



## Media Release

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### **HANDA OPERA ON SYDNEY HARBOUR - *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* OPENS FRIDAY**

Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, today joined a colourful trio of Geisha performers to launch the latest Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour: *Madama Butterfly*.

*Madama Butterfly* opens on Sydney Harbour this Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March for an exclusive three-week season, playing against a stunning backdrop and featuring an enormous sun and full moon, which rise out of the water.

"*Madama Butterfly* is one of opera's timeless Italian classics – Puccini's world-famous tale of love and honour is revered by opera enthusiasts the world over," Mr Souris said.

"The production, which is a fitting 'third act' to Opera Australia's objective of delivering three seasons the greatest operas ever written, performed on the Sydney Harbour. I congratulate everyone involved in these now world famous productions on their superb efforts again this year," Mr Souris said.

"It is estimated that since 2012, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour has attracted more than 11,000 overseas and interstate visitors who came to Sydney specifically to see the opera.

"Opera Australia and Destination NSW expect *Madama Butterfly* will drive around \$20 million in new money into the NSW economy throughout its season.

"The stunning show will remind audiences both here and overseas that Sydney is Australia's global events city and home of the performing arts."

Opera Australia Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini said he was thrilled to present Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, which is bigger and better than ever before.

"Sydney's spectacular skyline is the best possible backdrop for an opera, and at *Madama Butterfly* audiences will enjoy the city in all its glory," Mr Terracini said.

"Now in its third year, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour will be the cultural event of the year - there is nothing else quite like it."

Opera Australia Chief Executive Craig Hassall said Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour was winning new audiences each year:

"Sydney is the perfect place for an opera event of this scale and it is fast becoming one of the ultimate experiences to be had, here in the Harbour city.

"Tourists and locals are flocking to this spectacular event and we welcome audiences from all walks of life. This event is about making opera accessible and entertaining - not just the performance, but the whole experience from enjoying the Japanese themed site full of lanterns and cherry blossoms, through to the incredible drinking and dining spaces built in the tree tops. It's a magical night out," Mr Hassall said.

For more information and to purchase tickets to *Madama Butterfly* please visit <http://opera.org.au/whatson/events/operaonsydneyharbour>