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MEDIA RELEASE

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WEST SIDE STORY BOUND FOR SYDNEY

Sydney will play host to one of the world's greatest pieces of theatre, the much-loved *West Side Story*, when it takes to the stage at Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour next year.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events Adam Marshall said the production was secured by the NSW Government and will open in March 2019 for an exclusive four-week season.

"Every year we're securing awe-inspiring performances exclusively for Sydney through Handa Opera, and I am delighted to see this world-famous production make its way to Australia's Major Events State," Mr Marshall said.

"We expect *West Side Story* to attract around 10,000 overnight visitors to Sydney, generating more than \$10 million in visitor expenditure for NSW."

Mr Marshall said Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour was a key cultural event on the State's major events calendar, and the envy of the rest of the nation.

"The Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour series has gone from strength to strength, with the annual event now a permanent fixture, and a highlight of the Australian cultural calendar," Mr Marshall said.

"Since its inception, Handa Opera has attracted more than 330,000 attendees from around Australia and across the globe. From 2012 to 2017, this has included more than 63,000 overnight visitors, generating more than \$55 million in visitor spend for NSW.

"Events like this are huge drawcards for international tourists flying into Sydney and out to rural and regional NSW, enabling all corners of the State to reap the benefits of our record numbers of visitors.

"I encourage everyone to start planning their visit to see *West Side Story* performed on Australia's most famous outdoor stage for the very first time."

The production secured by the NSW Government will play on the magnificent stage at Fleet Steps, Mrs Macquaries Point, from 22 March to 21 April 2019.