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More Than Opera Ltd in cooperation with the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden

GAOG Adjudication Panel:

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Ian Lowe
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Hans Henkell

More Than Opera proudly announces the 17th German-Australian Opera Grant – the gateway to an international career.

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• 2019 MTO – German-Australian Opera Grant

The aim of the German-Australian Opera Grant is to promote emerging Australian opera singers in the early stage of their professional career, i.e. the singers have finished their education and have gained some experience for a short period of time (up to a few years). Artists who have established careers for longer will not be considered as emerging artists for the purpose of the grant.

The German-Australian Opera Grant offers a one-year employment contract as junior solo singer in the opera company of the Hessisches Staatstheater (State Theatre of Hessen), Wiesbaden, Germany; a one-month language course at the Goethe-Institut in Germany and one month's work experience at the opera house at the end of the opera season (June 2019) to gain an insight into the company and its procedures prior to the next season begin in August 2019.

The recipient of the German-Australian Opera Grant also receives a cheque for \$4500 to assist the preparation stage for overseas prior to departure in May 2019.

The recipient will become part of the professional ensemble in Wiesbaden from mid/late August 2019 until July/August 2020, therefore a well-considered choice of applicant has to be made. The German-Australian Opera Grant recipient has to be in a position to leave Australia for Germany in June 2019 to participate in the one month's work experience at the Hessisches Staatstheater prior to attending a one month German language course at the Goethe-Institut. The grantee remains in Germany until July/August 2020.

In addition to the German-Australian Opera Grant (GAOG), singers have the opportunity to be considered for:

• MTO Grant - Developing Artist: \$3500 plus performance opportunity in Australia

• Audience Award: \$2500

• Encouragement Grant(s): \$1500

Entry Form and Regulations

1. **Applications: Applications close 25 May 2018.** Late or incomplete entries may be accepted but only at the adjudicators' discretion.

2. **The stages of the grant process:**

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 form (application form)** submitted by the singer will be considered. Please also send/upload your electronic recordings (see details below). Your recordings will then be analysed by a preliminary adjudicating panel. As the applicants will probably not have direct contact with the adjudicating 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 could be asked to audition in Melbourne in June/July 2018.

Singers will be notified, by no later than late June 2018, as to whether or not they qualify for entry into the Semi-Finals.

Semi-Finals: up to 12 selected Semi-Finalists (6 male / 6 female voices) will be auditioned on 3 August 2018 in Melbourne, for approx. 25 minutes by an adjudication panel.

In the morning, before the individual auditions start, there will be a ninety-minute stage workshop including a vocal improvisation and drama class for all Semi-Finalists led by an opera director. A small part of an opera excerpt has to be prepared for this workshop. Semi-Finalists will be advised 3-4 weeks prior to the workshop.

The audition not only includes singing but also presentation, acting, working with a conductor and a personal interview.

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

The Opera Finale: four selected Finalists (2 male / 2 female voices) present two arias/excerpts of not more than twenty minutes each before an audience of over 450 people and the adjudicators, who then make their decision.

The Finals Concert will be held at Deakin Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne on 4 August 2018.

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 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.

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.

4. **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.

Two (2) of arias/excerpts in German and three (3) arias in other languages. One of the five arias must be a Mozart aria. No aria should exceed 8 minutes in length.

Arias/excerpts are to be listed on the application form (including name of aria, opera, composer and length). In total you state 5 arias (2 German and 3 in other languages).

5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Language:** The grant recipient will need to gain a sound knowledge of German and must undertake intensive German language study (one month of 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 on 4 August 2018), especially if he/she is not fluent in the German language, to enable him/her to work in a German opera house environment.
8. **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.
9. **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.
10. **Accompanist:** The Official Accompanist will be available for the Semi-Finals and Opera Finale, 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.

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11. **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 if you have been selected a Semi-Finalist.
12. **Availability:** The recipient must agree to be available to depart for Wiesbaden in June 2019, and to remain there for fifteen (15) months (minus leave, which may occur at the end of the period). The departure is scheduled for early June 2019 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).
13. 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.
14. **Entry Fee:** Applications must be accompanied by an entry fee of A\$40 which is non-refundable except in the event of cancellation of the Grant auditions.
 - Direct transfers can be made to the **ANZ account "More Than Opera No2 A/C", BSB 013-006, Account No 1085-10862**. Please state your name as reference.
 - 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.
15. **Audition Recording:** your electronic recording files will be considered by a preliminary adjudicating panel.

The audition recording must:

 - Be no more than one year old.
 - Be of the contestant singing three (3) contrasting arias in total, one (1) sung in German and two (2) in other languages. One of the three arias must be a Mozart aria.
 - The files must be clearly labelled with name and titles
 - **Quality is very critical.** Arias submitted can differ from repertoire stated for the Semi-Final and Final Auditions.
16. Programs to be performed in the Semi-Finals/Opera Finale, giving the list of arias/excerpts, opera, composer, 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.
17. **The Finals Concert will be held on 4 August 2018 at Deakin Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne.** Four (4) Finalists will be chosen to perform in front of an audience and an expert panel of musicians and music administrators.
18. **The recipient of the grant** incurs the obligation to perform at two (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.

19. **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 grant and the Adjudicators' interpretation shall be final.

20. **Checklist**

Please submit the following by mail (hardcopy)

- **Application Form** to be completed in full and verified
- **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/Opera Finale with the list of arias/excerpts including the opera, the composer, their length and the key in which they will be sung
- **Proof of Australian citizenship** (copy of birth certificate or passport)

Please send all documents to: German-Australian Opera Grant
PO Box 2160 MDC, Fitzroy VIC 3065

Please submit the following electronically:

- **Upload mp3 files of your audition recording**
You can make your files available to us via www.dropsend.com, an electronic file upload site which is easy to use and free of cost. The maximum file size is 8MB for each individual mp3 file. Make sure you have named each of your files before uploading using the following format (your name, name of aria, name of opera, composer). Example: Michelle Miller, "Ach ich fühl's", Die Zauberflöte, Mozart. Please send to info@mto-gaog.com .

Alternatively you can send a USB flash drive or a CD to the above postal address with your electronic files named using the above format.
- **Email a professional photograph** of moderate size and quality of the singer as a jpg file via email to info@mto-gaog.com - no prints required.
- **Transfer the entry fee of \$40** payable to "More than Opera Ltd"
Direct transfers can be made to the ANZ account "More Than Opera No2 A/C", BSB 013-006, Account No 1085-10862. Please state your name as reference.

All items listed under Checklist have to be with our administration by 25 May 2018. Only complete applications can be considered unless otherwise agreed.

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

We 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:

- 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 your recording space carefully as the recording cannot to be edited.
- 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.
- Visual recordings welcome, formats MP4 or MOV only