

THE LITTLE MERMAID

We're transforming Government House Ballroom into a fairytale world for *The Little Mermaid*, with the arches, balconies and stage becoming underwater caves, waterfalls and a palace.

Freeze Frame Opera are taking Dvořák's *Rusalka*, a beautiful version of *The Little Mermaid* story, and turning it into a magical production for children. Instead of following the traditional love story, this *Little Mermaid* is a coming-of-age tale about balancing adventure and responsibility as children grow up and leave home. In a perfect introduction to live music and theatre for young audiences, there'll be plenty of laughter, interaction and suspense – and of course the sublime music of Dvořák's lyrical opera.

Stay a while longer to enjoy pedal cars, face painting and refreshments in the supper room, followed by some fun games in the stunning gardens of Government House, all included in your admission price.

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION CREDITS

Director Rachel McDonald

Mezzo-Soprano Caitlin Cassidy

Baritone Robert Hoffman

Tenor Jun Zhang

Soprano Prudence Sanders

Narrator Jessie Ward

Musical Director and pianist Caroline Badnall

Designer Robbie Harrold

Lighting Jerry Reinhardt

FREEZE FRAME OPERA

Freeze Frame Opera is a not for profit incorporated association and a registered charity with DGR1 status which aims to spread the love of opera and introduce new audiences to its magic by presenting opera classics in new, accessible, locally made productions using singers and creatives of outstanding professional quality.

FFO reframes operatic classics to make them relevant and entertaining for modern audiences. Our shows are specifically designed to introduce opera to new audiences and to sustain the enthusiasm of those who are already opera lovers. We have embraced the entrepreneurial opportunities and interdisciplinary collaboration necessary to keep opera both innovative and sustainable. FFO has now firmly established itself as a company with great artistic merit that has changed the cultural landscape of Perth and provided numerous opportunities to artists in WA.

We have produced critically acclaimed productions and concerts, bringing opera to contemporary Perth audiences who may have previously found opera inaccessible or archaic. Our productions retain the essential qualities for a magical performance - packaged beautifully to create an unforgettable experience.

The Witch - Caitlin Cassidy (mezzo-soprano)

Caitlin was recently a principal artist with Opera Australia singing Aunty B in *The Barber of Seville* NSW Schools Tour. An award-winning Young Artist with the West Australian Opera, Caitlin made her principal as Countess Ceprano and subsequently performed the roles of Third Lady and Marcellina and in their regional concert series in Broome and the South West. In 2019 appeared as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* with the State Opera of South Australia. She performs regularly with Freeze Frame Opera in Perth namely as Silvia (*I Pagliacci*) and Ježibaba (*The Little Mermaid*) and in gala concerts. She completed a Professional Studies Diploma at

Mannes in New York where she also performed with New York Lyric Opera. Prior to this, she graduated from the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts where she completed a Bachelor of Music, a Graduate Diploma and a Master of Creative Arts.

The Father - Robert Hofmann (baritone)

Robert's Freeze Frame Opera productions have included the Sacristan in *Tosca*, Quarry concerts and most recently, Truck-o-rama, the European Tour. He has sung many roles with the West Australian Opera including Koko in *The Mikado*, Dulcamara in *L'elisir d'amore*, Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, John Styx in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Hobson in *Peter Grimes*.

An award-winning cabaret performer, Robert is renowned for playing multiple comedic characters with musical directors Tommaso Pollio and Cathie Travers, appearing with critical acclaim at Perth Writers' Festival, Downstairs at the Maj, Perth Fringe World, Edinburgh, Sydney and Melbourne Fringes as well as off-off Broadway in New York City. He is a frequent guest performer with DivaLicious in Perth and has toured with them to WA Regions, Adelaide Fringe and the Sydney Opera House.

As a concert soloist his engagements have included Messiah and the Bach Passions in the St Georges Cathedral Concert Series under the direction of Dr Joseph Nolan.

The Prince - Jun Zhang (tenor)

Born in China, Jun Zhang trained at the Australian Opera Studio and WAAPA.

