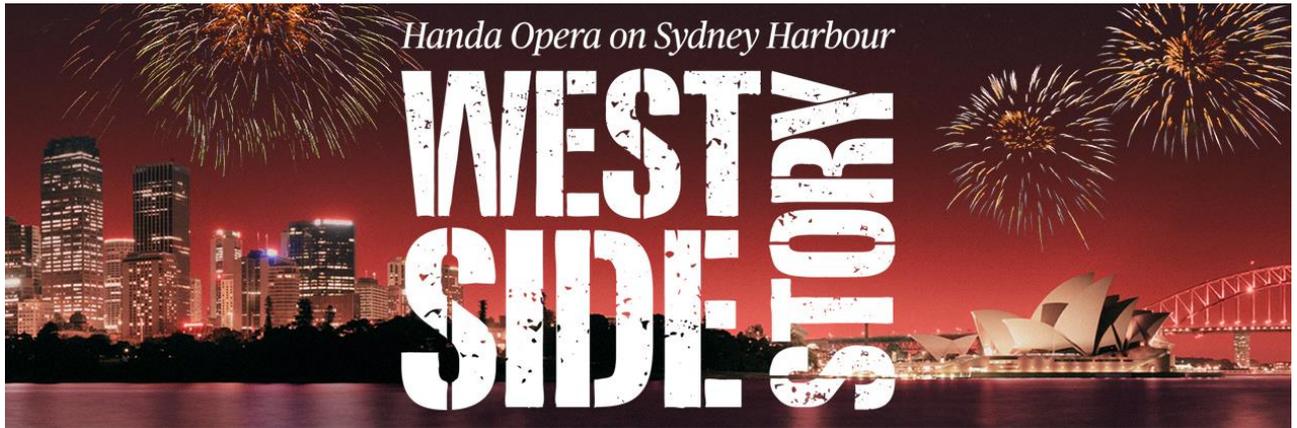


**MEDIA RELEASE**

11 October 2018

**Casting Call for *West Side Story* on Sydney Harbour 2019**



Opera Australia is calling for Australia’s best and brightest talent to audition for its brand new production of *West Side Story*, which will take to the iconic overwater stage at **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour** in 2019.

Auditions for principal and ensemble roles will be held in Sydney only from 23 to 28 November 2018.

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to perform in one of the greatest musicals of all time, featuring Jerome Robbins’ explosive choreography with Stephen Sondheim’s thrilling lyrics to Leonard Bernstein’s sensational score on one of the most recognised outdoor stages in the world.

*West Side Story* exploded onto Broadway in 1957 and is now considered a landmark theatrical musical and one of the most iconic works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In 2019, *West Side Story* on Sydney Harbour will continue the tradition of the great outdoor spectacles that have come before it, with the world’s finest singers, musicians, dancers and creative teams set to bring the vision to life.

Renowned American director Francesca Zambello, who directed the inaugural Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour – *La Traviata* in 2012, returns to Sydney for *West Side Story* auditions and will be joined by choreographer Julio Monge, who performed in Jerome Robbins’ 1989 production of the musical on Broadway.

Audition submissions will be accepted via webform only: [WSS Submissions](#) and should include a current biography (PDF) and headshot.

**SUBMISSIONS CLOSE MIDNIGHT MONDAY OCTOBER 22, 2018**

For more information on Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, *West Side Story* please visit <https://opera.org.au/whatson/events/west-side-story-on-sydney-harbour>

Please see following page for *West Side Story on the Harbour* casting brief.

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# Casting Brief



## Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour—*West Side Story*

**AUDITION DATES:**  
**SYDNEY, 23-28 November 2018**

### Overview

In 2019, *West Side Story* takes to the iconic stage at **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour**.

*West Side Story* exploded onto Broadway in 1957 in a sensational storm of exuberant dance and wistful romance. It was a phenomenon that never faded, “an incandescent piece of work” (*The New York Times*).

The landmark musical combined four of the biggest talents on Broadway: **Leonard Bernstein’s** sensational score, **Jerome Robbins’** explosive choreography, **Arthur Laurents’** powerful book and newcomer **Stephen Sondheim’s** perfect lyrics.

