

ROPA

Regional
Orchestra
Players'
Association

A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

Sunday, 20 September, 2020

TO: Mr. David Mortimer AO
Chairman, Opera Australia Board

Dear Mr. Mortimer,

The Executive Board of the Regional Orchestra Players' Association, a Player Conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, represents 90 orchestras of nearly 6,000 symphonic musicians in the United States, including the orchestras and musicians of 16 opera companies. We, our members, and our organizations are closely watching the events at Opera Australia, and we are dismayed to hear that the management and board are attempting to dismiss 25% of the work force, including 16 musicians, as well as terminate the collective agreements.

Opera Australia is known throughout the world as one of the great opera companies and as a cultural jewel of Australia. Such drastic cuts will do irreparable harm to your company, both by undermining artistic integrity and damaging its magnificent reputation.

We urge you to negotiate with your musicians and their union. The union has proposed an alternative emergency measures agreement, where workers would be prepared to take temporary cuts to ease the financial pressure and retain jobs. This is the path that should be followed, and is what is taking place in many other opera companies and arts organizations throughout the world.

Opera Australia must be preserved for all the people of Australia and these cuts must not be implemented. Musicians, artists, and opera lovers across the world will be watching.

Sincerely,



John Michael Smith, President
on behalf of the Executive Board of the
Regional Orchestra Players' Association

Cc: Mr. Rory Jeffes; Mr. Lyndon Terracini; Mr. Mark Bruwel