the voice of the Nightingale, the only character in the opera that isn't human, is perfect.

Raminsh's vocal writing for the chorus is a perfect example of exploring the ways in which children's voices can be utilized in a programmatic sense. His writing not only challenges the children's chorus in their musical capabilities, but challenges the way composers think about writing for children's chorus. Raminsh connected with H.C Anderson's ***The Nightingale*** on a personal level, and fell in love with the theme of the incredible power of music, as well as the elements of nature vs artificial presented in contrast to each other. These ideas combined into a children's story that presents lessons of virtue and resilience in the face of adversity told by the voices of children, makes for a powerful statement. Along with his choice of a children's choir to represent the voice of the main character,

Raminsh expanded this idea to include the orchestra, using the flute to represent the Nightingale, and the oboe to represent the artificial Nightingale. Two members of the woodwind family and yet different in tone and colour.

With the original tale being set in China, this opera was composed with its setting in mind, including 4 or 5 Chinese folk songs and the use of the pentatonic scale. Our rendition of this tale differs in setting and in character roles, and when you hear the music, I invite you to think of the music not as a story taking place in China, but as a story taking place in an unknown land. We found beauty in the idea that this fairy tale being free of political comment and free of cultural ties to the morals of this story, meant that it could be set anywhere, in any time, and openly encourages freedom of expression and imagination.

I'm at the beginning of my journey toward becoming a professional conductor. This is the first work of Imant Raminsh's I have ever encountered, and the first opera of this kind. I had the good fortune of speaking to him about his visions and ideas for this opera's first premiere in 2005 and after speaking to him at length about why this work of his was one particularly close to his heart, I was left feeling inspired by his belief in the power of children. I can't think of a more perfect work to be my first major debut. My sincere heartfelt thanks to Chris van Tuinen and West Australian Opera for this opportunity, and the boundless support you have given me.

"I learned early on that I didn't dare tell them something was difficult. If I didn't let on it was difficult, chances are it was never difficult for them to begin with. That's the neat thing of working with untapped potential." – Imant Raminsh

Leanne Puttick
Conductor

What do you do to take care of your mental health?

Take time out and enjoy something you love...

- Read a book
- Go for a walk in the fresh air
- Call a friend to chat
- Join a club

Actively choose to put your mental health first and take time out for you! Being active, having a sense of belonging, and having a purpose in life all contribute to happiness and good mental health. It's as simple as A-B-C, Act-Belong-Commit.

For more information google **Act-Belong-Commit**.



Director's Message



In a sense, the process of directing and designing ***The Nightingale*** has taken me back to my childhood: Huddled under a sheet in my bedroom with a torch, a plastic sword, Peter Pan hat on, reading Robinson Crusoe and scribbling down made-up stories about princes and knights. It was an imagined place where the world was malleable, the moon smiled, and it was difficult to tell who stood behind each shadow. Perhaps, not all unlike that of Hans Christian Andersen when in 1843, deeply in love with the great singer Jenny Lind, and after visiting a local park where a newly built “Chinese pergola” stood, he dreamed up the story of *The Nightingale* and had it written in just two days. The story of ***The Nightingale*** means vastly different things to different people. On one hand it's about pride and power and on the other, about the age-old conflict between nature and the manmade.

From a production and design perspective I'm exploring the notion of “storytelling”, employing basic elements; cloth, light and silhouettes. It's a nod to storybooks, childhood games and the earliest form of animation: shadows. Contextually, we find ourselves in an age of early electrics, magnetism and illusions. A land full of stories where truth matters very little and each can rewrite their history according to their will.

The showman (the Emperor) is self-made, a scavenger of ideas, culture and curiosities. With days lost trudging the dusty roads between towns and hamlets, the Emperor of Stories, his wife (the Chief Councillor) and their “Porcelain Palace” (a canvas tent) search for new audiences and their coin. Tired of their own improvised magic and selling of books, the world becomes brighter the moment a nightingale sings and all seems blissful. But when feelings are hurt, jealousy ignites, and a strange mechanical nightingale is revealed.

We live in a time when we access so much of our lives through portals of technology. The obsessive compulsion to capture every moment and event in picture or film, has become a marker of its reality. No longer can we allow a beautiful sunrise to exist only in the moment or in our memory. Our profiles are carefully curated and the images in our camera roll extend into the thousands. Too often I catch myself scrolling endlessly on social media while “spending time” with my kids and family. For me, this is what *The Nightingale* speaks to, the old-fashioned idea that maybe we should be more present in the moment. Maybe, we should allow ourselves to experience, remember, even forget, but above all feel.

