

Statement from the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Musicians Association

8th September, 2020
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The Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra wish to convey their strong support for our colleagues at the Opera Australia Orchestra. At this very challenging time for arts companies around the world we recognise the immense difficulties faced when we are unable to perform and generate income through ticket sales. In this environment we acknowledge the need for sacrifices to be made by all in seeking to secure the ongoing financial viability of our treasured arts organisations.

The greatest asset of our performing arts companies are their people. Orchestral musicians have spent many decades developing their skills to perform to generations of audiences at an internationally respected level. The jobs of Australia's highly specialised, skilled and experienced musicians and arts workers must be preserved at Opera Australia if they wish to recruit and retain artists of the highest standard and remain a world class opera company of which Australia can be rightly proud.

We believe the only path forward in these circumstances should be one of mutual respect, dialogue and open communication. With near universal coverage of Opera Australia Orchestra musicians by the Symphony Orchestra Musicians' Association (SOMA), the involvement of MEAA (Media Arts Entertainment Alliance) will be crucial in navigating this path.

At the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, it has been our experience that by working together, management, musicians and SOMA can achieve workable compromise in our Enterprise Agreements and the best possible outcome under these difficult circumstances. Through a collaborative and harmonious consultation process led by our CEO Emma Dunch, we agreed upon and all made salary sacrifices to meet our shared goal of avoiding redundancies and remaining viable as "One SSO" through the period we expect to be impacted by Covid.

We urge Opera Australia to do the same for their orchestral musicians in the Opera Australia Orchestra. The future health of the Arts sector depends upon being able to preserve jobs and skills for when we are able to perform again.

Musicians' Executive

On behalf of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Musicians' Association

Rosemary Curtin



Emily Long



Sophie Cole

