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GERMAN- AUSTRALIAN OPERA GRANT



in cooperation with:

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More Than Opera Ltd in cooperation with the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden

2012 MTO – German-Australian Opera Grant

The aim of the German-Australian Opera Grant is to promote emerging Australian Opera Singers, who are in the early stage of their professional career, i.e. the singers have finished their principal singing education and have been able to gain some experience over a short period of time of up to a few years. Artists who have established their careers for longer than this will not be considered as emerging artists for the purpose of the grant.

The grant offers the winner a one-year employment (junior) contract at the Wiesbaden Opera House in Germany plus one month language course at a Goethe Institut in Germany as well as a one month work experience at the Opera House to gain an insight into the procedures prior to the official start.

The winner of the first prize also receives a cash prize, a cheque over \$4000 which will help in the preparation stage for the time overseas.

Singers are encouraged to apply to be considered for the one year employment contract. As the recipient will become part of the professional ensemble in Wiesbaden from mid/late August 2012 until July/August 2013, a well considered choice has to be made.

The winner has to be in the position to leave Australia for Germany in June 2012 to participate in a one month work-experience at the Hessisches Staatstheater prior to attending a one month German language course at the Goethe Institut. The winner remains in Germany until July/August 2013.

2nd Prize: The second prize winner will receive \$3000.

3rd Prize: The third prize winner will receive \$2000.

4th Prize: The fourth prize winner will receive \$1000.

Entry Form and Regulations

- Applications: Applications close 2nd September 2011.** Late or incomplete entries may be accepted but only at the judges' discretion.
- The stages of the competition:**
 - At first a written **personal application** (personal introduction), a **curriculum vitae**, a **list with all performed and studied roles** (please list in separate columns) together with the **registration forms** submitted by the singer will be considered. Please also send an electronic media (DVD or CD) recording (see details below). This recording will then be analysed by a preliminary judging panel.



As the applicants will probably not have direct contact with the judging panel for the preselection it is essential that the information in the submitted application is complete in all requirements and the applicant pays attention to the presentation.

The process of selection for this grant is multifaceted. It therefore differentiates itself from a standard vocal competition. It may involve adjudicators requiring to personally see an applicant in the preliminary selection stage. In that case you will be asked to be auditioned in Melbourne in September 2011.

- Singers will be notified, by no later than early October, as to whether or not they qualify for entry into the Semi-Finals.
- Semi-Finals (being a competition): 12 selected Semi-Finalists (6 male / 6 female voices) will be auditioned on 11th November 2011 in Melba Hall, University of Melbourne, for approx. 25 minutes by an adjudication panel.
- In the morning, before the individual auditions start, there will be a one-hour stage workshop for all Semi-Finalists led by an opera director.
- The audition not only includes singing but also presentation, acting and working with a conductor. Contestants may be asked to sing an ensemble piece with another singer, for example, a member of the judging panel.

At the end of the day the 4 Finalists for the Opera Finale (held the following day) will be chosen.

- The Opera Finale (being a competition): four selected Finalists (2 male / 2 female voices) present two arias/excerpts of not more than twenty minutes each before an audience of over 400 people and the adjudicators, who then make their decision. The Finals Concert will be held in BMW Edge, Melbourne on 12 November 2011.

The Winner will present a program at an operatic (Farewell) reception for sponsors of the Grant before departing to Germany and another reception or "Master Class" upon returning from Germany to give feedback on the overseas experience.

The requirements for each stage of participation in the selection process are set out below.

3. **Age:** As a guide line for emerging singers an age limit applies for female singers of a maximum of 32 years of age and for male singers a maximum of 35 years of age. The nature of the criteria will let the selection process focus on the age group from the mid twenties to the early thirty-year-olds.
4. **How often can Singers apply:** Applicants can apply for the Grant program multiple times during their singing career. Applicants from previous years should ensure that they have taken enough time to make improvements and develop their skills further before applying again.
5. **Arias:** Applicants must be prepared to sing five (5) arias/excerpts from the opera / operetta repertoire in the original languages and keys in contrasting styles. Three (3) in German and two (2) in other languages. One aria must be a Mozart aria. No aria should exceed 8 minutes in length. One excerpt in German (one of the three) should be part of an ensemble (e.g. the Trio from *Die Zauberflöte*). Arias/excerpts are to be listed on the application form (including composers and lengths) as well as on the recording. In total you state 4 arias (2 German and 2 in other languages) and 1 ensemble piece in your application.
6. **What repertoire to choose:** As the grant aims at emerging artists, the applicant is not expected to choose and perform huge and difficult roles. The Grant panel advises to carefully choose the right repertoire for the applicants' voice. However the adjudicators expect applicants to sing their chosen arias at the highest level of



performance.

7. **Artistic Qualification:** Applicants must have a voice with outstanding operatic potential, artistic aptitude as well as a musical/acting/movement/language background. Some operatic stage experience is essential.
8. **Language:** The recipient will need to gain a sound knowledge of German and must undertake intensive German language study (1 months intensive German language course at a Goethe Institut in Germany). However the singer already needs to start his/her intensive studies immediately after winning the grant (12 November 2011), especially if he/she is not fluent in the German language, to enable him/her to work in a German opera house environment.
9. **Judging Criteria:** Ability of the candidate to perform at a high level on a day-to-day basis in Wiesbaden as part of the professional ensemble. Acting capacities may be examined during the auditioning process.
10. **Citizenship Requirements:** Applicants must be Australian citizens. Proof of citizenship will be required with the application. Applicants residing in Australia with no former overseas posting are preferred over applicants who have had an opportunity to sing with an overseas opera house.
11. **Accompanist:** The Official Accompanist will be available for the Finals, if required. Applicants must have the music available for all their listed arias/excerpts. Music submitted for the official accompanist must be neat, clear and legible with all cuts (where appropriate) clearly marked. Music must be bound or put in a scrapbook. No plastic sleeves/ pages are to be used. Music must not infringe the laws of copyright.

