



# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

by Lindsay Vickery

from the novel Djinn by Alain Robbe-Grillet

Wed 21-Sun 25 November

Wed-Sat 8pm + Thurs 1pm, Fri 6pm, Sun 6pm

Rechabites Hall, Northbridge

Directed by Talya Masel

Starring Kathryn McCusker,  
Taryn Fiebig, Andrew Broadbent

Musical Director Iain Grandage

Music performed by Magnetic Pig

Virtual Set by Vikki Wilson & Rick Mason

Physical Set & Costume Design by Lawrie Cullen-Tait

Lighting Design by Duncan Ord

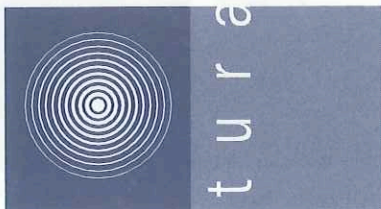
\$20, \$15 con, \$10 students BOCS 9484 1133

[www.tura.com.au](http://www.tura.com.au)

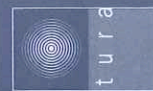
Presented by the tura events co in association with  
Magnetic Pig and Black Swan Theatre Company

**"an enthralling, seductive journey – full of mystery, intrigue and joie de vivre"**



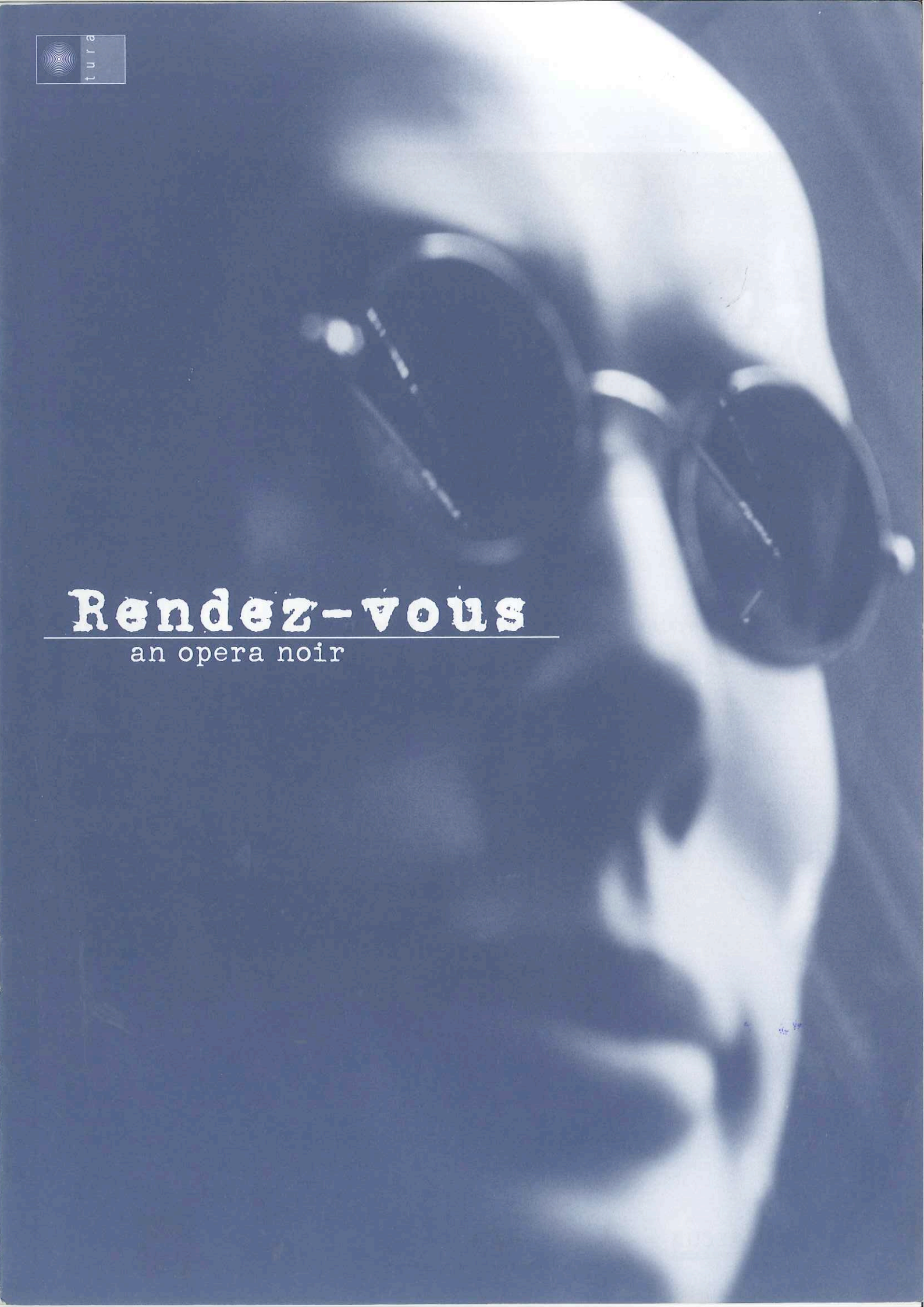


[www.tura.com.au](http://www.tura.com.au)

