

# THE LYREBIRD'S VOICE

EDUCATION RESOURCE

BY TIM RYAN

**Victorian Opera respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners  
of Country throughout Australia.**

**We recognise their continuing connection to lands, waterways and  
communities through song, dance and storytelling.**

**We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people  
and their Elders past and present.**

**Always was, always will be.**

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# INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Welcome to Victorian Opera's Access All Areas: Livestream Program. This program is built around Victorian Opera's family and school's production of *The Lyrebird's Voice* and is designed for students from Foundation to Level 6.

Over a series of four live-streamed and on-demand workshops, you and your students will learn all about opera as an art form and the many production elements required to stage a show. Your class then gets to watch a performance of *The Lyrebird's Voice*. This resource supports the workshops through the inclusion of additional information, as well as extra classroom activities to complete each week aligned to Victorian Curriculum 2.0.

In Workshops 1 - 3, your class will be learning how to sing the Bird Chorus, so that they can sing it together with the orchestra in Workshop 4 and when your class watches the opera. You'll find the sheet music and audio files (vocals only and with accompaniment) for the Bird Chorus in Appendix A on page 29 of this resource. You are welcome to use these materials to get a head-start on learning the music or to practise between each workshop.

## REPORTING TO OUR FUNDERS

Victorian Opera's *Access All Areas: Livestream Program* is generously supported by government grants, and philanthropic trusts and foundations. Through our agreement with these organisations, we are required to produce detailed analyses of our activities. Student and teacher feedback is invaluable for this program and helps inform future programming and funding.

To support the work we do, we would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete some questions following each workshop. The survey link can be found below and will also appear on your screen directly following each workshop:  
<https://bit.ly/voSurvey>.

After each workshop, simply click on the link and complete the questions relevant to the survey you have watched.

If you have any questions related to the program, please don't hesitate to contact Victorian Opera's Education Team on 03 9012 6659 or via email: [education@victorianopera.com.au](mailto:education@victorianopera.com.au).

# ABOUT THE WORK

## SYNOPSIS

Our story begins with the birds and animals of the Australian forest developing a plan to protect their new home after humans have logged their old home. During the meeting, Lyrebird imitates other birds, causing confusion and displeasing the Duchess of Wattle. The Duke and Duchess knight several birds, but Lyrebird's concerns about the southern trees not being guarded are dismissed.

Feeling excluded, she plans to trick the knighted birds to prove her worth. She deceives Lord Kookaburra into abandoning his duties, leading to a humorous encounter. Later, she mocks the Honeyeaters, angering them, and lies to mammals about her skills, resulting in her being shamed. When she tries to warn the animals about humans cutting down trees, they don't believe her due to her past pranks. Chaos ensues and she is blamed for the destruction and banished from her community of animals by the Duchess.

She wanders the forest alone until she meets four musical beetles who advise her to be true to herself and admit that she has done wrong. She then meets Lord Emu and the two bond over their being different to the other birds. Together, they must devise a plan to scare away a feral cat named Kitcat, who has captured all of the birds in cages. The Lyrebird bravely uses her sounds to frighten Kitcat, freeing the captured birds.

The Duke and Duchess apologise for blaming her and knight her as Lady Lyrebird, recognising her bravery. The animals celebrate their unity and learn the importance of respecting each other's strengths, with Lady Lyrebird emphasising the value of admitting mistakes and for using one's voice for good.





# NEW WORK OPERA STUDIO

In partnership with Montsalvat (Eltham) and as part of Victorian Opera's commitment to the creation of new work, the **New Work Opera Studio** brings young people aged 15 – 25 years of age together in workshops to create new opera for tomorrow.

In 2023 a group of young people - Asmira Adams, Xavier Grindlay, Alexis King, Agneishka Markwell, Amelia Mason and Anushka Tiwari - met to devise a concept for a new opera. Over the mid-year school holidays, these young people worked with composer Peter Rutherford and educator Paul Scott-Williams to brainstorm narrative ideas and share

their love of singing. At the end of the workshop period, *Kaleidescopia* was born - a story of how a young Australian animal finds their group of friends and is accepted for who they are.

Since the initial workshop, the group of young people have met with Peter and librettist Jayde Kirchert, to further develop and workshop the piece through the **New Work Opera Studio**. The original concept has now become *The Lyrebird's Voice*, a tale about the Australian spirit with a big dose of humour, imparting important lessons on identity and the ways in which we use our voice.



