

Opera UCT selected to stage global premiere

 By [Terry Levin](#)

1 Mar 2024

I was privileged to attend Opera UCT's celebration of talent showcase and launch of what to expect from students in 2024 by Opera UCT director Jeremy Silver, confirming Opera UCT's reputation as not just as world-class, but a world leader in opera.



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The biggest announcement is that September 2024 will see Opera UCT perform the world premiere of a previously lost operatic work, *Dalinda* by Donizetti (never performed due to censorship in 19th century Italy, the score has been recently rediscovered). Now, the first full staging ever, will be by Opera UCT students, shortlisted from three companies in the world and the exciting opportunity for students to be directed by an international producer and costume director.

Also happening this year in November, a fully-staged invitation collaboration with the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, will take place in Cape Town. Definitely not to be missed!

We cannot wait for April for *The Sound of Freedom*, presented by Opera UCT and the UCT Symphony Orchestra, inspired by the fact that this year about 50% of the world's population in over 60 countries, including our own, will go to the election polls. This super-relevant programme will include opera with democratic themes around political freedom.

Audiences can also expect masterclasses with international principle coaches and distinguished alumni, many with free access, as well as an array of bursary competition concerts.

SA punches above its weight in the arts

The world has woken up to a phenomenon, that South Africa's singers are preternaturally advantaged, punching above their weight in the global reputation often despite the minimum of resources.

If the recent showcase is anything to go by, the programme featuring about 30 performers, showed not only the incredible talent and commitment to excellence by so many, but the need for a long overdue government directive towards more arts funding, and state-owned arts institutions.



An audience with Jeremy Silver, director of Opera UCT

Terry Levin 26 Oct 2023



The fact that the genre, formerly considered Eurocentric or even irrelevant, is attracting such diverse and enthusiastic, multicultural audiences and is starting to be reinvented in a uniquely African cultural identity, offers exciting new creative directions, especially for companies and brands wishing to broaden their scope.

On the Baxter stage, the chorus, soloists and audience demonstrated why the vibrant, youthful energy and technical musicality of Opera UCT are being acknowledged by the world, their joyful assuredness and polished accomplishments are a source of shared pride.

ABOUT TERRY LEVIN

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