

Proposal for Award of Honorary Degree of Doctor of Visual and Performing Arts

MS CHERYL BARKER

Cheryl Barker is an internationally-recognised soprano at home on the opera, concert and recital platforms. Through her performances, teaching and commitment to the twentieth-century repertoire she has made an outstanding contribution to the development of opera in Australia and internationally. She has made a significant transfer of knowledge over many years through her initial studies at the VCA and her subsequent career.

Ms Barker appears regularly with Opera Australia and is internationally noted for performances at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, De Vlaamse Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Deutsche Oper, Berlin, Netherlands Opera and Houston Grand Opera. She has also sung for Opera Queensland and BTR New Zealand Opera. She performed Sarah in the world premiere of Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair*.

On the concert platform, Ms Barker has appeared at many prestigious venues including London's Barbican, Royal Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square, and with the Halle Orchestra. She has sung in the Edinburgh, Spoleto and Melbourne Festivals. Cheryl was selected to play Mimi in Baz Luhrmann's production of *La Boheme* at the Sydney Opera House

Cheryl Barker is the recipient of the 1986 Dame Mabel Brookes Fellowship, represented Australia in the Finals of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions Competition held in New York and won the Royal Overseas League Competition in London in 1989.

Critics have described Cheryl's singing as 'a delight' and commented on her 'extreme purity of vocal tone'. The highly respected critic Michael Kennedy described her performance of Tatyana in *Eugen Onegin* as 'impressive' with the singer 'managing the transformation from naive, sexually awakening girl to the society matron of the final scenes as convincingly as I have heard and seen. She is totally unaffected in the scenes with her old nurse, and sings the Letter Song superbly.'

Cheryl is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts. She made her debut as Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* for Auckland Opera, New Zealand in 1994. This particular production, under the direction of Canadian star director Robert Carsen, was filmed for television and broadcasted on huge outdoor screens for an audience of over 50,000 people.

Cheryl Barker is a visiting artist at the Sydney Conservatorium.

For outstanding service to the community in the field of Music, Cheryl Barker is nominated for admission to the degree of Doctor of Visual and Performing Arts (*honoris causa*).