The New Work Opera Studio is made possible through the generous support of Professor Barbara van Ernst AM.

# MEET THE LIBRETTIST AND COMPOSER/ARRANGER



**The Librettist**  
Jayde Kirchert

Jayde is a writer, director, dramaturg, lecturer and Artistic Director of Melbourne based theatre company, Citizen Theatre. She has directed & written multiple critically-acclaimed productions through Citizen Theatre including Green Room Award nominated *Mara KORPER* (2021), *Ascent* (2018), *Nude* (2015), and directed Rory Godbold's Green Room Award nominated play, *When the Light Leaves* (2019 & 2020). She has also been the dramaturg on numerous musicals, original cabarets and plays.

She was the 2020 recipient of Monash University's Jeanne Pratt Artist in Residence commission to create a new musical with Peter Rutherford. She was also the Artist in Residence

at Gasworks Arts Park in 2022 to create a new work, *Ego Machine*.

She is a lecturer at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne where she regularly directs student works, which have included the graduating 3rd year production *Sweet Charity* (2021) and *Morning Melodies* concerts at Arts Centre Melbourne's Hamer Hall (2019, 2022, 2024).

From the University of Melbourne, she holds a Bachelor of Music Theatre, Post Graduate Diploma of Arts (Anthropology) and is currently undertaking a PhD researching feminist dramaturgies in music theatre contexts.



**The Arranger/  
Composer**  
Peter Rutherford

Peter Rutherford is a highly regarded musical director, composer, and voice teacher whose international career spans Australasia, London, New York, and Europe. His extensive credits as a Musical Director include both Australian and international productions of *A Christmas Carol*, *Nine*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (MD), *Jagged Little Pill* (Australasian Musical Supervisor/MD), *School of Rock* (Vocal Coach/AMD), *Matilda The Musical*, *Beyond Desire*, *A Little Touch of Chaos*, *On the 20th Century*, *A Little Night Music*, *My Fair Lady*, *Little Women*, *The Hatpin*, *LoveBites*, *Sing On Through Tomorrow*, and many more. He has also served as Associate Musical Director for *Annie*, *Cats*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, and *The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber*.

As a composer, Peter has co-written large-scale theatrical works, including *The Hatpin*, *LoveBites*, and *A Little Touch of Chaos* with James Millar, as well as *Dangerous* and *The Lyrebird's Voice* with Jayde Kirchert. The most recent might be best described as a 'Jukebox Opera'. He has been fortunate enough to have his works staged across Australia, New York,

London, and beyond, earning critical and award-winning acclaim. He has also produced three albums featuring his compositions. He regularly orchestrates arrangements for publicity events and television, such as *Carols By Candlelight*.

Peter's expertise as a voice specialist has found him in demand on major productions such as *Hamilton*, *Hadestown*, *Miss Saigon*, & *Juliet, Once, West Side Story*, *Come Rain or Come Shine*, and *School of Rock*. Most recently, he coached the singing for the upcoming feature film *Moana*.

A two-time recipient of the Jeanne Pratt Artist in Residence at Monash University, Peter is also a dedicated member of the Music Theatre faculty at the VCA, University of Melbourne, where he continues to mentor the next generation of performers. He is a sought-after repetiteur, musical director and coach for festivals, concerts, and industry events.

His research combines multi-disciplinary approaches to pedagogical frameworks for the teaching of music theatre performance skills, particularly singing.



# WORKSHOP 1

## WHAT IS OPERA?





# VOICE TYPES AND SINGING STYLES

There are seven voice types in opera, each of which is defined by the range of notes they can sing and their vocal quality.