Matt Reuben James Ward
Director & Designer

Vice Regal Patron's Message



As Vice Regal Patron of West Australian Opera I am so pleased to see the state opera company returning live to the stage at His Majesty's Theatre with a children's opera ***The Nightingale***.

Collaboration is king in the arts so it is wonderful to see this work come to fruition through a partnership with five of Western Australia's arts organisations, including West Australian Opera, Co Contemporary Dance, WA Youth Orchestra, WA Young Voices and the AWESOME Festival. ***The Nightingale*** is a fairytale that reminds us to find the beauty in nature and to cherish the gifts of the natural world.

West Australian Opera contributes much to the arts in Western Australia by presenting world-class opera at His Majesty's Theatre, offering education and community programs, school workshops and regional touring and developing young artists through the Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist Program.

I join the company in acknowledging the generous support of both State and Federal governments, Principal Partner Wesfarmers Arts and private donors and corporate supporters for their continued support, particularly in this COVID19 environment.

The Honourable Kim Beazley AC
Governor of Western Australia
Vice Regal Patron West Australian Opera

Executive Director's Message



We are proud and pleased to be returning to live performance on the stage even while noting that we remain in Phase 4 which means smaller audiences in the beautiful His Majesty's Theatre.

I would like to thank our collaborators Co3 Contemporary Dance, WA Youth Orchestra, WA Young Voices, and the AWESOME Festival for bringing this Hans Christian Andersen fairytale to the stage to take you to faraway lands filled with stories of magic and mystery.

With a West Australian team under the direction of Matt Reuben James Ward, we are proud to showcase Wesfarmers Arts Young Artists Matthew Dixon, Brianna Louwen, Chelsea Kluga, Adrian Soares and Leanne Puttick. The voice of the Nightingale is performed by the WA Young Voices Children Choir prepared by Perry Joyce and Katie How, and danced by Co3's Zoe Wozniak with the WA Youth Orchestra in the pit for this season.

We are pleased to be able spread some joy to audiences, young and old, by sparking imaginations with a little bit of magic in a simple story that reminds us of the beauty of nature and the power of friendship.

Thank you for returning to live theatre and for supporting your state opera company and the talented youth of Western Australia at this pivotal time.

Carolyn Chard AM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
West Australian Opera

Chairman's Message



As Chairman of West Australian Opera, I am proud to see the company return to the live stage with a work that celebrates and harnesses the next generation of Western Australian talent.

Recent months have seen us all navigate uncharted waters. For our live performing arts organisations, bringing audiences together for shared experiences had to be paused during the COVID19 shutdown. We tried to connect online through new virtual media and while this has birthed excellent innovations, the absence of the live audience experience has been profoundly missed throughout the company and the broader artistic community. We are excited to experience the overwhelming joy from audiences being able to re-connect in person again (even though at reduced capacities).

The Nightingale is a special children's work, developed for, by and with young people for young people. It speaks to the beauty and value of the natural world and is perhaps particularly relevant at this time in history. I am sure it will be a treat for you and your family in theatre.

I acknowledge Principal Partner Wesfarmers Arts who have been the foundation of our partnership portfolio for many years and I thank Major Partners Lotterywest, Healthway, the Minderoo Foundation and the Civic Partner the City of Perth.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Federal Government through the Australia Council and the State Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

Finally, and importantly, a sincere thanks to all our supporters, donors, friends and families who have provided much needed support over the past several months. We have been moved by the messages, the donations and the outreach during this period. These have reinforced for us the importance of our community, and the relevance of our company in our community, through this challenging period.

Andrew Pascoe
CHAIRMAN
West Australian Opera

Creatives and Cast



Leanne Puttick
Conductor
Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist

Leanne discovered her love for music at age 4, tinkering away at the piano. She took up flute at age 9, picked up violin at age 11 and began composing at age 14. She went on to complete her Bachelor of Music: Composition and Music Technology at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts, graduating in 2015. It wasn't until 2016 after completing several composition masterclasses in Austria with notable Hollywood film composers, that she developed a love for conducting. In 2019, she was accepted into the West Australian Opera's Young Artist Program. Under this program, she has had extensive coaching with Music Director Chris Van Tuinen, and made her first debut as the Banda Conductor for WAO's 2019 Macbeth. In 2020 she makes first major debut as the conductor for WAO's 2020 The Nightingale. In addition, she has been awarded two scholarships from the Bendat Family Foundation and Opera Lovers. At the beginning of 2020 she travelled to Los Angeles where she took masterclasses in conducting for film under the baton of Angel Velez, Conrad Pope, Jorge Mester, William Ross and Emilie Bernstein. Leanne would like to thank the generosity of the Bendat Family Foundation, Opera Lovers, Wesfarmers Arts and the West Australian Opera for playing such a vital role in her development as a conductor.



