

Anke Höppner and Barry Ryan

soprano and bass baritone

Fidelio: Opera Queensland, 11 July – 1 August
Anke sings the title role Leonore (Fidelio) and Barry sings Don Pizarro

Aida: Opera Australia, second cast, 15 August – 3 September
Barry sings the role of Amonasro

The Girl of the Golden West (La Fanciulla del West), West Australian Opera
27 October – 7 November
Anke sings the lead role of Minnie

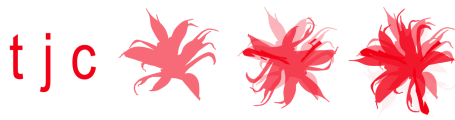
La bohème, Myer Music Bowl 11 December
Barry sings the role of Marcello



Media Kit

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MEDIA RELEASE

Drama, love and artistry: on and off-stage. With four major roles in Australia's leading opera companies, the remainder of 2009 sees husband and wife opera duo Barry Ryan (baritone) and Anke Höppner (soprano) steeped in death, passion and heroism.

Höppner, as *Fidelio*, is convincing, with a credible voice that manages the extreme registers of Beethoven's taxing vocal lines, and Barry Ryan is a deliciously twisted nasty. *The Australian*, 13 July 2009

Creative partnerships are the lifeblood of some of our best artists, but one of Australia's most accomplished and dynamic artistic couples, Barry Ryan and Anke Höppner, take it one step further in their performances and teaching.

Fresh from performing together onstage in Opera Queensland's *Fidelio*, which opened on 11 July, their remaining 2009 engagements see them performing in operas around Australia and deeply committed to their teaching.

"In *Fidelio*, we experienced a rare opportunity to perform opposite each other, in adversarial roles, but really, our close commitment to our singing and teaching, not to mention to each other, means that we venture to another level of 'truthfulness' on stage and in life all together," says Anke Höppner.

Meeting whilst performing together in *Die Banditen* in Germany in 1993, the singers have sung seven operas together.

"We come as a double package, and yet we are very different in our performance styles and approach," she adds.

"Preparation for any operatic role is rigorous, with music, acting and movement to learn and character roles to carefully construct; it's an intricate and detailed process," says Barry. "In rehearsals we always hope that each other goes well, yet on performance day, we simply need to let go and trust that the other will perform at their best."

Importantly, both singers are passionate educators of young emerging talent. As lecturers in **Voice and Opera at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music**, they strongly advocate support for the young stars of tomorrow.

"We are impressed by the high level of talent and focused level of concentration consistently demonstrated by our young people," says **Barry Ryan**. The **former footballer** (who represented St George in the President's Cup and under 23's in 1975 and 76), sees the **same level of commitment and motivation from young people in classical music as to those in elite sports.**

"Many people believe that opera is a dying artform," adds **Anke Höppner**. **"But our experience shows that young people are more committed than ever and the future holds promise for our budding talents.**

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"We also believe that the business world can learn a lot from the creativity and stamina shown in the arts – following your passion, having a commitment to artistic excellence, the ability to take a creative approach and the capacity to express yourself are important attributes to have in a rapidly changing world."

Other engagements for 2009 for **Anke Höppner** include **the title role** in **WA Opera's *The Girl of the Golden West*** (opening 27 October); and for **Barry Ryan** - the role of **Amonasro** in Opera Australia's ***Aida*** (second cast, 15 August – 3 September) and **Marcello** in ***La bohème***, (Myer Music Bowl 11 December).

MEDIA: For interviews & images please contact 02 8904 0822 Trudy Johnston, trudy@tjc.com.au or Prue Vercoe prue@tjc.com.au

For further inquiries with the presenting opera companies please contact:

Aida: Opera Australia National Publicist Emma Williams Emma.Williams@opera-australia.org.au, 9318 8327

Girl of the Golden West West Australian Opera Publicist, Rosita Stangl, rositapr@inet.net.au, 08 9367 8884

OPERA AT A GLANCE

Aida: Opera Australia, second cast

15 August – 3 September

Barry sings the role of Amonasro

The Girl of the Golden West (La Fanciulla del West), West Australian Opera

27 October – 7 November

Anke sings the lead role of Minnie

La bohème, Myer Music Bowl

11 December

Barry sings the role of Marcello

Anke Höppner

Born in Germany, Anke Höppner studied with Professor Renate Faltin at the Hanns-Eisler Conservatorium in Berlin and graduated with a Master's Degree in Performance.