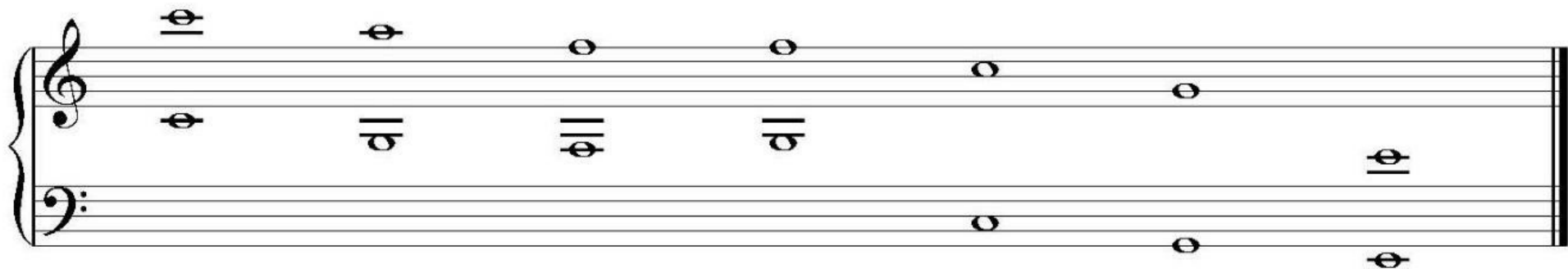
There are three female operatic voice types, although most operas only have soprano and mezzo-soprano roles.

- **Soprano** – the highest sounding female voice with a vocal range from middle C up to the C two octaves above.
- **Mezzo-Soprano** – slightly lower than the soprano with a vocal range from the G below middle C to the A two octaves above.
- **Contralto** – the lowest sounding female voice and rarely used in opera today. The vocal range for this voice type is from the F below middle C to a high F one octave above.

There are four male voice types, although the countertenor voice is mainly used in operas from the Baroque period (1600-1750).

- **Countertenor** – the highest sounding male voice with almost the same vocal range as a mezzo-soprano; the G below middle C to a high F one octave above.
- **Tenor** – a high sounding male voice that usually takes the leading male role. The vocal range for this type is roughly from the C below middle C to the C above.
- **Baritone** – the middle sounding male voice with a vocal range from the second G below middle C up to the G above.
- **Bass** – the lowest sounding male voice which has a vocal range from the E above middle C to the E two octaves below; however, some bass singers can sing lower.

Below is a diagram that illustrates where each voice type sits on a music staff.



Soprano

Mezzo-Soprano

Contralto

Countertenor

Tenor

Baritone

Bass

There are further categories of voice defining the kind of voice quality and the type of music they can sing. The composer will consider voice types to highlight the different characters – for example, to differentiate between a King and a Servant, or a Princess and a Witch.

A few of these are:

- **Coloratura** – a very high range with the ability to sing complicated parts with agility.
- **Dramatic** – a heavy sounding, powerful voice.
- **Lyric** – an average sized voice with the ability to sing long, beautiful phrases.
- **Heldentenor** – The 'heroic tenor', a very big role that requires a powerful sound.

Follow the links below to hear examples of what these voices sound like:

Classical female voices - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIPFAww8X-U>

Classical male voices - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRL7shs23Wc>

Here are the voice types in *The Lyrebird's Voice*:

CHARACTER	VOICE TYPE	CHARACTER	VOICE TYPE
Lyrebird	Soprano	Dame Scarlett	Soprano
Lord Emu	Tenor	Dame Spinebill	Soprano
Duchess of Wattle	Soprano	Dame Yellow-Tuft	Mezzo-Soprano
Duke of Wattle	Tenor	KitCat	Mezzo-Soprano
Lord Kookaburra	Baritone	Konga Kangaroo	Baritone
Lady Lorikeet	Soprano	Emma Echidna	Mezzo-Soprano
Lady Rosella	Soprano	Wozza Wombat	Bass



# WORKSHOP 1 – ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVITY ONE: SINGING PRACTICE

In Workshop 1, we started to learn the Bird Chorus from *The Lyrebird's Voice*. Practise singing the first section that we covered in this workshop together as a class. Remember to follow the the following steps:

1. Practise saying words in the correct rhythm
2. Listen to the melody
3. Take a deep breath and support with your diaphragm
4. Sing the melody.

The music can be found in Appendix A on page 29 of this resource.

