



Sydney Opera House

MEAA members at Sydney Opera House left in the dark about Joan Sutherland Theatre closure

The Sydney Opera House (SOH) will close the Joan Sutherland Theatre for eight months in 2017 for a long overdue venue refurbishment. Whilst that is good news for the future of live theatre in NSW, the impact on regular users of the venue and SOH employees will be profound.

Sydney Opera House management has been mute on how they will manage the closure and how this will impact SOH staff job security.

MEAA has written to the SOH CEO Louise Herron demanding an urgent Consultation Committee meeting to brief our members on how they will manage the closure.

Our members who are employed at the SOH, Opera Australia, Sydney Theatre Company are concerned with the lack of consultation and communication from senior executive management in relation to the closure.

Further, our SOH members are concerned that SOH management may use the closure to surreptitiously reduce full time positions and create insecure work in the form of fixed term/flexible time contracts.

MEAA has previously written to SOH regarding a related issue (on October 22, 2015) and has not yet received a response. MEAA believes that the request was a reasonable and legitimate approach in accordance with the SOH Enterprise Agreement.

We now share our members concerns regarding the openness and transparency of the planning for the closure. Our members must be given an opportunity to participate in the planning process given the profound impact the closure will have on them.

MEAA has demanded SOH convenes an urgent SOH Consultative Committee to brief the union and its delegates on the planning for the closure and address the impact it will have on our members' job security.

The union has set a deadline of the March 18, 2016 after which we will consult members on further action.

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