Her awards include the best vocal Graduate in the German Democratic Republic, the first prize in the Hanns-Eisler-Song-Competition, the Bayreuth Stipendium in 1993 and the inaugural Sir Robert Helpmann Award for the Best Female Performer in an Opera in 2001 for her lead role as Cio Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*.

After her first Opera Australia engagement in 1998, in the title role in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, she sung many roles for the company, including: the title role in *Jenufa*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Cio Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, Sylva in *The Gypsy Princess*, Lucretia in *Batavia* (world premiere), Giulietta in *Tales of Hoffmann*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Fata Morgana in *The Love For Three Oranges*, Foreign Princess in *Rusalka*, Emilia Marty in *The Makropulos Case* and Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

Anke Höppner has sung with opera companies around Australia and in Germany, with roles including: Fiorella in *Les Brigandes* (Komische Oper Berlin), Amor in *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Komische Oper Berlin), Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (Komische Oper Berlin), Tisbe in *Cenerentola* (Komische Oper Berlin); Brautjungfer in *Der Freischütz* (Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin), Title role *Madama Butterfly* (South Australian Opera), Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* (South Australian Opera); Procne in *The Love of a Nightingale* (Lyric Opera Queensland and Melbourne Opera); Lucretia in *Batavia* (West Australian Opera); Title role in *Jenufa* (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater), Lisa in *Pique Dame* (Schleswig- Holsteinisches Landestheater), Abigail in *Nabucco* (Schleswig- Holsteinisches Landestheater), Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater), Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater), Charlotte in *Werther* (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater).

Her concert performances include - Liederabend (London Opera Festival), Mozart's *Requiem* (Berlin Philharmonie), Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* (Neubrandenburger Philharmonie, Schleswig-Holsteinisches Symphony Orchestra), Marie in excerpts from Berg's *Wozzeck* (Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Halle), guest soloist in *Liederabende* (1996 Melbourne International Festival and Barossa Music Festival); soprano solo in Beethoven's 9th Symphony (TSO); Sydney Philharmonia Choirs.

Anke Höppner has been broadcast in radio and television by NDR, WDR, ORB and the ABC.

Barry Ryan

Australian baritone Barry Ryan graduated with honours from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. His many awards for singing include the Shell Aria, the New York Metropolitan Auditions, the Marten Bequest for Singing, the Vienna State Opera Award and the Green Room Award.

Barry Ryan has performed with Europe's leading opera companies including the Royal Opera Covent Garden (including tours to Israel and Sicily), La Scala Milan, the Opera Comique in Paris, the Paris Opera Bastille, the Deutsche Oper am Rhein Düsseldorf, the Flemish Opera Antwerp, the Komische Oper Berlin, Basel Opera and the Otono Festival Opera Madrid. He has also performed for Christchurch Opera, New Zealand Opera Wellington, the West Australian Opera, the Victorian State Opera and Opera Queensland. He was a principal artist with the Cologne Opera from 1988 to 1992 and in 1993 made his Australian Opera debut in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Since then Barry Ryan has performed with opera companies throughout Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Barry Ryan has performed in concert throughout Europe, Australia and Asia and has been seen in televised performances of opera in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Australia. He has performed on radio for the BBC London, the ABC in Australia, the WDR in Germany, Norwegian Radio and Radio Tokyo. He has performed with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Norwegian Symphony Orchestra, the Shinsei Nihon Symphony Orchestra Tokyo and all the major Symphony Orchestras in Australasia.

Barry Ryan has performed under the batons of some of the world's leading conductors, including, Riccardo Muti, Zubin Metha, Sir Charles Mackerras, Richard Bonyngue, Carlo Felice Cillario and Richard Hickox.

Barry Ryan is also a lecturer in Voice and Opera at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Barry Ryan has performed many leading roles for **Opera Australia** including: Marcello in *La bohème*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Prosecuting Counsel in *Lindy*, Mister Redburn in *Billy Budd* and the Gamekeeper in *Rusalka*.

Videos and recordings include: *Manon Lescaut*, Flemish Opera Antwerp, *The Summer Of the Seventeenth Doll*, Victorian State Opera, *Rusalka*; *Lindy*, Opera Australia