## ACTIVITY TWO: RECREATING THE SOUNDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOREST

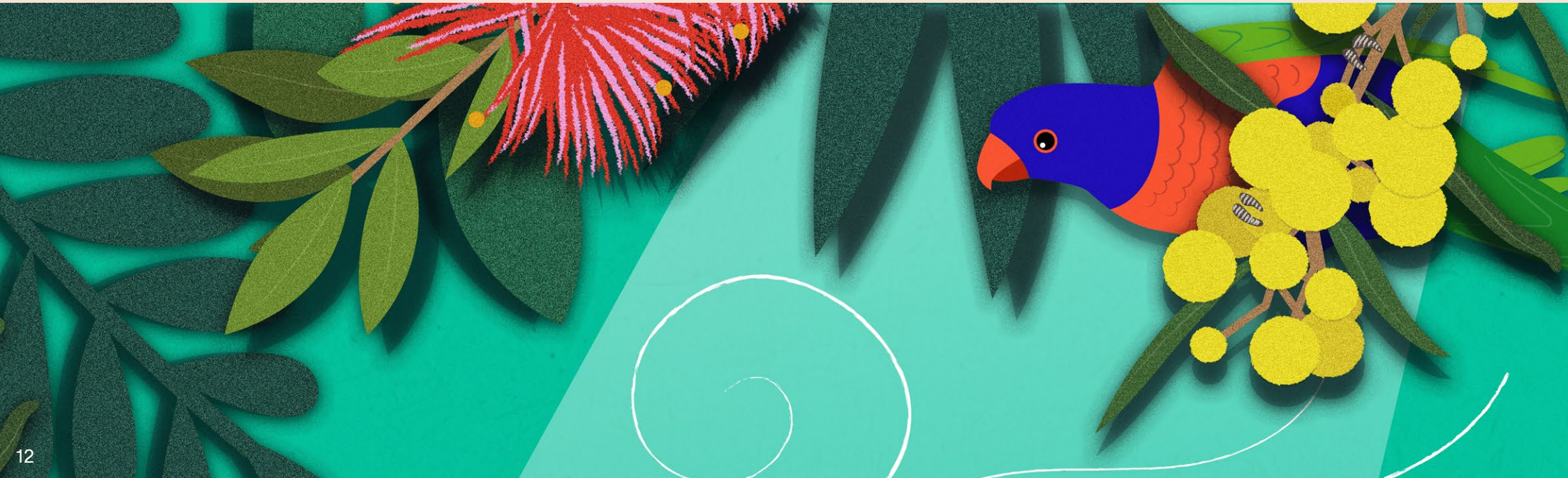
**Step 1:** Investigate the sounds of the different birds in our story by listening to their bird calls below:

BIRD	PICTURE	BIRDCALL	BIRD	PICTURE	BIRDCALL
Honeyeaters		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&amp;v=YqTc5r-jDA4">www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&amp;v=YqTc5r-jDA4</a>	Kookaburra		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fc_-icFHwQo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fc_-icFHwQo</a>
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzwyusdKEjA">www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzwyusdKEjA</a>	Emu		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lkg7_6iaPdY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lkg7_6iaPdY</a>
Lyrebird		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjE0Kdfos4Y">www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjE0Kdfos4Y</a>	Lorikeet		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsCjtdt5Alw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsCjtdt5Alw</a>
Rosella		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1EeV8wfpuA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1EeV8wfpuA</a>			

**Step 2:** As a class you will create a soundscape. Choose one of the bird sounds from the above list - remember to work with the other students in your class so there is a variety of bird calls chosen. Listen to the bird call and then use either the instruments available in your classroom or your voice to recreate the sound - consider the pitch and rhythm of the sound. If you chose the Lyrebird, remember that even though it copies other birds, it must have its own voice, so choose one instrument that is different to the class and use this to copy the other bird calls. Now we are ready to create a soundscape using the form below:

NIGHT TIME	PRE-DAWN	DAWN	DAYBREAK
It is dark and the birds are asleep	The sun is about to rise and the birds are slowly waking up	All of the birds are now awake getting ready for their day ahead	The sun is now fully up and the birds are off about their day

In each section, consider if your pitches will be loud or quiet and if the tempos of your rhythms will be fast or slow. To help with this, you need to determine what the level of action will be and the types of emotions you are trying to convey.





### WHAT IS OPERA?

Opera as a European art form has been in existence since the seventeenth century and became especially popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today there are many styles of opera performance, but they all have one thing in common – an opera is a play that is sung.

The main languages that are sung in opera are Italian, French, German and English.

The main difference between opera and music theatre is amplification: music theatre is usually amplified while opera is not, which means no microphones are used. In addition to singing, music theatre usually includes spoken dialogue and dance. Opera on the other hand, uses recitative – a singing style designed to imitate natural speech.