The administration of "MTO German-Australian Opera Grant" is to be informed by the Semi-Finalists in case they would like to perform with the official accompanist four (4) weeks prior to the finals. Finalists must contact the Official Accompanist at least three (3) weeks prior to the finals to arrange their rehearsal time and the music is to be sent to the Official Accompanist.
12. **Travel and Accommodation:** In some instances it may be necessary for Semi-Finalists / Finalists to travel to Melbourne. MTO-GAOG will try everything to keep costs for the singers as low as possible. MTO-GAOG offers support in form of a flat rate (different for each state) for flight cost for interstate Semi-Finalists (only), however this may not cover all your travel costs. Please enquire with our office after you have been selected a Semi-Finalist.
13. **Availability:** The recipient must agree to be available to depart for Wiesbaden in June 2012, and to remain there for fifteen (15) month (minus leave, which may occur at the end of the period). The departure is scheduled for early June 2012 as participation in the language course and the opportunity to gain insight into the Opera House, prior to the 12 month engagement, are mandatory. This opportunity could only be foregone if the singer is a fluent German speaker. Confirmation of availability to spend the allotted time in Germany will be required in writing from all applicants (by signature on the application form).
14. In the event of the recipient being approached during the term of the contract to fulfil any engagement other than that stipulated by the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, he/she must, in the first instance, submit this request and relevant details in writing to the German-Australian Opera Grant administration, prior to initiating any approach to the management of the Hessisches Staatstheater. MTO-GAOG will assess the request and inform the recipient of its decision.



15. **Entry Fee:** Applications must be accompanied by an entry fee of A\$35 which is non-refundable except in the event of cancellation of the Grant competition. Cheques and Money Orders should be made out to "More than Opera Ltd". "More than Opera Ltd" will not take responsibility for cash sent through the mail.
16. **Audition Recording:** an electronic media recording which may be a DVD or a CD, will be considered by a preliminary judging panel.
It must:
 - Be no more than one year old.
 - Be of the contestant singing three (3) contrasting arias, one (1) sung in Italian and two (2) in German. One aria must be a Mozart aria.
 - The case must be labelled with name, address and titles; the DVD/CD itself labelled with name and titles only.
 - Quality is very critical.
17. Recordings will only be returned at the conclusion of the competition if a suitable stamped self-addressed package is supplied.
18. Programs to be performed in the Semi-Finals/Finals, giving the list of arias/excerpts, their length and the key in which they will be sung, must be submitted with entry for consideration by the judges who will notify contestants if any change is required. One aria must be a Mozart aria.
19. **The Finals Concert will be held on the 12 November 2011 at BMW Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne.** 4 Finalists (2 male / 2 female voices) will be chosen to perform in front of an audience and an expert panel of musicians and music administrators.
20. **The recipient of the grant** incurs the obligation to perform at 2 events without remuneration: an operatic reception for Sponsors of the Grant before leaving for Germany and upon return an operatic reception or "Master Class" to give feedback about the overseas experience. He/she is also asked to submit bimonthly e-mail reports about his/her experiences working in Wiesbaden.
21. **The Adjudicators' decision is final.** No correspondence will be entered into. Adjudicators may, at their discretion, withhold the grant without explanation and give the grant to any person they may determine. In the event a winner is unable or unwilling to fulfil their grant obligations, the adjudicators reserve the right to rescind and/or re-award the grant. The Adjudication Panel reserve the right to rescind, modify or add to any of the rules and conditions of the competition and the Judges' interpretation shall be final.
22. **Checklist.** Application Forms are to be completed in full, verified and sent with the following:
 - A personal application covering letter elaborating why the Wiesbaden position would be an ideal match for both the Hessisches Staatstheater and the candidate.
 - A written CV of the singer which should include dates and details of any future engagements. Please give as much information as possible, stating clearly which roles have been studied and which have actually been performed, and where.
 - A list of the repertoire proposed for the Semi-Finals/Finals with the list of arias/excerpts, their length, the composer, and the key in which they will be sung.
 - An electronic media recording (DVD or CD).



- A professional photograph of moderate size and quality of the singer should be enclosed. Alternatively such a professional photo could be send as a jpg file via email.
- An entry fee of \$35 payable to "More than Opera Ltd".

Please forward these to: Administration of More Than Opera
- German-Australian Opera Grant
P.O. Box 2160 MDC
Fitzroy, VIC 3065

For inquiries call Nicole Ritzdorf on: (03) 9417 4144 Email: info@mto-gaog.com

Entries and repertoire sent by e-mail only will not be accepted. However we would appreciate your short expression of interest via e-mail before receiving your full application. This will enable efficient processing of all applications.

When presenting yourself via electronic media recording (DVD or CD):

- Present yourself at your best on your audition recording. Recording quality should reflect as accurate a sound image of the actual voice as feasible. For example, there should be no artificial reverberation or other electronic effects.
- Choose works suited to your voice type, which demonstrate your range, diversity and versatility as a performer. Remember, one should be a Mozart aria.
- Research in detail the context of the works you choose so that you can perform them in an appropriate style.
- Pay attention to usage and correct pronunciation in all languages. A high standard is expected.
- Make sure your repertoire can also form the basis of opera and concert programs of professional standard if you are the recipient of the grant.