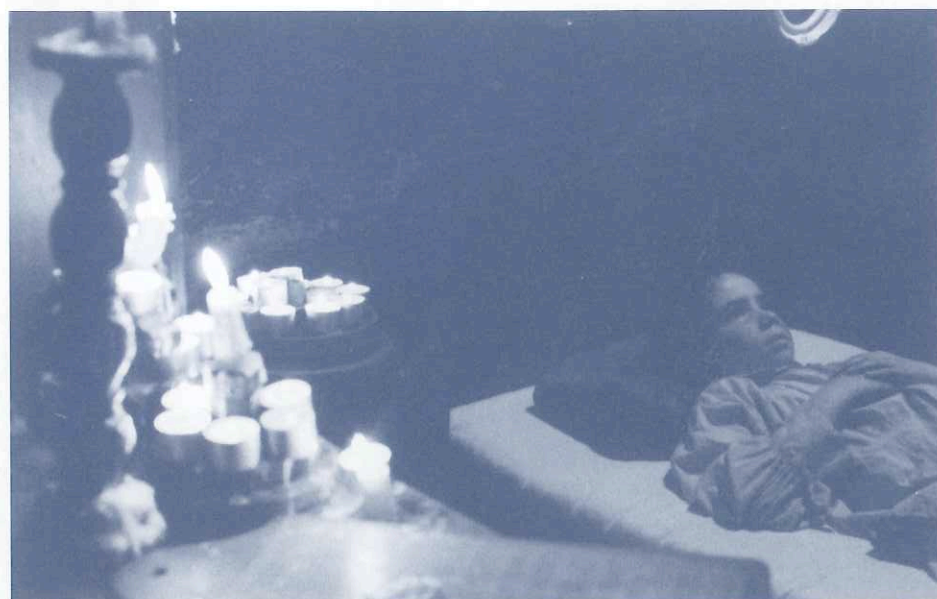


# Rendez-vous

an opera noir







The Tura Events Co in association with Magnetic Pig and Black Swan Theatre Co presents  
the World Premiere Season of

# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

Devised and Composed by Lindsay Vickery  
from the novel Djinn by Alain Robbe-Grillet\*  
Wed 21st – Sun 25th November 2001  
Rechabites Hall, Northbridge

Directed by Talya Masel

## On Stage

Kathryn McCusker  
Taryn Fiebig  
Andrew Broadbent

Djinn  
Marie  
Simon Lecoeur aka Boris

## On Film

Kathryn McCusker  
Taryn Fiebig  
Borivoje Kandic  
Jett Black  
Maxwell Vickery

Caroline, Laura  
voice of the Medical Student, Waitress  
Dr. Morgan, Waiter, Taxi Driver  
Medical Student, Waitress  
Jean

## Magnetic Pig

Lindsay Vickery  
Iain Grandage  
Steve Richter  
Emily Green-Armytage  
Jess Ipkendanz  
Cathie Travers

Reeds and electronics  
Cello  
Percussion  
Piano  
Violin  
Accordion

Musical Director  
Virtual Set  
Set & Costume Design  
Lighting Design

Iain Grandage  
Vikki Wilson & Rick Mason  
Lawrie Cullen-Tait  
Duncan Ord



# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## The Novel

Rendez-vous is based on Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel Djinn. Described as a haunting, disorienting and brilliantly constructed novel, it is the story of a young man who joins a clandestine organisation under the command of an alluring, androgynous American girl Jean (Djinn). Having agreed to wear dark glasses and carry a cane like a blind man, he comes to realise, through bizarre encounters, recurring visual images and fractured time sequences that he is, in a sense, helplessly blind. His search for the meaning of his mission and for possible clues as to the identity of the mysterious Djinn, becomes a quest for his own identity in an ever-shifting reality.

## From the Devisor/Composer

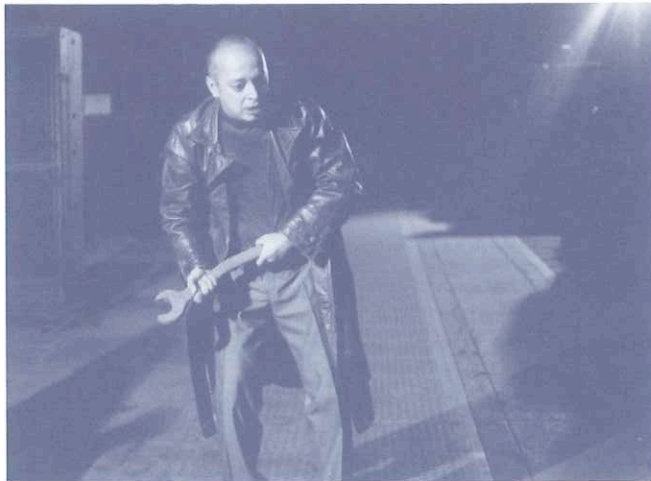
It was in November 1993, in a back room at my house that Warwick Stengards and I first hatched the plan for an opera adaption of Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel Djinn. The book had much to recommend it - witty, humorous - but its principal appeal was a unique blend of challenging and strange post-modern structure with familiar pop culture ingredients: Film Noir, Sci-Fi the Occult etc.

Its is incredible to me now to think of the literally thousands of hours of work that have been invested into bringing this plan to fruition. There have been many twists and turns in the journey of Rendez-vous from libretto, to score, a workshop, a concert performance, and finally a full production. Robbe-Grillet's fascinating and tightly woven novel has, over the last 8 years been contemplated by a vital team of collaborators.

Opera is always by its nature multi-media, and we have striven to capitalize on this with an integrated and multi-layered mode of performance that reinforces the seduction of story-telling that is at the core of the original work. In what might be considered an updating of the medium, we have created an extra layer of video to give further depth and focus to Robbe-Grillet's labyrinthine work. Audience's understanding of narrative, through text, theatre, music and film etc. is ever expanding - an evolution we believe performance must embrace - we hope this production is keeping up with you!

Personally it also gives me great pleasure to present the work here at Rechabites Hall, in the heart of Northbridge, with an incredible set, designed just down the street and a video that blends Paris with some iconic Northbridge locations into a fabulous fictitious new world - a 'Pont du Nord' perhaps. My deepest thanks go out to the many people who have contributed in so many ways to the success of Rendez-vous, but especially to Tos Mahoney and Tura Events who have championed and nurtured this work and finally brought it to the stage.

Lindsay Vickery



## From the Director

Rendez-vous is an extraordinary work as it appears initially to represent one genre then in its unraveling offers multiple genres within the overarching idea of "opera Noir". Using the idea of light within the context of music is fascinating to me. To deprive the listener of a strong visual or indeed get them to strain to see and they hear the music differently - it is like listening to the music in the dark and then putting light on the situation. What I hope to achieve is to allow the audience access into the music through various creative genres, light, video, shapes, colours (or lack there of) and live performance. The audience should be uncomfortable in trying to work out where reality stops and imagination starts, indeed I feel that this is a wonderful metaphor for the theatre itself. Here we explore the notion of an actual believed event as determined by the teller or an imagined event as told by the believer. The whole idea that we are or may be able to manipulate the truth is fundamental here to understanding the piece. One persons version of an event is always by the very nature of the human condition different to the telling by the next person. I guess in analyzing the piece in this way I am trying to pose the questions to the audience but not offer an answer - the answer after all is in the telling!!!!