**1. When did European Opera begin to develop?**

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**2. What is an opera?**

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**3. What are the main languages that are sung in opera?**

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**4. What is recitative?**

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**5. List the 2 differences between Opera and Musical Theatre**

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**Now it's your turn to create a concept for an opera by filling out the sections below:**

**What is your opera called?**

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**Who are the main characters in your opera?**

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**What is your opera about?**

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**What are the main emotions your characters will express?**

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# WORKSHOP 2

## EXPLORING THE STORY OF *THE LYREBIRD'S VOICE*





# THE STORY

Lyrebird is a trickster who goes a step too far and gets in trouble with her friends in the Australian forest. Her bad choices lead to the Duchess of Wattle banishing her from the community and placing a curse on her so that she can not use her own voice. From now on, it's mimicry only. Alone in the bush, the Lyrebird meets a quirky assortment of Australian animals, where she discovers the power of being different. Director Elizabeth Hill-Cooper says "At its heart, this opera is about **identity, belonging, and finding your voice**. Even when others want to silence you, it's important to stay true to who you are".

The idea for the story was created in 2023 at the **New Work Opera Studio** by six young people who wanted to celebrate being different. The original concept has been further developed by composer/arranger Peter Rutherford and librettist Jayde Kirchert, using well known opera and music theatre classics to explore the Australian spirit and the importance of using your voice in a responsible way.

# STAGING THE ACTION

The Director of a production is responsible for organising the movement on stage and ensuring the performance makes sense to the audience. Before rehearsals begin, the director usually undertakes some research of the work by studying the libretto and music score to begin working on both a concept of the story and the world they want to present on stage. They collaborate heavily with the design team to establish a strong idea of what the set and costumes will look like, and how the lighting will help enhance the emotions and create the mood. Over the course of the rehearsal period, the director works with the performers to stage the action in a process called 'blocking'. Through the blocking process, performers become familiar with their movements within the space before moving into the theatre to rehearse it all on stage.

# MEET THE DIRECTOR

## The Director

Elizabeth Hill-Cooper



### What was the first theatre show you saw? How old were you?

The first theatre show I saw was *Jesus Christ Superstar*, I was 8 years old. I'll never forget how loud it was and how much it held my attention. I was fascinated.

### What inspired you to become a Director?

Stories and music inspire me. Bringing a world to life and creating the characters that inhabit it.

### What is your favourite part of this opera?

It changes every day but right now I have two favorites, the scene where Kogga Kangaroo, Emma Echidna and Wozza Wombat play football and the second is Lord Emu's song.

## WORKSHOP 2 – ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY ONE: SINGING PRACTICE

In Workshop 2, we continued to learn how to sing the Bird Chorus from *The Lyrebird's Voice*. Practise singing the first and second sections that we covered in Workshop 1 and 2 together as a class. Remember to follow the steps below:

1. Practise saying words in the correct rhythm
2. Listen to the melody
3. Take a deep breath and support with your diaphragm
4. Sing the melody.

The music can be found in Appendix A on page 29 of this resource.

### ACTIVITY TWO: EXPLORING REACTIONS AND EMOTIONS

As you'll discover when you watch a performance of *The Lyrebird's Voice*, the characters are all animals from the Australian forest.

**STEP 1:** By yourself, consider the characteristics of the animals in the list on the right and then explore how each animal moves, their posture and any particular gestures they may have:

- Emu
- Lyrebird
- Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo
- Kookaburra
- Kangaroo
- Wombat
- Cat

**STEP 2:** In groups of 3 or 4, use body language, facial expression and gesture to create freeze-frames (or tableaux) that communicate to the audience how the animals respond emotionally to different situations in the list below:

- One animal feeling embarrassed because they are different to the other animals
- Finding your home has been destroyed
- Being captured by someone who wants to eat you
- Showing others that you are good at something
- Being tolerant and accepting of other animals who are different

When you have completed the freeze-frames, take some time as a class to discuss the different emotions and the impact they may have on an individual.

### ACTIVITY THREE: CREATE A SCENE

Working in groups of 8 to 10, use the script in Appendix B on page 31, to create and rehearse your version of Scene 20 - Celebrations from *The Lyrebird's Voice*. You'll just say the lines, no need to sing them.

