

# Australian opera star Stuart Skelton returns for Mahler epic with Catherine Carby and the ACO

**MAHLER'S SONG OF THE EARTH**

**12–26 May**

Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra



**Stuart Skelton**, the Grammy-nominated Australian singer known as the world's greatest living heldentenor, will make a much-anticipated return to his home stage to join Australian mezzo-soprano **Catherine Carby**, Artistic Director **Richard Tognetti** and the **Australian Chamber Orchestra** for Gustav Mahler's mighty *Das Lied von der Erde* (The Song of the Earth) in a national tour from 12–26 May.

Described by Leonard Bernstein as the greatest "symphony" from this master symphonist, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* covers the vast spectrum of the human experience, moving through darkness, light, cruelty, love, beauty and, at last, catharsis. Skelton, Carby, Tognetti and the ACO will perform Schoenberg's strikingly intimate arrangement of the work, which Skelton and the Orchestra first presented at Scotland's Edinburgh Festival in 2016 to critical acclaim, with *The Herald, Scotland* describing the performance as 'phenomenal'.

Skelton is one of the great tenors of our time, internationally acclaimed for his outstanding musicianship, tonal beauty and intensely dramatic portrayals. Commanding a voice of incredible power and passion, he was awarded 'Male Singer of the Year' at the 2014 International Opera Awards and is renowned for his capacity to sing the most demanding vocal music ever written, including the epic 'heldentenor' roles of Wagner, Beethoven and Mahler, and Britten's 20th-century masterpiece *Peter Grimes*.

A lover of fast cars, cigars and cocktails, Skelton is in demand as a soloist across the world's most prestigious stages, from singing the role of *Tristan* at The Met in New York to starring in *The Last Night of the Proms* in London, and has sung *The Ring Cycle* – a 15-hour epic regarded as the pinnacle of opera – with the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera, Paris Opera and Opera Australia.

**Media Contact**

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“Heldentenor means ‘heroic tenor’”, Skelton explained to *The Guardian*. “Singers are like athletes doing long-distance competitions. You get to the point where you’ve reached your physical limits. You hit the wall. Then it’s a mental game of trying to dig deep into your technical resources to keep going.”

Carby is one of Australia’s leading mezzo-sopranos, with a richly soaring voice described by *The Guardian* as ‘ravishing’ and *The Independent* as ‘world-class’. She has sung major opera roles across the globe, from London and Lisbon to Sydney with opera companies including the Royal Opera House, English National Opera and Opera Australia, and has performed with all the major Australian orchestras

Carby has carved out a reputation for roles including the lead in *Carmen*, Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Arsace (*Partenope*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Emilia (*Otello*), and Siegrune (*Die Walküre*). She has recorded critically acclaimed albums with Naxos, the BBC and the ABC, including the highly praised 2022 recording of Lampe’s *The Dragon of Wantley* and the BBC Concert Orchestra and John Andrews’ award-winning *The Dancing Master*.

Opening the program is the tender warmth of Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll*, written as a musical gift to his wife, followed by the exquisitely expressive songs of Alma Mahler-Werfel, in a new arrangement commissioned by the ACO.

**Concert Details**

**MAHLER’S SONG OF THE EARTH**

**RICHARD WAGNER** Siegfried Idyll

**ALMA MAHLER-WERFEL** (arr. David Matthews) Laue Sommernacht; Die stille Stadt; Bei dir ist es traut (World Premiere of new arrangements)\*

**GUSTAV MAHLER** (arr. Arnold Schoenberg & Rainer Riehn) Das Lied von der Erde

\*Arrangements commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

**Richard Tognetti** Director & Violin  
**Catherine Carby** Mezzo-Soprano  
**Stuart Skelton** Tenor  
**Australian Chamber Orchestra**

**Sydney Opera House**  
 Sun 12 May, 2pm

**City Recital Hall**  
 Wed 15 May, 7pm  
 Fri 17 May, 8pm  
 Sat 18 May, 7pm

**Melbourne Recital Centre**  
 Mon 13 May, 7.30pm  
 Wed 22 May, 7.30pm

**Brisbane • QPAC**  
**Concert Hall**  
 Mon 20 May, 7pm

**Canberra • Llewellyn Hall**  
 Fri 24 May, 8pm

**Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne**  
 Sun 26 May, 2.30pm

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