Talya Masel (with thanks to Perth College)

## From the Producers

### Tura Events Co

Rendezvous represents 8 years of research and development by its devisor Lindsay Vickery. Tura Events Co has supported this process at all times and we are most proud to finally be able to present this premiere season. We pay tribute to Lindsay Vickery for his tenacity as well as to Talya Masel, Vikki Wilson, Rick Mason, Lawrie Cullen Tait & the current cast and musicians for converting Lindsays vision to reality

Tura acknowledges the special contribution of WAAPA@ECU & Black Swan Theatre Company whose support has been critical to being able to produce this season at the level that has been achieved.

It is a constant battle all over the world to find the resources and funds to present new music - it is even harder to find those extra resources needed to present new opera. Rendezvous is a great achievement. It has required heroic efforts on limited resources. We truly hope that this is just another beginning for Rendezvous and that it will have a long life - nationally and internationally. We likewise hope that it is not such a long time before we see another genuine West Australian new opera performed in WA. We thank you for supporting new music in WA.

# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## Black Swan Theatre Co

Black Swan Theatre has promoted Western Australian contemporary composers since its inception, with the work of Stuart Davies-Slate and Ross Bolleter featured in early years, followed by a long association with Iain Grandage and Magnetic Pig.

We have been delighted to have Lindsay Vickery as a performer in The Merry Go Round In the Sea, Plainsong and recently in The Breadtrap.

Black Swan is committed to the support of independent producers and is proud to be associated with a new Western Australian Contemporary Opera.

## WAAPA @ ECU

The Research Committee of the WA Academy of Performing Arts at Edith Cowan University is very proud to be involved with the premiere season of Rendez-vous: an Opera Noir. Although the creation of new work and the attendant contribution that this makes to our culture is in itself crucially important, Rendez-vous promises to push a number of theatrical boundaries in a particularly engaging and novel manner. The development and integration of the opera's video component and the evolution of a unique vocal idiom, clearly call upon time consuming experimental work. The Academy has a long established and central role in the music and theatre life of this state, nurturing talent and new voices. The Research Committee is excited to be involved through support of Rendez-vous, with a work that may well set a precedent of the presentation of Opera for the future.



# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## SYNOPSIS

### Opening: Paris - the present

A Film-Noir style voice-over informs us that a man (Simon Lecoeur aka Boris) has disappeared leaving only a manuscript ('99 pages typed double-spaced'). What follows is the story of the text.

### Scene I: an Abandonned warehouse

Simon Lecoeur enters a warehouse. He has come in answer to a mysterious advert in the paper to meet someone called Jean. He sees a man dressed in great coat and trilby and introduces himself. To his surprise Jean (Djinn) is a woman. They converse, but as he approaches he realises the figure is a manikin with a loudspeaker concealed inside it. The manikin instructs him to climb to the next floor. Here the ground floor scene is exactly repeated he approaches the manikin and reaches out to touch it : this time it is 'Djinn' herself. He tries to leave but is prevented by Laura, Djinn's hench-person' who has moved up behind him. Djinn gives him a note with instructions to meet with a passenger from Amsterdam at the Gare du Nord train station.

### Scene II: a café

Simon decides to stop for a coffee on the way to the train station. A medical student seated at another table informs him that he is going to be late for his 'rendez-vous'. Simon tries to find out what part she plays in the organisation, but is merely given instructions on the shortcut to the railway station.

### Scene III: the street/an apartment

When Simon takes the shortcut, a young boy runs out in front of him and falls. To his amazement Simon discovers the boy (Jean) has died. He carries the boy back to the apartment from which he ran. The apartment is furnished in 1880's style and occupied only by a young girl, Marie, also dressed as though from the last century. An odd conversation ensues in which Marie Jean is her husband and that he dies often. She directs him to a note addressed to him, stuck in the corner of a portrait of her father: a Russian sailor who was lost at sea. The note explains that the Amsterdam train was a false track and that the children will lead him to where he is supposed to go. At this Jean comes to life and they all go to the cafe.

### Scene IV: a café

Simon asks Marie about her fondness for lying and a lying contest ensues, where the virtuoso Marie demonstrates her prowess by discussing the lying classes she takes at school, how the waiter (Dr Morgan) is actually a ghost who haunts the cafe because his mistress once worked there and finally how Simon is actually her father, but that he doesn't remember because gypsies stole them both as children. Now its Simon's turn to tell a story, so he tells a ludicrous tale of a mediaeval robot and his gullible bride. At its conclusion the children dress Simon as a blind man and Jean leads him to his true Rendez-vous.

### Scene V: the street/a taxi-cab

The boy leads him to a waiting cab driven by Dr Morgan. During the ride the boy offers Simon a mint. He takes it and then falls into a deep sleep.

### Scene VI: the warehouse

The boy wakes Simon up and leads him to a meeting. The geography seems to suggest it is at the warehouse in the first scene. He hears the voice of Djinn delivering a speech about her organization's struggle against mechanism. Simon manages to dislodge his glasses a little and discovers that the room is filled with likenesses of himself, dressed as blind-men with a young boy leading them. He then sees that it is not Djinn, but a tape machine and loudspeaker delivering the speech. The person next to him tries to pass him a note. Simon tries to reach his hand but is knocked out by Dr. Morgan who has entered behind him.

### Scene VII: a warehouse

Simon awakes in the warehouse from scene one. He is disoriented and cannot remember the order of the events in his recent past. He decides to get a coffee and some aspirin.

### Scene VIII: a café

He goes to the same cafe. This time an old woman is serving. She tells him she is called Marie and that he can't have been there yesterday because they were closed. He sees the photo of the Russian sailor on the wall. Thewaitress tells him it is her father who was lost at sea. He sees the dark glasses and walking cane and decides to put them on. He walks out into the street.

# Rendez-vous

an opera noir



### Scene IX: the street

A young boy (Jean) offers to help him across the road. Simon tells him that he is trying to get to the railway station to meet the Amsterdam train. The boy tells him he is going to be late and they hurry down a short-cut the boy knows. The boy stumbles and falls: he dies again.