At the Opera Studio, he performed leading roles in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Manon*, *The Magic Flute* and *La Finta Giardiniera*. Recent roles for FFO include Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and Beppe in *Pagliacci*.

The Little Mermaid – Prudence Sanders (soprano)

Australian born soprano, Prudence Sanders, commenced her training at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. As a recipient of a scholarship from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Prudence completed her Masters degree under the tutelage of John Evans.

Prudence made her Wigmore Hall debut as part of the GSMD New Music Festival. Roles have included Musetta, La Boheme (Opera Up Close's Olivier award winning production), Governess, Turn of the Screw (dir. Edward Dick), Cunegonde, Candide (Cambridge Philharmonic), Soprano Soloist, Mittwoch aus Licht (Birmingham Opera, dir. Graham Vick), Adina, L'elisir d'amore (Opera Up Close) and Bianca, La Rondine (Go Opera) and Fiordiligi, *Così fan tutte* for WAO.

The Narrator – Jessie Ward

Jessie Ward is a strong, proud Noongar woman. Born in Mackay, Queensland and raised in the Country town of Toodyay she caught the acting bug at a young age. After a few years acting in local Toodyay theatre productions she travelled to Perth and studied screen performance and a Certificate IV in Aboriginal Performance at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Since graduating in 2017 Jessie has been performing in Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company productions, Freeze Frame Opera and Constable Care. Jessie's love of acting, is now spilling into a passion for writing with a short film and 10 minute stage play (*A girl boxed*), now crafting her voice with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company's 'Which Way' poetry group facilitated by Jennifer Compton.

Musical Director and pianist – Caroline Badnall

B.Mus. F.Mus. L.Mus. A.Mus.

Caroline has enjoyed many years as a chamber musician, repetiteur, vocal coach and soloist. She has recorded numerous recitals for the ABC including two Sunday Live performances. A highlight of Caroline's career was winning a Fellowship to Yale Summer School where her tutors included pianist Boris Berman and the Tokyo String Quartet.

Caroline has been coach and accompanist to singers and instrumentalists in WA for many years, as well as enjoying much success in chamber music and recently performed 2 recitals for the Melbourne Digital Concert Hall Series with soprano Sara Macliver.

Caroline is thoroughly enjoying being a freelance pianist and especially loves her regular performances with Freeze Frame Opera.

Director - Rachel McDonald

Rachel McDonald has directed for many of Australia's leading companies, with productions including La Voix Humaine for Opera Australia, The Pianist for Belvoir/Sydney Festival, The Taming of the Shrew for Sydney Theatre Company, La Traviata for OzOpera national tour and Queen Lear for Melbourne Theatre Company. Rachel is the Artistic Director of Freeze Frame Opera, where she has directed La Boheme, Pagliacci and Tosca. Rachel has also directed extensively for WAAPA and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and enjoys working with emerging artists. Writing credits include several projects for Musica Viva national tours, Susanna's Wedding and this adaptation of Rusalka for children. Rachel lectures at WAAPA in acting, directing, and design.

Designer - Robbie Harrold

Robbie Harrold has designed all FFO shows since its launch in November 2016. These shows have included Rusalka, Tosca, Pagliacci, La Boheme, Opera Truckorama, Opera at the Movies, Opera at the Movies – the Sequel, Opera Heroines, Opera at the Quarry, Handel in the House and Kidogo concerts. Robbie trained in set design at WAAPA and is an Artistic Advisor to the board of FFO.

Lighting – Jerry Reinhardt

Lighting Designer Jerry Reinhardt hails from the USA. Born and raised in Reno Nevada, Jerry began his entertainment career working in casino show rooms. Jerry holds a BA in Theatre and an MFA in Dramatic Arts from the University of California, Davis. As Technical Director for the University of Oregon Jerry designed Lighting for productions of La Boheme, Faust, and La Traviata. Jerry has toured extensively with international artists including Cher, Neil Diamond, Al Jarreau, Van Halen, Mikail Baryshnikov, Chicago, Burt Bacharach, and Natalie Cole; to name a few. Jerry currently manages the Perth Company, Concert & Corporate Productions and lectures at the University of Notre Dame, Fremantle.