



STATE OPERA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Saturday 2 April 2022

FRIENDS OF STATE OPERA – 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope you are all still glowing (as we are) from the success of *Boheme on the Beach* last weekend! What a night! As close to 5,000 bathed in the warm glow of yet another stunning Adelaide sunset and heard the thrilling and moving well-loved music by Puccini, I was reminded of our vision – *more opera for more people* – and how successfully we have been able to deliver on that promise even as we continue to face COVID restrictions and complications.

Despite losing much time, impetus and momentum in 2020, and then resurrecting a largely complete program in 2021 (only having to postpone *Turn of the Screw* and *Voss*), State Opera has acquitted itself very well on the national stage in terms of volume, breadth of repertoire, and reach.

Repertoire aside, the Company has also flourished in the business end of operations. We have been able to support and expand our staff cohort, and establish some norms of management that will see State Opera work more seamlessly into the future. The role of Office Manager (Business Support Officer) has now been filled by a number of excellent candidates over the last 18-24 months, demonstrating this very necessary front-facing position in the staff structure. We have also engaged a part-time Producer which speaks to our place in the industry landscape where we have expertise in co-productions, venue deals, using unusual spaces and creating shows from scratch. We have also moved with the times and created a welcoming flexible workplace where we can and have engaged part-time, casual and contract staff who work entirely remotely – a Contracts Administrator in Sydney, a Marketing Manager in Japan, and a Travel Coordinator in New Zealand.

These staff movements, changes and adjustments all represent the normalising of our business where there are opportunities for succession, learning and development. The current expansion of our Marketing & Development Team, led by Sidonie Henbest, is the next most important item on the business agenda so that we can ensure growth and high-performance in box office income, fundraising, branding and expansive campaigns showcasing the value of what we do.

State Opera now successfully manages and stores our documents in Sharepoint, we communicate remotely via Teams chat and video, and contracts are issued and executed remotely via Docusign. As our tools and systems evolve, so do we. In line with our public-facing push into the new digital world, behind the scenes much work has been undertaken in

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developing and improving State Opera's methodology for project and budget administration, financial stability and human resource management.

The volume, quality and diversity of work by State Opera sets this Company apart from every other state-based opera company in Australia. In addition, we are actively delivering on our State and Federal Government funding KPIs which will culminate in a new Strategic Plan for 2023-2024, followed by a vision for 2025-28 (which includes the celebration of State Opera's 50th anniversary).

On behalf of the Management Team, I want to extend my thanks to those members of the Friends of State Opera Committee who have embraced our partnership so that we can continue to share in we all love the most.

We would like to thank Beata Byok for her time and energy on the Board of State Opera, and all the Committee Members for their regular and dedicated interest in the work that we do. I am honoured to be leading one of the flagship arts companies in Australia and excited about our potential to thrive into the future.

I look forward to seeing you all in the theatre soon.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Yarmila Alfonzetti'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Yarmila' being larger and more prominent than the last name 'Alfonzetti'.

Yarmila Alfonzetti
Executive Director
State Opera South Australia