### Scene X: an apartment

Simon carries the boy into the 1880's style apartment and is met by Djinn. She supplies a far fetched explanation of Simon's strange experiences: they are both part of the boy's afflicted memory. Simon is from his future and she from his past. They only exist together because the boy is dreaming and when he awakens they will both return to their proper time. She shows him the photograph of the Russian sailor: it is Simon. When Simon tries to show the flaws in her explanation she ridicules him as being too 'positivist and Cartesian'. Out of exasperation (and perhaps desire) he grabs her and they fall onto the bed, knocking over a lit candelabra. The room bursts into flames....

### Scene XI: a story...

Djinn speaks directly to the audience about her strange experiences in Paris with this crazy guy who was always making the kind of stories you would find in science fiction novels. As she tells her story it becomes obvious that some of the details in previous scenes must be true and soon she leads herself back into the action, arriving at the train station to meet her friend Caroline from Amsterdam.

### Scene XII: the Gare du Nord train station

Djinn meets her friend who has arrived with two small children, Marie and Jean, who have been spent their vacation with their uncle Boris an officer in the Russian Navy. Marie begins to explain how he is really a Russia spy, but as she is speaking Djinn sees Simon and Dr. Morgan approach and stand staring at her. When Caroline notice her friend's agitation, Marie begins to explain how Dr. Morgan is obviously a sexual deviant who has been following them since Amsterdam with his 'little suitcase full of knives'. As Caroline reluctantly corroborates her story Djinn passes out.

### Scene XIII: a warehouse

Djinn awakes on the second floor of the warehouse from scene one. She is disoriented and can't remember the order of the events in her recent past. She sees a manikin lying on the ground. It is lying in a pool of real blood. She runs down the stairs and sees another manikin. She slowly approaches it....

### Closing

The voice-over (that we now recognize as Dr Morgan) returns and informs us that the manuscript ends here. He tells of the subsequent investigation (including a theory that Djinn and Simon were in fact the same person) and how the police were able to trace little Marie (who did exist) back to the cafe and how police tailed her back to the abandoned alleyway where 'some of our people stepped in. Having quietly intercepted that overzealous guardian of law and order, they brought him back, once more to square one.'



# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## The Author

Alain Robbe - Grillet is one of the leading writer's of the European Avant Garde. He is acknowledged as the father of the French school 'Nouveau Roman' (New Novel) a movement that challenges traditional notions of plot, narrative and even the novel itself. Djinn is a succinct and tightly constructed exploration of all of these themes. It was originally written to function both as an introduction to French for American students and as a novel for public release in France, and manages to integrate its didactic purpose (of gradually increasing language complexity) as an element of the plot. The text's ambivalent origins were seized upon by Robbe-Grillet to create what is perhaps one of the only true examples of an 'anti-novel': where the reader is never certain whether the text is a language exercise or part of an elaborate mystery.

## The Composer/Librettist/Devvisor

Lindsay Vickery's music with its kaleidoscopic blend of influences, has been performed in Norway, Germany, Holland, England, the USA and across Australia. Known principally for his work over the last ten years with new music group Magnetic Pig, he has been described in The Australian as 'truly an original voice and his work is one of sustained intensity that resonates in the mind long after the performance is over'.

In December 2001 he will be resident at STEIM in Holland working on an interactive video project and in January he will undertake a 9 states tour of United States culminating a residency with Amy Knoles and Taryn Fiebig. Vickery works as a Lecturer in Music at the WA Academy of Performing Arts at Edith Cowan University in Perth Western Australia, where he also curates the Western Australian New Music Archive.

## The Director

Talya Masel's work as actor, director, writer and teacher of theatre, music theatre and opera has taken her to Australia, Russia, Great Britain and Europe. Her unique ability to understand and interpret various theatre forms whilst maintaining the genesis of the ensemble (via Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko) has created a career path which has seen her work with across the spectrum from students to the world's top professionals.

Internationally Talya has worked with David Edgar, Robert Lepage, Serge Issayev, Taganka Theatre's Yuri Lubimov, Maly Theatre and Lev Dodin.

Talya has recently returned from the United States where she worked with Marta Domingo on a new production of Sly (Wolf-Ferrari) for The Washington

Opera with Gregory Yurisich and Jose Carreras followed by a season with the National Academy of Music. Recently she has directed a production of Emma and completed an original piece, Zhona, which she both devised and directed in Perth. In January 2001 Talya made her debut with Opera Australia where she directed a successful season of Il Trovatore.

## The Musical Director

Iain Grandage has composed scores for over 20 theatre productions including the award-winning Cloudstreet, Caucasian Chalk Circle Merry-Go-Round theSea, Year of Living Dangerously and Plainsong. He also composed scores for BBC Radio 3 and Radio 4, ABC Radio and scores for short films and dance. His concert compositions have been performed throughout Australia and overseas by the Australian Voices, St Peter's Chorale, Australian Boy's Choir, Collegium Musicum, WA Youth Orchestra and the West Australian Symphony Orchestra with whom he also plays cello.

## The Performers

### Kathryn McCusker

Perth born and now based in London, Kathryn has sung with Opera Australia, Victoria State Opera, Opera de Massy (Paris), Vienna Staatsoper and the Covent Garden Festival.

Career highlights include the role of Titania in the critically acclaimed Baz Luhrmann production of Benjamin Britten's Midsummer Night's Dream at the Sydney Opera House, and also at the Edinburgh Festival (which also won the critic's choice award) and the title role for Opera Australia's "Iphigenie En Tauride"(1997).

Kathryn recently returned to the Western Australian Opera to sing the rôle of the Countess in their new production of Le nozze di Figaro. As a member of Australian Opera's 1992-1993 Young Artist's Programme, Kathryn McCusker won the Remy Martin Australian Opera Award in 1994 which enabled her to further her studies in London and Europe.

### Taryn Fiebig

Taryn graduated from UWA with a Bmus in cello performance in 1993. She has recently returned from vocal study in London, having been the recipient of a Churchill Fellowship and an ArtsWA grant. While there, she studied 20th Century repertoire with Jane Manning and Renaissance & Baroque vocal techniques with Evelyn Tubb. Engagements included recording the soundtrack to the radio drama Southland for BBC Radio 4, and performing Australian and American

works in LA with the California EAR Unit. Taryn's abilities in cello and voice have led her to work with a wide range of Companies and Ensembles including the WA Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Archangelo, Magnetic Pig Contemporary Music Ensemble, Perth Oratorio Choir, Black Swan Theatre Company, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, and Fieldworks Dance Company. A highlight was creating the role of the Angel in Black Swan Theatre Company's production of Plainsong for 2000 Perth International Arts Festival.

