



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 14 October

GP tickets on sale Friday 16 October

**SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS
CULTURE CLUB:**

Go behind the curtain and explore Sydney's cultural landscape

Every work of art has a backstory, reflects a mindset and a world. The Sydney Opera House today announced a new arts talk series, *Culture Club*, aimed at taking audiences inside that world. Beginning in November, *Culture Club* features conversations with Australia's leading artists, artistic directors and cultural leaders, including:

- Opera Australia's **Lyndon Terracini AM**, on the politics of arts criticism;
- Sydney Theatre Company director **Sarah Goodes** and Sydney University scholar **Annamarie Jagose** on Virginia Woolf's startlingly modern meditation on history and gender, *Orlando*;
- Bangarra Dance Theatre's **Stephen Page** and Sydney Festival's **Wesley Enoch** on the ancient art of modern storytelling; and
- Artist **John Olsen AO, OBE** on the story behind creation of Sydney Opera House masterpiece *Salute to Five Bells*.

Sydney Opera House Head of Talks and Ideas Ann Mossop said: *"We are incredibly proud at the Sydney Opera House of our robust and dynamic year-round Talks and Ideas program, which responds to our mandate as a meeting place for the discussion of issues of local, national and international importance and attracts an audience of more than 50,000 a year. Culture Club is an opportunity to bring audiences into the life of the Opera House, its resident companies and the arts in Australia."*

THE PROGRAM

UNDERSTANDING ORLANDO AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

Sarah Goodes in conversation with Annamarie Jagose

Monday 23 November, 11am

"As long as she thinks of a man, nobody objects to a woman thinking." - Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

When she published *A Room of One's Own* in 1929, Virginia Woolf became a symbol of artistic independence to generations of women writers and artists. But her ideas about gender and the relationships between men and women were also an important part of her fiction, as *Orlando* (published the year before) and *To the Lighthouse* illustrate.

University of Sydney feminist studies scholar Annamarie Jagose will provide background on Woolf's writing, followed by an in-depth discussion with Sarah Goodes on the poetic and playful *Orlando* and the process of bringing it to the stage in her new STC production, playing at the Opera House 9 November-19 December.



OTHER PEOPLE'S STORIES

Wesley Enoch and Stephen Page in conversation with Caroline Baum

Monday 30 November, 11am

From *Star Wars* to *Sleeping Beauty*, many contemporary cultural moments rely on rich traditions of folklore, myth and storytelling. Stories are told and re-told for each generation and are part of the heritage that artists draw on in their work. So how can ancient stories become part of a modern art form that engages contemporary audiences?

Bangarra Dance Theatre's Stephen Page and future artistic director of Sydney Festival, Wesley Enoch, are renowned for their use of Indigenous storytelling in their work. Together they will discuss with Caroline Baum their perspective on reinterpreting these ancient stories for their audiences and what other people's stories mean to them.

CRITICS AND THE ARTS

Lyndon Terracini in conversation with Christopher Lawrence

Monday 7 December, 11am

For artists, musicians, directors, designers and producers, ticket sales and audience response are very important measures of success. What is the state of play for critics and arts criticism in Australia? Opera Australia Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini AM and ABC Classic FM's Mornings Presenter Christopher Lawrence will reflect on the state of arts criticism in Australia and the relationship between artists and critics.

JOHN OLSEN AND FIVE BELLS

John Olsen in conversation with Caroline Baum

Monday 14 December, 11am

"I wanted to show the Harbour as a movement, a sea suck, and the sound of the water as though I am part of the sea ... The painting says directly what I wanted to say: 'I am in the sea-harbour, and the sea-harbour is in me'." - John Olsen, 1999

In 1971, Australian artist John Olsen was commissioned to create *Salute to Five Bells*, a mural for the Sydney Opera House. Completed in 1973, the mural is a tribute to poet Kenneth Slessor and *Five Bells*, Slessor's poem about the death of a friend who drowned in Sydney harbour. The result is a nocturnal image of fluorescent sea creatures welcoming sinking Joe into the suspended state between life and death. A great tragedy played out in Sydney harbour.

More than 40 years later Olsen's personal account of creating the mural has been published in *My Salute to Five Bells*, and it includes illustrations, quotes and thoughts, hand-written notes and his plans for the mural. In front of his mural at the Sydney Opera House, Olsen will share his passion for Sydney, and the inspiration behind the biggest commission of his career.

ABOUT IDEAS AT THE HOUSE

[Ideas at the House](#) is Sydney Opera House's talks and ideas program. It presents ideas, conversation and debate from leading thinkers and culture creators. Ideas at the House online extends the reach of live events with unique content. As well as a year-round program of inspiring events, Ideas at the House features the annual festivals *All About Women* and the *Festival of Dangerous Ideas*, and one-day events *For Thought* and *Carnegie Conversations*. More info:

www.sydneyoperahouse.com/ideasatthehouse



KEY INFORMATION

WHAT:	Culture Club
WHEN:	23 November, 30 November, 7 December & 14 December 2015, 11am
WHERE:	Various venues, Sydney Opera House
TICKETS:	\$15 single tickets, including transaction fee \$40 for series package, including transaction fee
MORE INFO:	sydneyoperahouse.com/cultureclub

CONNECT WITH IDEAS AT THE HOUSE

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