

MEDIA RELEASE
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Lyric Opera of Melbourne unveils 2017 three crown season

The Japanese Princess, The Coronation of Poppea and The Little Prince

Lyric will deal audiences an engaging and entertaining hand in 2017 with a “three crown” season of operas exploring the theme of royalty.

The calendar will feature Australian premieres of *The Japanese Princess* and *The Little Prince*, as well as a welcome new production of *The Coronation of Poppea*.

From comedy to drama, from one act to full length, from baroque to contemporary, this majestic season contains a wealth of music, drama and design fit for kings, queens, opera fans and anyone open to experiencing the art for the first time.

In autumn, Lyric will transport you to Imperial Japan, as imagined by Camille Saint Saëns in his rediscovered one-act comedy *The Japanese Princess*. This hour-long gem explores the fascination with the orient in a compact fusion of singing, theatre and movement.

This Australian premiere will be directed by Miki Okawa in an adaption by Stephen Nicolazzo, with design by Julie Renshaw.

Artistic Director and Conductor, Pat Miller said: “*The Japanese Princess* will have both early and late performances, making it an ideal complement to a night out, a perfect introduction for the first time opera-goer or a delightful discovery for the seasoned opera fan.”

In winter, visit ancient Rome in Monteverdi’s *The Coronation of Poppea*. This full-length bloodthirsty drama will be directed by Tyran Parke, leading an exceptional Melbourne creative team including Rob Sowinski, Bryn Cullen and Dann Barber. *Poppea* will feature an ensemble of period instruments and will be sung in the original Italian by a cast of exceptional singing actors led by Rebecca Rashleigh in the title role making a welcome return following her success in *Il Signor Bruschino*.

In spring, take a journey back into your childhood to meet *The Little Prince*, in Rachel Portman’s 2004 setting of Antoine Saint-Exupery’s beloved story. This Australian premiere will be brought to life by the same team as 2016’s *Our Man in Havana* with direction by Suzanne Chaundy and Lyric’s Artistic Director, Pat Miller, conducting. Featuring an exciting young Melbourne cast and a full chorus of children, *The Little Prince* is a timeless and touching story from a 'child's eye' view of the world.

“*The Little Prince* is a perfect introduction to opera for the young, or the young at heart,” said Pat.

Lyric is committed to fostering the next generation of opera makers, not just singers but also designers and directors.

In April 2017 we will hold our second Opera Directors’ Workshop. Led by Suzanne Chaundy, this four-day program will allow developing and interested opera directors to explore the world of opera in guided workshops on concept development, working with the artistic team and pitching skills as well as practical sessions directing singers.

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2017 season:

Camille Saint Saëns – *The Japanese Princess (La Princesse Jaune, 1862)*

Opera comique in one act

Sung in French with surtitles in English

One hour only, with early and late shows each night.

Chapel off Chapel, March 13th – 18th

Director: Miki Okawa

Design: Julie Renshaw & Lucy Birkinshaw

Conductor: Pat Miller

Claudio Monteverdi – *The Coronation of Poppea (Il Coronazione di Poppea, 1648)*

Drama with Music in three acts

Sung in Italian with surtitles in English

Three hours, including two intervals

Chapel off Chapel, July 15th – 22nd

Director: Tyran Parke

Design: Dann Barber & Rob Sowinsky

Musical Direction: Pat Miller

Rachel Portman – *The Little Prince (2004)*

Fairytale opera in two acts

Based on the story by Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Sung in English

2 hours, including one interval

Geelong Performing Arts Centre September 30th – October 1st

Meat Market North Melbourne October 5th – 8th

Director: Suzanne Chaundy

Design: Rob Sowinsky

Conductor: Pat Miller