"Taryn Fiebig interpreted the vivid imagery to perfection ...." The Western Review

### Andrew Broadbent

After training as a trombonist at Melbourne University, where he also played the title role in Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale", Andrew spent four years as a music teacher before coming to Perth last year to study Music Theatre at the WAAPA - ECU. There he has performed in "Bye Bye Birdie", Kurt Weill's "From Berlin to Broadway", "A Comedy of Errors", which he also musically directed, and will play the central character of Les Darcy in the world premiere of the new Enright/King musical, "The Good Fight" in March 2002.

### Magnetic Pig

Perth based Magnetic Pig has been the most dynamic composer/performer group in the Western Australian new music scene most of the last decade.

The group specialises in repertoire utilising new technologies both as a performance and a compositional tool. Their music draws from a stylistically broad spectrum including Modernist Art Music as well as World Music Traditions, Avant-Rock, German 1930s Cabaret, Avant Garde Jazz and Electronica.

"Magnetic Pig drew us in with their irresistible, almost indefinable contemporary music blends" The Wire

"Magnetic Pig's members are masters of electronic gadgetry, but this is not paraded to impress. It is, rather, the conviction one can sense in their compositions, works idiomatically conceived within the electronic medium, that is impressive." The Australian.

# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## The Designers

### Lawrie Cullen-Tait

Lawrie Cullen-Tait's passion for creativity and mood has once again being unleashed on a new and exciting work. Having just finished work on a feature film for SBS Television, which was an exercise in raw realism, she has now taken us to a very different space of extremes, a seductive world of imaginings which is both beautiful and confronting, and stunning within the text and score. Through this work we are exposed to Lawrie's keen understanding of design themes and genres.

Freelance and as part of Plumb Construction and Design Lawrie has worked extensively in Set and Costume Design for Theatre, Dance and Opera; Production and Design for Film and TV; Art Director for Advertising; Scenic Artist and Model Maker - her work is seen on billboards, TV and in local Perth theatres.

### Vikki Wilson/Rick Mason

Experimental screen based audio-visual artists Vikki Wilson & Rick Mason have developed a immersive video set blending archival with original footage, revisioning the ambience of Paris. As Retarded Eye, their works have been broadcast in the USA, Germany and Australia wide including:

1998 THE ONLY MACHINES screening at "Downloading Downunder" digital festival, Amsterdam. Produced video for "Songs of (virtual) love and war" in Lindsay Vickery's contemporary performance production of 5/3 at PICA. Broadcast screening of SUPERPERMANENCE on ABC as part of the ART/RAGE. SUPERPERMANENCE screened at D.lux Digital Media Event at Sydney film festival. RADIUM CITY website with Cam Merton of nervous\_objects. Part of Australia Council funded FUTURE SUTURE project for 1999 FESTIVAL OF PERTH.

### Duncan Ord

Duncan is a highly experienced producer and lighting designer who has lit over 150 shows in Perth, including many premieres of new Australian work such as Jimmy Chi's Bran Nue Dae, Jack Davies's No Sugar, Heather Nimmo's The Hope and Dorothy Hewitt's The Man From Muckinupin. His lighting designs for Black Swan Theatre include Bran Nue Dae, Sistergirl, Tourmaline, The Year of Living Dangerously, The Merry-Go-Round In The Sea, Closer, Plainsong, Così and Away. In addition to his lighting design work, Duncan managed the Western Australian Theatre Company from 1984 to 1990. He then became Dean of the School of Dramatic Arts at the WA Academy of Performing Arts before being appointed General Manager of Black Swan in 1999.



# Rendez-vous

an opera noir

## Production

Production Manager	Duncan Ord
Stage Manager	Sharon Kay
Lighting Assistant	Aaron Stirk
Lighting/Sound Operator	Roger Miller

## PreProduction

### Film

Andrew Beck of X-Events	Production Manager
Graham Beck	Videographer (Warehouse, Cafe, The Street, 1880s Bedroom)
Tanja Visosevic	Videographer (Warehouse, Cafe, The Street, The Taxi, 1880s Bedroom)
Madelynne Cornish	Videographer (Paris)
Rachael Dease	Still Photography (Warehouse, Cafe, The Street, The Taxi, 1880s Bedroom)
Lindsay Vickery	Still Photography (Paris, Warehouse, Cafe, The Street, The Taxi, 1880s Bedroom)

## The Tura Events Co

The Tura Events Co. (the metamorphosis of Evos Music) is devoted to the promotion and presentation of New Music in WA and has presented hundreds of events in Perth from the mid-eighties till now.

Tura's current activities focus on the annual Totally Huge New Music Festival, its regional event staged at Wogarno Station, near Mt. Magnet, its new chamber music series "Scale Variable"; a youth music program and an annual multimedia project.

### Tura Board of Directors:

Nick Geronimos, Belinda Carrigan, Ann Macbeth, Tos Mahoney, Bryce Moore

Artistic Director	Tos Mahoney
Publicity/Sponsorship	Shane Pavlinovich
Administrator	Sophie Richards

Suite 10 No.1 Rokeby Rd, Subiaco Western Australia 6008  
Ph 61.8.9380 6996 Fax 61.8.9380 6997  
www.tura.com.au

## The Gratitudes

Rendez-vous has been made possible by a Seeding Grant from the Research Committee of WAAPA@ECU; has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and The State of Western Australia through ArtsWA in association with the Lotteries Commission. Rendez-vous is sponsored by Malaysian Airlines, Wise Winery and Healthway to promote The Family Planning Association's Play It Safe message.

Special Thanks to School of Music at The University of Western Australia (Piano), Edible Delectables, Valentinos, Kerry Torpy ('66 Peugeot 404), Eric Berghofer (Proprietor- The Moon Cafe), Midland Railyards Authority, The Blue Room, The Ghost Bar and John Milson, Alan Lourens, Linda Rossen and Max Vickery, Jett Black, Tanja Visosevic, Rachael Dease, Evan Kennea.

