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## Simon Kenway Conductor

*Madama Butterfly* West Australian Opera

"The glorious certainty of attack was matched by the subtle rhythmic flexibility which infused the entire production with emotional intensity. Simon Kenway certainly impressed in his handling of this score."

Alan True

*Opera Opera* June 2000

Simon Kenway is an established and highly respected orchestral and operatic conductor. He has held posts as Principal Chorus Master of Opera Australia, Musical Director for Opera in the Vineyards, Opera by George and Opera Under the Stars in Broome, and Conductor and Chief Vocal Coach for the Sydney Conservatorium Opera School. He now works as a freelance conductor, both internationally and in Australia.

Simon continues his long association with Opera Australia as a Guest Artist and has conducted performances of *Madama Butterfly*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Magic Flute*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Gondoliers*, *La Traviata*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Sweeney Todd*. For Opera Australia's Youth Education programme Simon has also conducted Kurt Weill's *Down in the Valley*, Ann Boyd's *The Little Mermaid* and Purcell's *The Indian Queen*.

As Conductor and Chief Vocal Coach for the Sydney Conservatorium Opera School, he prepared and conducted performances of Puccini's *La Rondine*, Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Ravel's *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* and Poulenc's *Les mamelles de Tiresias*, *Cendrillon*, *Acis & Galatea*, *Eugene Onegin*, Berkley's *A Dinner Engagement* and Larry Sitsky's *De Profundis*.

Simon also composes and arranges scores for plays and incidental music. More recent work includes *The Rivers of China* by Alma de Groen for Australian director Jenny Lang Peach. He also wrote *Wild Alone (The Imprisonment of Oscar Wilde)* for Opera Apollo and the vocal arrangement for Baz Luhrmann's album, *Something for Everyone*. Simon was Musical Director for the first working draft of Baz Luhrmann's acclaimed movie, *Moulin Rouge*.

Simon obtained a Bachelor of Music Degree (Piano) and a Post-Graduate Diploma (Opera) from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music before continuing post-graduate studies at the Royal College of Music, London and in Europe with Norman Del Mar, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Pierre Boulez, Simon Rattle and James Lockhardt. He also trained as a vocal coach with the leading répétiteurs from Covent Garden, English National Opera and Paris Opera. Simon was Chorus Master for Chelsea Opera Group and Artistic Director/Conductor of University College Opera, London. He subsequently conducted *Lakmé* for University College Opera.

More recent engagements include Graeme Murphy's new production of *Swan Lake*, *Carmina Burana*, Fauré *Requiem*, *Wild Swans*, a new ballet choreographed by Meryl Tankard and composed by Elena Kats-Chernin, and *The Bella Trilogy* for The Australian Ballet, *Madama Butterfly* for West Australian Opera, Rossini's *La Cenerentola* for Opera Queensland, *Carmina Burana* and *Götterdämmerung* (Chorus Director) for Sydney Symphony, *George* with Sydney Symphony for the 2003 Sydney Festival, debuts with the Tasmanian Symphony and Queensland Orchestras, Handel's *Messiah* with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Berlioz *Te Deum* and Saint-Saëns *Organ Symphony* for Sydney University Musical Society and Willoughby Symphony Orchestra, *Eugene Onegin* for Aldeburgh Productions in UK, *Madama Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, OzOpera's *La bohème* tour, *La Traviata* and *The Mikado* for Opera Australia, *Don Giovanni* for West Australian Opera, an OzOpera concert at Olympic Park, concerts for The Queensland Orchestra, Pops in the Park with Ben Folds Five for West Australian Symphony, *Midnite* for OzOpera and Windmill Performing Arts in Adelaide, and *Stella and the Moon Man* for the Australian Youth Orchestra.

In 2006 Simon conducted a series of pop concerts with Hong Kong Philharmonic and Anthony Wong, as well as concerts for Canberra Symphony and The Schools Concerts for Sydney Symphony. In December he conducted Christmas concerts for Hong Kong Philharmonic.

In 2007 Simon continued his work as a lecturer at the Sydney Conservatorium and in May conducted at the Singapore American School. He is also the pianist for the ongoing *High Tea* programme at Sydney Opera House. Forthcoming engagements include conducting OzOpera's *Madama Butterfly* for Opera Australia in 2008.

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Telephone (02) 9211 9422 Facsimile (02) 9211 9466 E-mail [enquiries@artsmanagement.com.au](mailto:enquiries@artsmanagement.com.au)