1. As a group, read through the script and determine what is happening
2. Consider which characters the audience needs to focus on throughout the scene and what emotions need to be expressed

3. Assign who will play the different roles  
(There are 8 characters who say something in the scene. If you have more than 8 in your group, you can share characters or the extra people can say the lines of all animals)
4. Work together to stage the scene thinking about your positions, movements, gestures, and facial expressions
5. When it's ready, perform your scene for the rest of your class.



For all your answers below, write them in first person as if you are the Lyrebird.

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# WORKSHOP 3

## CREATING THE WORLD OF *THE LYREBIRD'S VOICE*





# MEET THE DESIGNER

An important element of any theatre production is the set and costumes because they help shape the world the story is based in, and make it easier for audiences to engage with the performance. For *The Lyrebird's Voice*, **Ishan Vivekanantham** designed the setting and the costumes, and we were lucky enough to ask him some questions about his experience as a designer.



## **What was the first theatre show you saw? How old were you?**

The first show I ever saw was *Mamma Mia!* in London when I was 11. My parents told me that when you're in London, you must see at least one West End show. We were seated right at the back row in the top level, but that didn't matter at all. I was completely mesmerised. I remember being obsessed with how the set moved and rotated so seamlessly, it felt like magic. I couldn't stop thinking about how it was done. That experience sparked my fascination with theatre design, and it's something I carry with me to this day. I always try to capture that same sense of wonder in my work and create moments that stay with an audience long after the show ends.

## **What made you want to be a designer?**

When I arrived back home in Australia after watching my first ever musical, I begged my parents to take me back and watch more musicals. Every year on my birthday, my parents would take me to see whatever musical was in town. Every musical I watched, I paid close attention to the set and costume designs and would obsess over every detail. And while I didn't realise it would be a possibility for me to be a theatre designer until I was in University, I recall these memories and realise that I was always meant to be a set and costume designer for theatre.

## **How do you approach theatre design for young audiences? Is it different compared to adult audiences?**

My overall design process doesn't really change. I always begin by reading the libretto, listening to the music, analysing the characters, and collaborating closely with the director to understand what kind of world will best serve the story. What does shift, however, is the aesthetic approach. For young audiences, I tend to heighten and stylise the visuals to create something bold and memorable. For example, rather than presenting a naturalistic Australian bush, we amplified the colours and textures to create a more vivid and imaginative landscape.