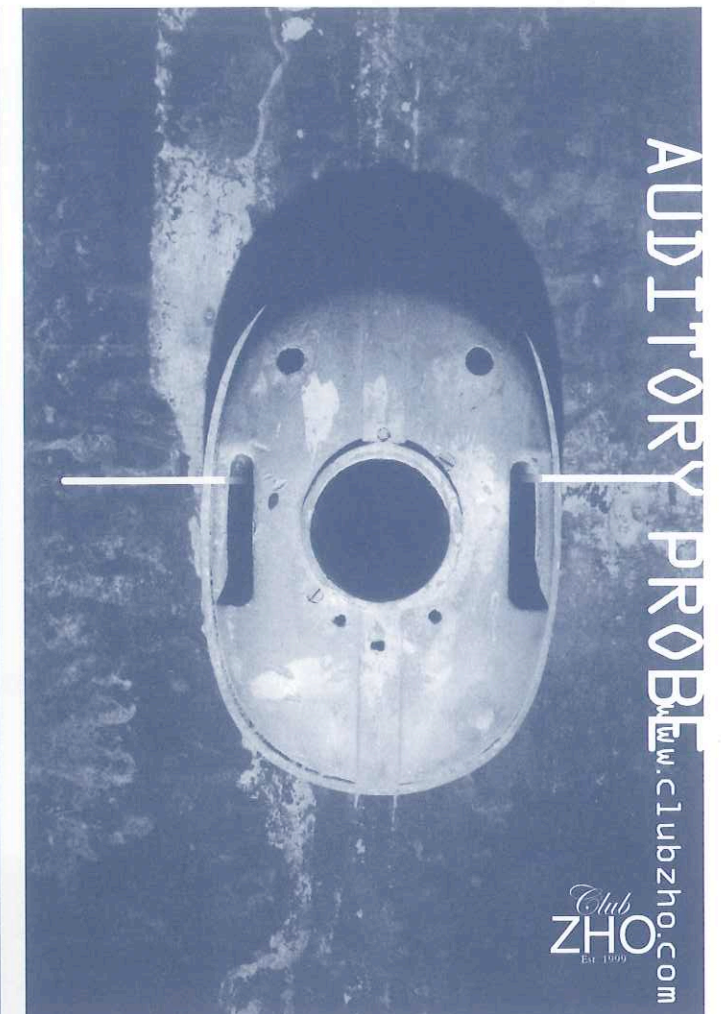
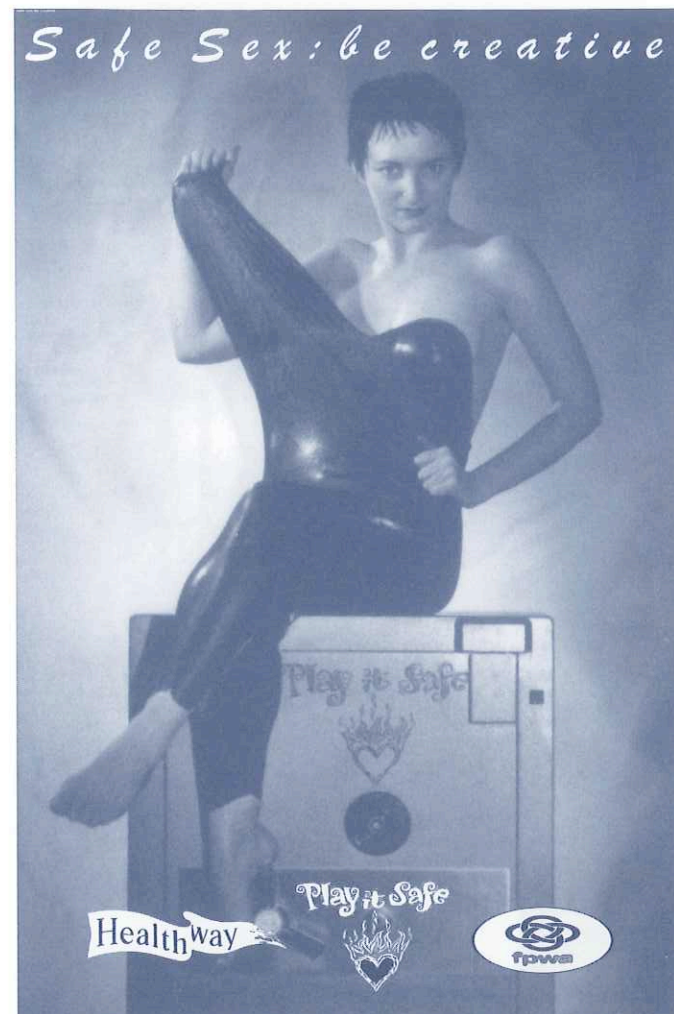
Poster Design - Ray Leeves

abc classic fm

Healthway



Malaysia



## the western australian new music database

Keeps you abreast of whats on  
in New Music in WA  
Regular e-newsletter, mail outs  
for major events.

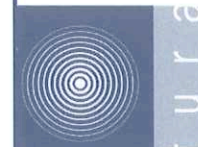
No cost  
Get on it !

mane@ii.net  
or post to  
10/1 Rokeby Rd. Subiaco 6008  
inquiries: 9380 6996

## the 5th totally huge new music festival

perth western australia

april 2002  
www.tura.com.au  
inquiries: 9380 6996







Composer Lindsay Vickery.

# Challenging work shows creative flair

Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel *Djinn* is a bleak, puzzling tale which stretches the audience's powers of comprehension.

It is difficult to identify who the narrator really is, as the focus continually changes and "reality" is questioned.

The old Rechabites Hall, with its goldrush interior grimly intact, is a fitting

setting for this seedy tale which is set in the less salubrious parts of Paris. Lawrie Cullen-Tait's spare set effectively communicates the message of alienation, amplified by a superimposed

## opera in review

### perth

virtual set created by Vikki Wilson and Rick Mason.

Duncan Ord's lighting also complements the extraordinarily eerie mood evoked by the composer's use of tapes, and the still and moving images flung on to the decrepit rear wall.

Lindsay Vickery set out to use a multi-arts approach through the use of video, electronic and chamber music, singing and acting. Whether or not his eight-year project is worthwhile is open to question because of the difficulties associated with Robbe-Grillet's 1981 novel.

