

Media Release – Richard Bonyngé AC CBE joins National Opera as patron.

National Opera is delighted to announce Richard Bonyngé AC CBE has accepted our invitation to become a patron of National Opera in Canberra. In accepting the invitation Mr Bonyngé wrote "I have the greatest of respect and admiration for Peter Coleman-Wright AO and it is so good to know that someone of his ability, experience and taste has the role of Artistic Director of National Opera".

National Opera's Artistic Director is overjoyed that Richard Bonyngé has become our Patron alongside the Governor-General His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley, adding "we are looking forward to a highly successful future with such illustrious support on board with us."

Mr Bonyngé was born in Sydney in September 1930. His early musical education at the NSW Conservatorium of Music led to further piano studies at the Royal College of Music in London and also with Herbert Fryer, who had been a pupil of Busoni. His first appearance as a conductor was in Rome in January 1962. He has subsequently conducted in many of the world's major opera houses, in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Argentina, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Portugal, Poland, Russia, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. Richard Bonyngé was Musical Director of the Sutherland-Williamson Grand Opera Company in Australia in 1965, Artistic Director of the Vancouver Opera, 1974-77 and Musical Director of The Australian Opera, 1976-86.

In 1954 Mr Bonyngé married the soprano, Joan Sutherland and their son, Adam, was born in 1956.

Mr Bonyngé has received a number of international commendations. In Great Britain in 1977 he was awarded the CBE by Her Majesty, The Queen. And in 1983 he became an Officer in the Order of Australia, which was, in 2012 promoted to companion, for eminent service to the performing arts as an acclaimed conductor and musical scholar, to classical singing and the promotion of opera, and through the collection and preservation of operatic manuscripts. In Paris in 1989, he was awarded the title *Commandeur de l'Ordre National des Arts et des Lettres* and in 2007 was made "Socio d'onore", R. Accademia Filarmonica di Bologna. In 2009 he was awarded the Sir Bernard Heinze Award in Australia for service to music and in London in 2010, Dame Beryl Grey gave him the Patron's Award within the Critics' Circle National Dance Awards for services to ballet.

Highly regarded as an expert on opera, he has written articles on the subject, its composers, great interpreters, the art of bel canto, ballet, theatre and antiques. The Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Foundation Ltd. has been instrumental in supporting and aiding many Australian opera singers throughout their careers. This has culminated in the book *CHALET MONET Inside the Home of Dame Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé*.

Some of information included in this media release is from publicly available content on The Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Foundation Ltd website www.jsrbfoundation.com

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