## **What are some examples of the ways you tried to evoke native wildlife in your costumes?**

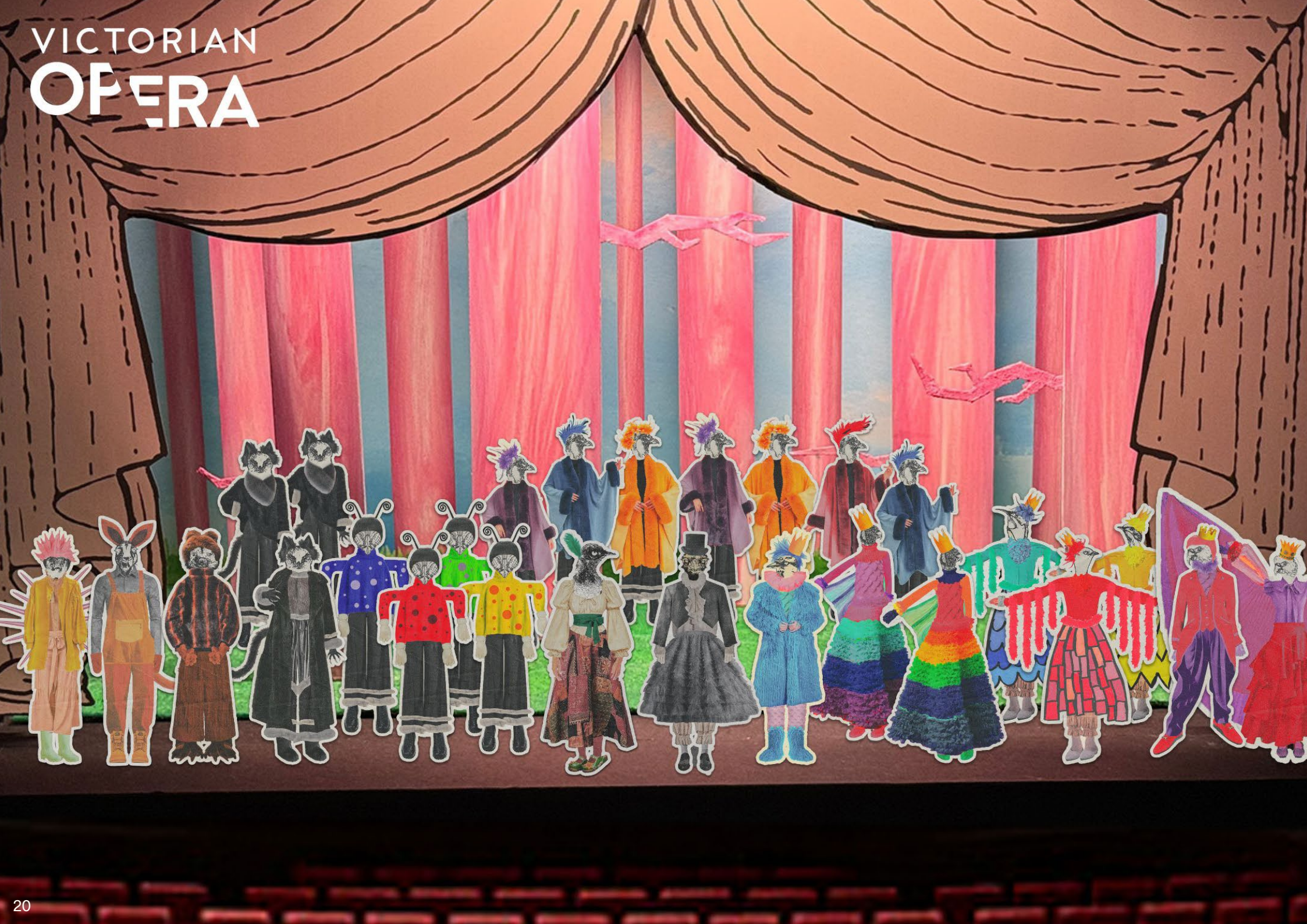
The design incorporates key elements of native wildlife—colours, textures, and feathers—but takes them to a surreal level to engage younger audiences. The costumes blend period clothing with animal silhouettes, reflecting the regal nature of the birds in the story and their monarch-like presence.

## **What advice do you have for aspiring costume and set designers?**

Stay endlessly curious. Curiosity is what keeps me going in this field and it's the reason I'm still so passionate about set and costume design. See as much theatre as you can: shows you're drawn to, and especially the ones you're not. Inspiration often comes from the most unexpected places; visual art, architecture, fashion, even conversations overheard on a tram. Research deeply, explore widely, and don't be afraid to ask questions. The more curious you are, the more nuanced and imaginative your designs will become.



# VICTORIAN OPERA








# WORKSHOP 3 – ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVITY ONE: SINGING PRACTICE

In Workshop 3, we finished learning how to sing a section of the Bird Chorus from *The Lyrebird’s Voice*. Practise singing all three sections covered in Workshops 1, 2, and 3 together as a class. Remember to follow these steps:

- 1. Practise saying words in the correct rhythm
  - 2. Listen to the melody
  - 3. Take a deep breath and support with your diaphragm
  - 4. Sing the melody.
- The music can be found in Appendix A on page 29 of this resource.

## ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT DO YOU SEE?

The Animal	IMAGE	Ishan’s Design	What features from the animal has Ishan used in his design?	How do the texture of the fabrics and the shape of the costume help to convey what animal this is on stage?
Kookaburra			<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>
Emma Echidna			<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>