Matt Reuben James Ward
Director & Designer

Raised in regional WA in Carnarvon, Katanning and Albany, Matt has gone on to lead an international career as a tenor and director. As a performer his credits include the Messenger in Stephen Fry's Life to Come (Britten Theatre London), Western Union Boy in English Touring Opera's Olivier Award Winning Paul Bunyan (Linbury Studio Royal Opera House, UK tour), Frantz in Tales of Hoffmann (English Touring Opera, UK tour), Giacomo in L'assedio di Calais (Armel Operafesztivál Budapest, Arte TV live broadcast, English Touring Opera), Monostatos in Die Zauberflöte (Mid Wales Opera), Borsa in Rigoletto (Opera Project), Jiminy Cricket in Pinocchio and Carter in King Tut (Charles Court Opera London). As a director Matt has created and directed numerous performances, with commissions from plays to research & development programs, having collaborated with Operasonic UK, Royal College of Music Sparks Family Orchestra & Chorus London, BBC Symphony Family Orchestra & Chorus, BBC Proms Sing Plus and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Glyndebourne. For West Australian Opera, Matt recently directed Hansel & Gretel (Opera in the Park), performed School Master/ Mosquito in The Cunning Little Vixen and Remendado in Carmen.



Michael Rippon
Lighting Designer

After coming from the United Kingdom in 2001; Perth based lighting designer Mick Rippon has worked in many venues and roles around the Perth theatre scene. During this time he has also toured productions through Australia and New Zealand.

Mick has designed lighting for Harmonike (Pulse Productions), Witches of Eastwick (9 Lives) and Strassman's iTedE among others.

More recently Mick has been Lighting Designer for West Australian Ballet's Quarry seasons in 2019 and 2020.

Mick has also worked as an Associate Lighting Designer for a re-light of Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap in New Zealand for Lunchbox Theatrical and for West Australian Ballet's seasons of Giselle (2019) and Dracula (2020).

This is Mick's first engagement with West Australian Opera.



Alice Kell
Movement Director
Co3 Contemporary Dance

Alice Kell (nee Hinde) has a background in the creative industries spanning 15 years. Since graduating from the QUT in 2005, Alice has worked in both Australia and Europe as a performer and choreographer with notable companies including Dancenorth, Force Majeure, Physical Virus Collective (Germany) and Animal Farm Collective. In 2012, Alice worked with Raewyn Hill at Dancenorth before joining Co3 in 2016 as a guest artist for the return season of re:Loaded.

Over the years Alice has designed and coordinated costumes for Dancenorth, Force Majeure, Animal Farm Collective, Regurgitator and Australian Ballet. Most recently she has undertaken a Masters of Teaching (Primary), deepening her interest in child and adolescent development and pedagogy. Actively seeking ways to combine her passion for education and extensive background in the creative arts.

Under the mentorship of Raewyn Hill, she has taken on the role of Movement Director realising the character of 'The Nightingale' performed by Zoe Wozniak in this production of The Nightingale.



Raewyn Hill
Artistic Director
Co3 Contemporary Dance

Raewyn has held prestigious positions in dance world-wide, including Cite des Arts (Paris), Baryshnikov Arts Centre (New York), Juilliard (New York), Bolshoi Ballet Academy (Moscow), Beijing Dance Academy (China), and The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (China). Creating works for international arts festivals and venues in New Zealand, Australia, America, Russia, and Japan. In 2016, was awarded a prestigious residency at Tokyo Wonder Site and in 2018 awarded a Saison Foundation Artist in Residency.

As Artistic Director, Raewyn was instrumental in the formation of Co3. Devising and presenting innovative mainstage works, building a vibrant youth ensemble, an elite training squad and programs with wide-reaching community engagement. Leading the development of high-level partnerships with the West Australian Institute of Sport, Edith Cowan University (WAAPA) and Hassell Architect Studios. In 2018, nominated in the Australian Dance Awards for Services to Dance Education; Outstanding Achievement in Choreography for THE ZONE; and Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer for Good Little Soldier (Ochre Contemporary Dance Company). Currently, Raewyn is in development for a new contemporary dance work ARCHIVES OF HUMANITY due to premiere at the State Theatre Centre in 2021.



