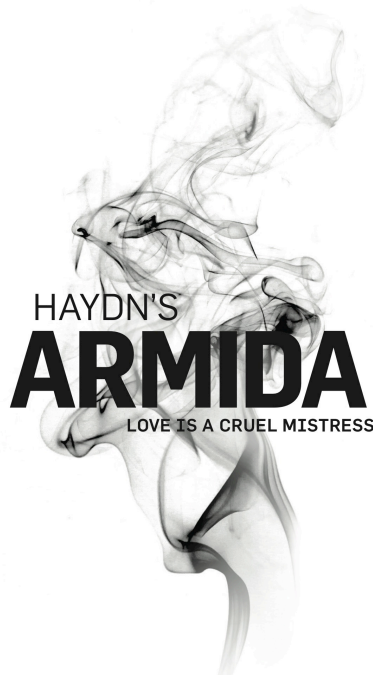
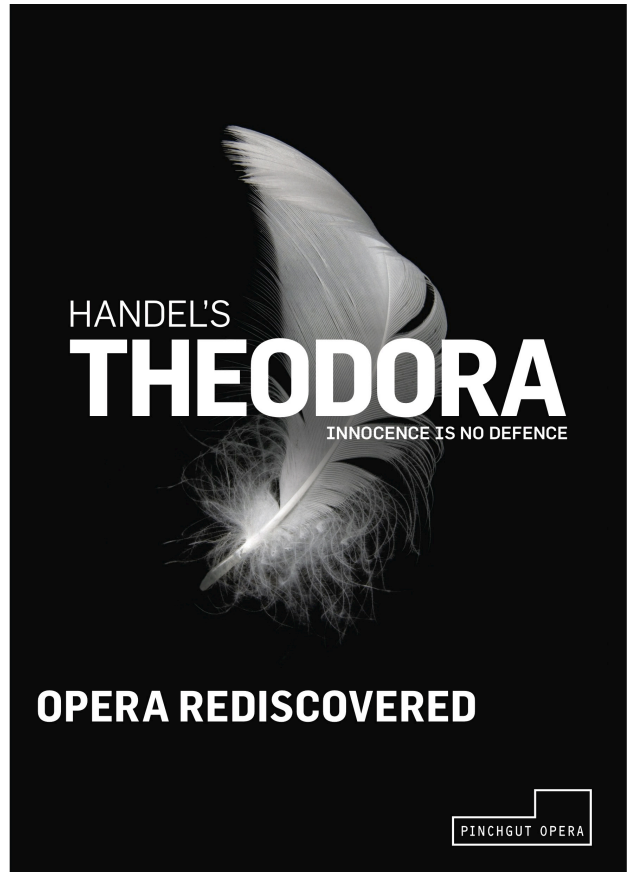


**PINCHGUT OPERA ANNOUNCES ITS  
2016 SEASON:  
HAYDN'S *ARMIDA* AND HANDEL'S *THEODORA***



HAYDN'S  
**ARMIDA**  
LOVE IS A CRUEL MISTRESS

**PINCHGUT OPERA 2016**



HANDEL'S  
**THEODORA**  
INNOCENCE IS NO DEFENCE

**OPERA REDISCOVERED**

PINCHGUT OPERA

In its 15th year, Pinchgut Opera is launching its first subscription season in 2016, featuring two more rarely staged Baroque and early Classical operas; Haydn's *Armida* and Handel's *Theodora*. As always, Pinchgut's 2016 season will feature two freshly created productions.

Artistic Director Erin Helyard says '2016 marks our third year of a winter and a summer season and to mark the occasion we are turning to masterworks which the composers themselves thought were their best works: Haydn's *Armida* and Handel's *Theodora*. Whereas 2015 features two operas that revolved around strong male leads, 2016 showcases two works with powerful female leads; one an evil sorceress, one virtuous and devout. Haydn's *Armida* has the composer at the height of his theatrical prowess, and Handel's *Theodora* is one of his best-constructed operas, with soulful arias and virtuosic showpieces and choruses. We are thrilled to bring these masterpieces to the Sydney stage.'

Both operas will be directed by women; Crystal Manich from the USA and Lindy Hume joins Pinchgut again after her triumph with *Iphigénie en Tauride* 2014. The season features a stellar cast

of singers, many of whom are internationally acclaimed Australians returning to Sydney to performing with Pinchgut. As always, The Orchestra of the Antipodes will feature on period instruments, conducted by Antony Walker (*Armida* in June 2016) and Erin Helyard (*Theodora* in December 2016).