More than one viewing is necessary before the plot lines can be understood. I, for one, found it impenetrable. If opera cannot communicate with its audience there seems to be little point in persevering. The dramatic vehicle is flawed, no matter how persuasive the music might be.

With contemporary opera, frequently the dramatic urgency carries the audience along, but in this work, too much time is spent trying to work out the relationships and the music is pushed even further into the background.

Magnetic Pig is one of Perth's foremost contemporary music ensembles and Lindsay Vickery pulled out all stops to create music which challenges players and listeners alike. It is a fascinating blend of melodic tunefulness and angular atonality as it supports the three singers. Indeed, most of the musical attraction lies in the instrumental work as the singers frequently have to rely on a somewhat dated Sprechstimme style of singing.

Kathryn McCusker as *Djinn* was androgynous in the earlier scenes, quietly menacing towards the indecisive Boris. Her ability to color her voice and freely negotiate the often cruelly taxing Sprechstimme made it a performance to treasure. The eeriness of the plot was enhanced by her acting which suddenly resolved into sunny, girlish enthusiasm tinged with fear in scene 11.

After her recent Countess, this was a revelation, for here was a powerful actress who sang the taxing music beautifully.

Taryn Fiebig's role required a mercurial approach, which sets out to deceive. She holds the key

RENDEZ-VOUS: An Opera Noir (Lindsay Vickery)

*Djinn* ..... Kathryn McCusker  
Marie ..... Taryn Fiebig  
Simon Lecour, aka Boris

..... Andrew Broadbent  
Musical director ..... Iain Grandage  
Virtual set

..... Vikki Wilson, Rick Mason  
Designer ..... Lawrie Cullen-Tait  
Lighting design ..... Duncan Ord

Magnetic Pig:  
Lindsay Vickery, Iain Grandage,  
Steve Richter, Emily Green-Armstrong,  
Jess Ipkenanz, Cathie Travers  
Rechabites Hall Northbridge, Perth  
Wednesday, November 21

to the plot as she toys with Boris, *Djinn* and the audience. Only she knows who fits where and the music she is required to sing reinforces that fact. It ranges from severe Sprechstimme, to her final "Take my hand and start all over again," a delightful 1930s cabaret pastiche accompanied by sumptuously colored instrumental work. It is a heady mix which came off spectacularly well.

The young Andrew Broadbent was by no means overshadowed by the two women. He had to radiate retiring innocence coupled with a strong sexual attraction for the women in the early stages; but then he had to reveal a darker side which led to the bleak conclusion which is not entirely explained. He is tall, good looking and more than capable of singing contemporary music without any apparent strain.

These three singers melded to form a convincing ensemble. They were riveting as they negotiated the daunting dramatic idiom with consummate ease.

The set required the singers to be athletic as they clambered over scaffolding which represented a dingy Parisian warehouse, or the tracks leading to the railway station, or a seedy backstreets cafe. With lighted candles scattering the framework, it was a tension-filled time as Marie, in her flouncy skirt, climbed perilously close to them. All three fluently overcame the obstacles without losing their vocal focus. It was a triumph of stamina as well as vocal technique.

*Rendez-vous* is certainly an opera of the 21st century, with its multi-arts approach. Lindsay Vickery's creative flair ensured that it was a tautly constructed work, with all the conflicting images and the music blending to form a challenging whole.

It is not over-long, with its 13 scenes being completed within 90 minutes; but there was a curious feel of anachronism about the vocal lines. The instrumental work, on the other hand, was full of playful inventiveness. He was fortunate that he had three singers who could give full rein to his musical idiom while acting superbly.

*Rendez-vous* is a well- (To Page 289.15)

## opera opera

# MERCHANDISING

Libretto	Guide	Piano Score	Full Score	VHS Video	DVD Video	Libretto	Guide	Piano Score	Full Score	VHS Video	DVD Video
OPERA, BALLET and CHORAL WORKS						OPERA, BALLET and CHORAL WORKS					
Rossini, Il Conte Ory				47.80w		R. Strauss, Lieder with					
Rossini, Ermione				31.55w		Te Kanawa and Soli				33.45	
Rossini, L'Italiana in Algeri	9.70	53.85		43.95h	90.00r	R. Strauss, Gala				34.40	
		33.00i				Stravinsky, Oedipus Rex,					
Rossini, Semiramide	9.70			53.15h		The Rake's Progress	18.15				
Rossini, Tancredi				43.95h		Stravinsky, Oedipus Rex,					
Rossini, Il Turco in Italia	4.35i					Le Rossignol	12.65				
Rossini, Il Viaggio a Reims				47.80h		Stravinsky, The Rake's Progress	10.95e	23.65h		33.45w	
Rossini (film biography)				47.80h						47.80h	
Saint-Saens, Samson et Dalila	9.75	35.15				Strouse, Annie		83.05e			
Schoenberg, Moses und Aron	12.05					Sullivan, Cox and Box				19.25s	
	6.90g					Sullivan, The Gondoliers	15.35e	39.55e		28.70z	
										19.25s	
Shostakovich, Lady Macbeth						Sullivan, The Grand Duke		33.00e			
of Mtsensk	8.80e					Sullivan, HMS Pinafore	8.75e	36.25e		19.25s	
Shostakovich, Die Nase	9.30g					Sullivan, Iolanthe	15.35e	41.75e		19.25s	
Sitsky, Fall of House of Usher		10.95a				Sullivan, The Mikado	15.35e	39.05e		28.70z	
Sitsky, The Golem	9.70e									19.25s	
Smetana, The Bartered Bride	6.80e	54.95e				Sullivan, Patience	17.55e	39.55e		28.70z	
Smetanin, Michael, The Burrow	9.70e									19.25s	
Sondheim, Into the Woods		219.95e				Sullivan The Pirates of Penzance	16.45e	30.75e		28.70z	
Sondheim, Sweeney Todd		217.80e								19.25s	
Sportini, La Vestale		42.85i				Sullivan, Princess Ida	12.05e	41.75e		19.25s	
J. Strauss, Die Fledermaus	9.85e	35.15e		28.70z1		Sullivan, Ruddigore	11.20e	39.55e		19.25s	
				28.70z2		Sullivan, The Sorcerer	15.35e	26.35e		19.25s	
				38.25ss		Sullivan, Trial By Jury	4.15e	34.65e		19.25s	
				57.45y		Sullivan, Utopia Limited		37.30e			
J. Strauss, The Gipsy Baron	21.95e	39.55e				Sullivan, The Yeomen of the Guard	9.10e			19.25s	
R. Strauss, Arabella	12.65			28.70w		Sullivan, Gilbert & Vol 1 (Cox and Box,					
	5.50g	38.50h		43.00h	40.45h	Trial By Jury, The Sorcerer, HMS					
	6.60e			47.80h		Pinafore)				57.45e	
R. Strauss, Ariadne auf Naxos	24.15			48.95h		Sullivan, Gilbert & Their Greatest Hits				38.25	
R. Strauss, Capriccio	6.60e					Tahourdin, Heloise and Abelard	9.70e				
R. Strauss, Daphne	6.05g					Tchaikovsky, Eugene Onegin	13.20e	19.25	25.30e	31.55w	
R. Strauss, The Donkey's Shadow	3.85e									38.25h	
R. Strauss, Elektra	16.45	130.85	51.75g	47.70h		Tchaikovsky, Queen of Spades	8.80e		63.30e*		
R. Strauss, Elektra & Salome		19.25				Tchaikovsky, Sleeping Beauty			28.90		
R. Strauss, Das Esels Schatten	4.40g					Tchaikovsky, Swan Lake					
R. Strauss, Die Frau Ohne Schatten	16.45g					(Excerpts for piano solo)			13.15		
R. Strauss, Friedenstag	6.60g					Thomas, Hamlet	9.70		20.35		
R. Strauss, Intermezzo	7.15g					Thomas, Mignon	5.80		47.95e		
R. Strauss, Die Liebe der Danae	5.50g					Thomson, Four Saints in Three Acts			74.75e		
R. Strauss, Der Rosenkavalier	16.45	17.05	113.25	38.25y		Thomson, The Mother of Us All					
		38.50h	45.55g	60.90g		Tippett, The Ice Break, King Priam,					
				84.60b	50.55b	The Knot Garden,					
				38.25y		The Midsummer Marriage	14.25e				
R. Strauss, Salome	17.55	41.25h	105.55	41.75g							
				44.05h							