Adrian Soares
Repetituer
Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist

Adrian Soares is a current member of the Wesfarmers Young Artist Program at West Australian Opera as a repetiteur.

He completed his piano studies at UWA with First Class Honours in 2019, and was awarded the prestigious Tunley Music Scholarship, the VOSE Concerto Prize, Waveney Wansborough Prize and Flora Bunning Chamber Prize. Adrian has also performed with WASO as a casual musician and as a soloist performing Ravel's Piano Concerto in G.

He currently works as both piano teacher and accompanist for Iona Presentation College and Mercedes College, whilst also working as a freelance performer and accompanist for many ensembles and soloists in Perth.

Adrian was recently awarded the Lady Callaway Award from the Australian Society of Music Education in recognition for outstanding service as an accompanist in the field of music education.



Perry Joyce
Chorus Master
WA Young Voices

Perry is a singer, composer, conductor, and educator who is actively involved in the Perth classical music scene. In 2018 he was nominated for the West Australian Young Achiever Awards for his achievements in music and community outreach.

As a soloist Perry has performed with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (Choral Fantasy, Beethoven 2018), West Australian Opera, and many ensembles around Perth including as a member of St George's Cathedral Consort. In 2014 Perry founded the West Australian Young Voices (WAYV) and has established and conducted many choirs since.

In 2018 Perry was Chorus Master for West Australian Opera's production of Don Giovanni and in 2019 was awarded a Bendat Scholarship to study abroad. Perry has also won many awards for his compositions including the Sydney Symphony's Young Composers Award, the Gondwana Voices Young Composers Award, and the 2012 Paula and David Tunley Award.



Katie How
Chorus Master
WA Young Voices

Katie is a singer, conductor and teacher based in Perth specialising in school-age vocal tuition. For the past five years, Katie has conducted West Australian Young Voices. Alongside this, Katie works as a singer performing regularly with the St George's Cathedral Choir and Consort and the Giovanni Consort.

As a soloist, Katie has performed with Perth Lyric Opera, Art Song Perth, Perth Symphonic Chorus and St George's Cathedral. Katie graduated from the University of Western Australia with a Bachelor of Music Performance, majoring in Classical Voice.

In 2017 Katie attended the Gondwana National Summer School Conducting program. In 2018 she completed her 3 years of training for the Australian Kodaly Certificate and in 2020 she will be completing a Master of Teaching in Secondary Music Education.



Matthew Dixon
Emperor
Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist

Matthew is a baritone from Perth, currently studying on a scholarship with Robert Dean at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD).

Also as an avid pianist, Matthew was the recipient of the Silver Anniversary Prize for the Evelyn and Ralph Thompson Scholarship and also the winner of the Royal Overseas League Singing Competition and a semi-finalist in this year's IFAC Australian Singing Competition (winning the Tinkler Trust Award).

In 2018/19 Matthew has performed the roles of Don Giovanni, Belcore (L'elisir d'amore) and Billy Budd at GSMD also debuting at Wigmore Hall in a Schubertiade with Graham Johnson. He debuted the role of Motor Cop in Dead Man Walking for the UK premiere opposite Joyce Didonato..



Zoe Wozniak
The Nightingale
Co3 Contemporary Dance

Zoe is a Perth based independent artist and founding dancer of Co3 Contemporary Dance. After graduating from WAAPA with a Bachelor of Arts (Dance) in 2013 she joined LINK Dance Company as a member in 2014. Since then she has created and performed for various independent artists, Ochre Contemporary Dance Company and performed in Ohad Naharin's Decadance Perth 2016 with STRUT Dance.

Over the past five years she has performed in the following mainstage works at Co3 under Artistic Director, Raewyn Hill; re:Loaded, THE ZONE and WA Dance Makers Project. Zoe has also participated in Co3 collaborations with Sydney Dance Company on Antony Hamilton's Crazy Times (2016/2017) and West Australian Ballet on Garry Stewart's Reincarnation (2019).

Most recently Zoe performed in Australian Dance Theatre's North/South (2019) by Garry Stewart and Ina Christel Johannessen. She is currently in development with Raewyn Hill on ARCHIVES OF HUMANITY, set to have its World Premiere in 2021.



Brianna Louwen
Kitchen Maid
Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist

Brianna Louwen is a Soprano from Perth, Western Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Western Australia and a Masters in Solo Voice Ensemble Singing from the University of York in the UK. She is a Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist with the West Australian Opera Company and makes her role debut as the Kitchen Maid in The Nightingale.

