

younion _ Die Daseinsgewerkschaft, Maria-Theresien-Straße 11, 1090 Wien

Mr David Mortimer AO
Chairman, Opera Australia Board
(via e-mail)

Subject: Letter of Protest

Vienna, September 2020

Dear Mr Mortimer,

In all countries, health restrictions imposed by governments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced the performing arts sector to reduce its activity considerably. During the confinement periods, it was completely stopped, and, unlike other sectors, it was only able to resume after confinement at a very low level, with constraints that are both complex and costly to implement.

Several players in the sector (operas, orchestras, companies, unions) have chosen to join their efforts in an attempt to adapt together to this unprecedented challenge. Opera Australia Artistic Administrator Lyndon Terracini took a completely different path by deciding, in August, to respond to the crisis with devastating measures combining job cuts and denunciation of existing collective agreements.

The pandemic must not be used as a pretext to justify the termination of freely negotiated collective agreements, and the promotion of precarious work. On the contrary, this crisis is an opportunity to demonstrate the solidarity and respect of our societies for those who, through their creative activity, bring meaning to the daily life of all citizens. Should Mr Terracini persist in his intentions, he would provide the worst and most unfair response to the difficulties his institution is going through.

Therefore, younion _ Die Daseinsgewerkschaft, Austrian affiliate of the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) representing (among others) individuals in the arts sector including employees of the Vienna State Opera, protests strongly against the measures announced by the management of Opera Australia. We call on its Board of Directors and the heads of this institution to suspend these measures and immediately open a dialogue with representative union MEAA, to develop a common plan and address the current pandemic in a coordinated manner.

Yours sincerely,



Thomas Kattnig
Member of the Federal Executive Board

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