On the mean streets of New York's West Side, two rival gangs strut their stuff. But when a Jet falls for a Shark, the stage is set for a rumble. Their wistful love story is studded with infectious songs including 'Somewhere', 'Maria', 'I Feel Pretty', 'America', 'Cool' and of course, 'Tonight'.

Renowned director **Francesca Zambello** teams up with **Brian Thomson** and **Jennifer Irwin** to create a brand new production for the harbour stage.

Please note that the venue is an outdoor purpose-built stage over Sydney Harbour. Given the nature of the venue, the stage will be raked and also have a gridded surface to ensure the safety of performers as performances of the production continue in inclement weather.

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**Conductor: Guy Simpson**

**Director: Francesca Zambello**

**Choreographer: Julio Monge**

Performers must be available for the entire season (including rehearsals) from: **11 February – 21 April 2019**. Please find following a casting brief detailing the roles for the production - please note the **specific requirements** for each role and submit accordingly.

All ethnicities are encouraged to submit for an audition.

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## Audition Information

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Specific requirements for auditions will be provided with confirmation of audition time. Auditions cannot be guaranteed for all applicants submitted.

### Please Note:

1. Artists should be available for the entire audition period. Any restrictions must be noted in the submission.
2. Auditions will take place in Sydney only.
3. Auditionees may be photographed and recorded as part of their participation in the audition process for casting purposes.

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## Submission Process

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Submissions will be accepted via the following webform only: [WSS Submissions](#) by **Midnight, Monday October 22**, and should include:

- Current biography (in PDF Format)
- Headshot (File clearly labelled)

## SUBMISSIONS CLOSE MIDNIGHT MONDAY OCTOBER 22, 2018

*West Side Story auditions are at the risk and sole financial responsibility of the auditionee.  
Opera Australia are committed equal opportunity employers.*

# AUDITION APPLICATION

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## Roles

**CHARACTER: RIFF**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Tenor

**DETAILS:** Glowing, driving, intelligent, slightly wacky leader of the Jets.

**CHARACTER: BERNARDO**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Baritone

**DETAILS:** Handsome, proud, fluid leader of the Sharks, with a sardonic chip on his shoulder.

**CHARACTER: ANITA**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Alto/mezzo-soprano

**DETAILS:** Older and wiser in the ways of the world, flashy, sharp-tongued, and with a knowing sexuality.

**CHARACTER: LIEUTENANT SCHRANK**

**AGE:** Early 40s – Mid 50s (male)

**VOCAL:** Non-singing role

**DETAILS:** Plainclothes policeman used to being in charge, superficially pleasant to cover his venom, fear, and bigotry.

**CHARACTER: OFFICER KRUPKE**

**AGE:** Mid 40s – Mid 50s (male)

**VOCAL:** Non-singing role

**DETAILS:** A not-too-bright street cop; aggressive; hard-nosed.

**CHARACTER: DOC**

**AGE:** 50's + (male)

**VOCAL:** Non-singing role

**DETAILS:** Drug Store Owner, tired and worn out.

**CHARACTER: GLADHAND**

**AGE:** Late 30's-mid 40's (male)

**VOCAL:** Non-singing role

**DETAILS:** Nerdy, overly cheerful and ill-equipped social director at the local gym dance.

**CHARACTER: JET BOYS**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Strong ballet/jazz dancers who can sing

**DETAILS:** American gang members. Urban, economically depressed with a sense of empowerment, aggressive. Desperately holding on to their little bit of street.

**CHARACTER: JET GIRLS**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers who can sing.

**DETAILS:** Girlfriends to the Jet Boys. Urban, attractive and aggressive.

ANYBODYS - (17-20 yrs old FEMALE) Desperately trying to be one of the Jet Boys. Sexually ambiguous, venerable, a fighter and a survivor.

**CHARACTER: SHARK BOYS**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers who can sing.

**DETAILS:** Shark gang members. Angry, strong and fighting against the Jets.

**CHARACTER: SHARK GIRLS**

**AGE:** Early 20s

**VOCAL:** Must be strong ballet/jazz dancers who can sing.

**DETAILS:** Girlfriends to the Shark Boys. Vivacious, sexy, and strong.

**ALL ETHNICITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT.**

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**Further information**

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Email [majorprojectsauditions@opera.org.au](mailto:majorprojectsauditions@opera.org.au)