N.B.: Because of the large number of titles available through Opera-Opera Merchandising, we cannot advertise the full list each month. For a copy of the complete list and full casting details of videos, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, 100 x 230 mm or larger.

GST: All prices and shipping costs include Australian GST of 10%; orders to be shipped overseas are GST-free, and prices on this list will be reduced by 1/11th.

LANGUAGES: All libretti and scores are bi-lingual, with original text and parallel English translation, unless price is followed by a letter indicating it is monolingual only — (c) Czech, (e) English, (f) French, (g) German, (h) Hungarian, (i) Italian, (l) Latin, (r) Russian, (s) Spanish.

FORMAT: Most items are in paperback; an asterisk (\*) following the price indicates hard covers.

GUIDES: The Opera Guides are prepared jointly by the English National Opera and Covent Garden, London. They contain the bi-lingual libretto, a plot summary, musical analysis and thematic guide. Cambridge Opera Handbooks, which do not contain the libretto but present detailed historical and analytical material as well as discography and a select bibliography, are available for some titles and are indicated by the letter (h) following a price in the Guide column.

VIDEOS: All titles are in VHS format, and practically all are stereo hi-fi. The quality of tapes marked ¶ may be variable. The letters following the prices for videos indicate the performing company: (z) Australian Opera/Australia/Australian Ballet, (y) Covent Garden London, (x) English National Opera London, (w) Glyndebourne Festival Opera, (v) Berlin State Opera, (u) Edinburgh International Festival, (t) La Scala Milan, (s) Ambrosian Opera Chorus and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by A. Farris and introduced by Douglas Fairbanks Jr, (r) Arhaus Musik, (q) Arena di Verona, (o) Drottningholm Court Theatre Sweden, (n) Bolshoi Moscow (CEL), (l) La Fenice Venice, (m) Kirov Opera/Ballet Leningrad, (k) Twyla Tharp Dance Foundation, (j) American Ballet Theatre, (i) Royal Danish Ballet, (h) Film version, (g) Teatro Comunale di Bologna, (f) Deutsche Oper Berlin, (e) Paris Opera Ballet, (d) Lyric Opera of Chicago, (c) Earl's Court version with Maria Ewing, (b) Vienna State Opera/Ballet, (a) Orchestre et Chœur de l'Opéra National de Lyon, (zz) Rambert Dance Company, (yy) Salzburg Festival, (xx) San Francisco Opera, (ww) Municipal Opera Theatre of Genoa, (vv) Théâtre du Châtelet Paris, (uu) Bolshoi Moscow (Pickwick), (tt) Metropolitan Opera New York, (ss) Bavarian State Opera, (rr) Canadian Opera Company, (qq) Schwetzingen Festival Germany, (pp) Arturo Toscanini concert collection, (oo) Savonlinna Opera Festival Finland, (nn) Bayreuth Festival, (mm) Basler Ballett, (kk) Dresden State Opera, (jj) Gewandhaus Leipzig, (ii) Bel Canto Society New York, (hh) Berlin Komischer Oper, (gg) Rome Opera, (ff) Royal Shakespeare Company, (ee) BBC version, (dd) Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists cond John Eliot Gardiner, (cc) Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields cond Neville Marriner, (bb) Welsh National Opera, (aa) Thames Television version. (=) Other.

Over the counter on Level 2, 44 Bridge Street, Sydney

Phone (02) 9247 2264 \* Fax (02) 9247 2269 \* deg@opera-opera.com.au \* www.opera-opera.com.au

By Mail To: Opera-Opera Merchandising, PO Box R-361, Royal Exchange, NSW 1225

☐ I enclose \$..... OR Please debit this amount to my ☐ Bankcard ☐ Visa card ☐ MasterCard, details as below, covering the cost of the items indicated above, as well as the postal allowance of \$2.70 each (except \$4.95 each for videos; or \$8.50 each for scores and most books within NSW, or \$10.20 interstate; or \$13.45 for large bound volumes within NSW, or \$20.30 interstate). Any excess included in this allowance will be credited against further orders.

Name ..... Card No

Address ..... Signature .....

Postcode ..... Card Expiry Date .....