**Pinchgut Opera subscriptions available from the City Recital Hall from 22 July 2015.**

### **Pinchgut Opera and Opera Australia**

Opera Australia and Pinchgut Opera are continuing their collegial approach. CEO of Opera Australia, Craig Hassall stated 'We are delighted to further the already co-operative relationship between Opera Australia and Pinchgut Opera by including Pinchgut in the OA subscription brochure for the 2016 season as optional add-on performances for our subscribers. Both Opera Australia and Pinchgut Opera have a reputation for great work but we both recognise the benefits of building audiences for the performing arts, whilst maintaining artistic distinctiveness and autonomy. I congratulate Pinchgut on the launch of their first subscription season.'

Pinchgut Opera Chair, Liz Nielsen said 'Pinchgut is thrilled at the opportunity to be able to reach new audiences this way in addition to offering our long-term loyal audience the opportunity to subscribe to our season for the first time'.

### **Background**

Pinchgut Opera's focus is on new creations of rediscovered masterpieces, bringing the music of the Baroque and early Classical eras to life with intelligence and passion. Pinchgut performances are presented in the intimate surroundings and superb acoustics of City Recital Hall. Under the musical direction of artistic directors Antony Walker and Erin Helyard, Pinchgut's operas are a thrilling night out.

Pinchgut Opera continues to achieve outstanding recognition for its artistic excellence despite no government funding in 2015. The company received its first Helpmann Nomination for Best Female Performer in an Opera for Caitlin Hulcup's performance as Iphigénie in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* in December 2014. Artistic Director Erin Helyard is also in the running for an award for Best Music Direction for Brisbane Baroque's *Faramondo*.

### **Contact**

For all of the latest Pinchgut Opera news and behind the scenes happenings:

Subscribe to our e-newsletter at [pinchgutopera.com.au](http://pinchgutopera.com.au),

or follow us at:

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For more information, or to arrange an interview with Erin Helyard, Artistic Director,  
please contact

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## Information on the operas

### **ARMIDA by Haydn**

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#### **Australian premiere**

**Dates:** 22, 24, 28 June at 7pm; 26 2016 at 5pm

**City Recital Hall, Sydney**

**Tickets:** \$90-\$150

**Subscriptions from 22 July:** [www.cityrecitalhall.com](http://www.cityrecitalhall.com) or 02 8256 2222

**More information:** [www.pinchgutopera.com.au](http://www.pinchgutopera.com.au)

ARMIDA, a sorceress, has cast her web of seduction over the Crusader knight Rinaldo: caught in her enchantments, he has abandoned his comrades and thrown in his lot with the enemy, just to be with her. But this time Armida has gone too far, unleashing a force beyond her control; the power of love.

**Armida:** Rachele Durkin, **Rinaldo:** Leif Aruhn-Solén, **Zelmira:** Janet Todd, **Ubaldo:** Jacob Lawrence

**Conductor:** Antony Walker, **Director:** Crystal Manich **Set Designer:** Alicia Clements (*Bajazet*)

**Costume Designer:** Christie Milton

### **THEODORA by Handel**

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#### **First Australian fully staged performances**

**Dates:** 30 Nov, 1, 3, 6 Dec 2016 at 7pm; 4 Dec 2016 at 5pm

**City Recital Hall, Sydney**

**Tickets:** \$90-\$150

**Subscriptions from 22 July:** [www.cityrecitalhall.com](http://www.cityrecitalhall.com) or 02 8256 2222

**More information:** [www.pinchgutopera.com.au](http://www.pinchgutopera.com.au)

The beautiful THEODORA has inspired many to embrace the Christian faith – including the Roman officer Didymus, who has fallen deeply in love with her. When the order comes through that all Christians are to be arrested and executed, the two lovers find themselves locked in a battle to the death: each determined to sacrifice their own life to save the other.

**Theodora:** Valda Wilson, **Irene:** Caitlin Hulcup **Didymus:** Christopher Lowrey, **Septimius:** Ed Lyon, **Valens:** Andrew Collis

**Conductor:** Erin Helyard, **Director:** Lindy Hume, **Designer:** Dan Potra, **Lighting Designer:** Matthew Marshall