Brianna sings with the St George's Cathedral Choir and Consort, The Giovanni Consort and the Choirs of St George's College, UWA, where she is the Vocal Specialist. In 2019 she featured on an ABC recording with Australian Baroque. Brianna has been a soloist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra on a number of occasions including the BBC Planet Earth II Arena Tour.

In 2016 Brianna won a Young Person and the Arts International Travelling Scholarship, and the Fremantle Eisteddfod Aria Competition. In 2018 and 2019 she was a finalist in the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Oratorio Competition.



Chelsea Kluga
Counsellor/Death
Wesfarmers Arts Young Artist

Chelsea Kluga is a mezzo soprano from Perth who made her professional debut as the Woodpecker in The Cunning Little Vixen with West Australian Opera (2018). Currently a Wesfarmer's Arts Young Artist, Chelsea is a graduate of Mannes College in New York (MM) and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (GradDip, BM Voice and Clarinet).

Chelsea has been a full time chorus member with West Australian Opera since 2016 and is a scholarship recipient of the Dame Joan Sutherland Fund, joint recipient of the Bendat Scholarship and was awarded the V.H Cooper prize from the University of Western Australia.

As part of the apprentice studio at Mannes College, she performed as Olga (Eugene Onegin), Marcellina (Le Nozze di Figaro), the Third Lady (Die Zauberflöte) and Idamante (Idomeneo). At WAAPA her roles included Meg (Little Women) and Clorinda (Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda).

A woman with dark hair tied in a bun, wearing a black sleeveless top, is shown in profile from the back, looking towards the right. In the background, there is a large poster featuring a black and white portrait of a man with a beard. The background is slightly blurred, showing some foliage.

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Synopsis

The Emperor hears of the wondrous singing of a nightingale who lives in the forest behind his palace. He demands that she be found and brought to him to hear. Her song moves him to tears and he offers her an honored place at court.

One day a gift arrives —a mechanical nightingale covered with jewels. The Emperor and his court are enchanted by this new bird and the true nightingale quietly flies away. The Emperor is furious at her departure, and banishes her. After many playings, the mechanical bird eventually breaks down.

Five years pass and the Emperor becomes gravely ill. When Death arrives to take his life, the true nightingale returns and sings. Death is so charmed by her song that he restores the Emperor's life.

The grateful Emperor asks her to stay always at court. The nightingale replies that she must be free but promises to visit and sing as often as she can for the Emperor and for all his people, "the highborn and the low."



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WA Youth Orchestra *performing in the orchestra pit this season*

Violin 1

Ryan Lee
Helena O'Sullivan
Benjamin Caulfield
William Wu

Violin 2

Mia Thomas
Alyssa Zhao
Stephanie Yap

Viola

Amadea Foss
Hanae Wilding
Aaron Dungey

Cello

Tiffany Lee
Anneke Van Der Laan

Double Bass

Josh Spirek

Flute

Dominique Rees

Oboe

Alexandra Allen

Clarinet

Clarine Arlidge

Bassoon

Bailey Ireland

French Horn

Aisha Chadwick-Stumpf

Trumpet

Sophie Carter/Jennifer Bylund

Timpani & Percussion

Carissa Soares

WA Young Voices

performing as the voice of The Nightingale

Conductor / Artistic Director

Perry Joyce & Katie How

Rehearsal Manager

Teresa Nicholls

Conductor

Nick Schurmann

Kyrine Arumugam

Dior Chai

Daisy Churchman

Jack Churchman

Ashley Croft

Harriett Dawson

Liam Fitzpatrick

Harris Goh

Emma Hairsine

Sophia Healdgrove

Raymond Hopkins

James Jurjevich

Ella Jurjevich

Thomas Lovegrove

Molly Johnson

Ava Laurie

Emily Neal

Linley Nevin

Adam Lynch

Hannah Tenzing

Holly Westlake

Ehrel Yedid

Denver Havercroft

Ethan Kent

Lachlan Menezes

Apurva Muwanwella

Joshua White

The Courtiers

Sophie Alderson

Mairindi Bailey

Jessica Blakeley

Brylee Butterworth

Josephine Ellis

Alexia Leake

Sophie Harvey-Lissienko

Perri Hinton

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Elke Ruane

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Jasmine Ward

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Ulrich & Gloria Kunzmann

Ross & Frances Ledger

Bill Reid

Len & Sue Roberts-Smith

Kerry Sanderson

Glenice Shephard

Kim & Keith Spence

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Yannis Vrodos

Dr Chris & Mrs Vimala Whitaker

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West Australian Opera acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples of Western Australia as the traditional custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.