



Hon. George Souris M.P
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing
Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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La Traviata on Sydney Harbour a Major World Event

NSW Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, has welcomed the upcoming premiere of "**La Traviata, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour**", which opens this Saturday March 24 2012.

Speaking at the media launch today in the Sydney Botanic Gardens, Mr Souris said: "La Traviata, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour is one of the greatest events in the world.

"It is a truly visionary project that will see Sydney Harbour transformed into the grandest stage afloat," Mr Souris said.

"This monumental production features a specially built stage above the water, set against the spectacular Sydney Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge, with a full orchestra, fireworks, magnificent sets and a 9 metre Swarovski crystal chandelier.

"**La Traviata, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour** will remind audiences both here and overseas that Sydney is one of the world's most breathtaking cities.

"The creative inspiration required to stage this production on Sydney Harbour is daring, ambitious, and bold – just like the Harbour City itself – pushing the boundaries of what is possible when it comes to major outdoor events.

"**La Traviata** will equal the grandeur of prestigious outdoor opera events including **Aida at the Luxor, Turandot in the Forbidden City** and **Opera at Lake Constance in Bregenz**, Austria.

"In years to come, **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour** will present some of the greatest operas ever written, with productions of similar scale, grandeur and spectacle.

"The economic benefits of the Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour resonate far beyond the final curtain call.

"Based on 18 performances and a capacity of 54,000, Destination NSW expects that \$20 million in new money will be driven into the NSW economy.

"Investing in events that have such a bold vision, through Destination NSW, is a key priority for the NSW Liberals and Nationals Government. These are the events that make NSW the number one events destination in Australia.

"**La Traviata, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour** highlights the role world-class events play in (rebuilding) the NSW economy and the emphasis on tourism and major events that the State Government has brought to bear since the change of government a year ago," Mr Souris said.