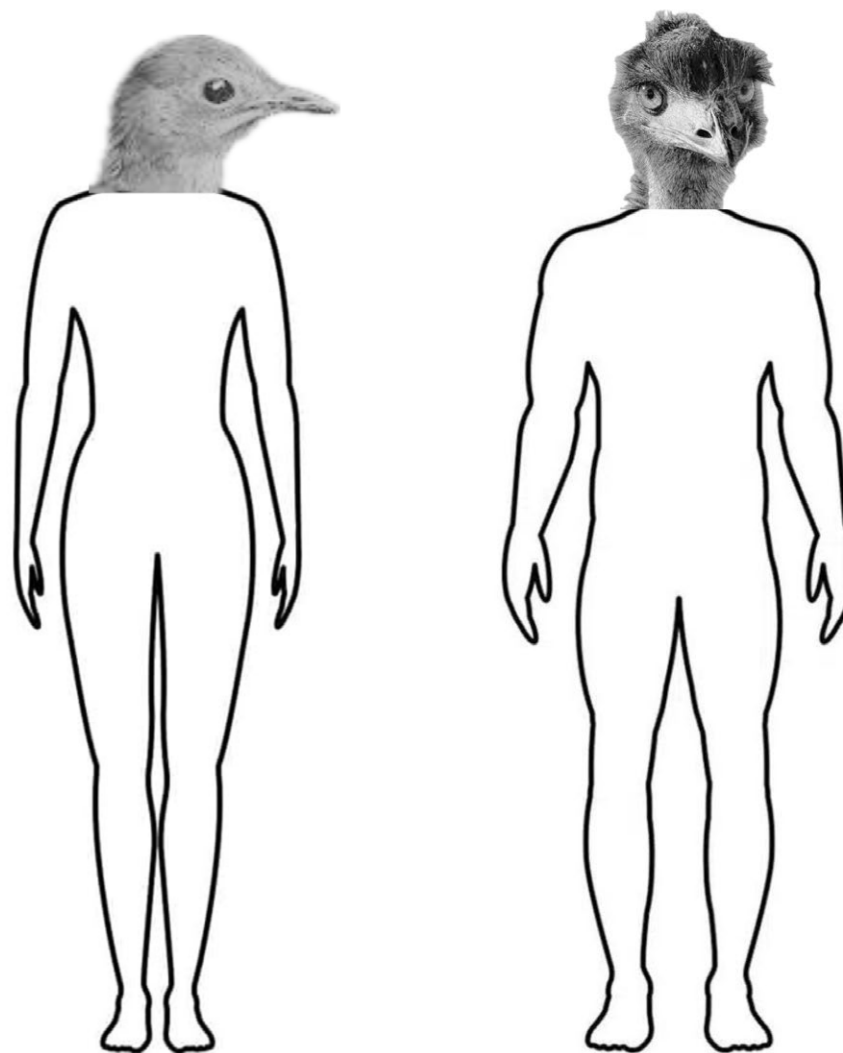
## Research

There is an even older form of opera called Chinese Opera. Go to the following website and read about the conventions of Chinese Opera: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_opera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_opera)

Colour is very important when designing costumes and make-up in Chinese Opera. From the same webpage, find out what the following colours represent in Chinese Opera.

- **Red** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Black** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **White** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Blue** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Yellow** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Purple** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Green** means \_\_\_\_\_
- **Gold & silver** means \_\_\_\_\_

Suppose *The Lyrebird's Voice* is being staged as a Chinese Opera and you have been appointed as the designer for the production. On the outlines provided below, sketch the costumes you would like to design and then use colours from Chinese Opera that correspond with the characteristics of the Lyrebird and Lord Emu.





# WORKSHOP 4

## MEET THE ORCHESTRA AND TIME TO BUMP-IN



# THE ORCHESTRA

The orchestra is another important element of opera. Some operas have large orchestras of up to 100 musicians, while others only have a smaller group, also known as a chamber orchestra. An orchestra is made up of four families of instruments - the strings, the woodwinds, the brass, and the percussion. Generally, the instruments do not need to be amplified.

The orchestra for *The Lyrebird's Voice* is a chamber orchestra and is made up of 12 musicians and will include two amplified instruments. Look at the table below to see what instruments are used and the instrument families they come from.

INSTRUMENT		INSTRUMENT FAMILY	KEY CHARACTERISTICS
2 Violins 1 Viola 1 Cello	1 Double Bass 1 Acoustic/ Electric Guitar	String family	These instruments are generally made from wood and have strings. Sound is made by plucking or strumming the strings, or by running a bow across them.
1 Flute 1 Clarinet		Woodwind family	These instruments were traditionally made from wood and/or have a reed. A reed is a very thin piece of wood placed on a mouthpiece and sound is made when air is blown between the reed and the mouthpiece. Some woodwind instruments have a double reed, which means there is no mouthpiece and sound is made by blowing air between two reeds. The flute is now made from metal but was originally made from wood.
1 French Horn 1 Trombone		Brass Family	These instruments are made from different types of metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece.
1 Keyboard		Not a traditional member of the Orchestra because it is an amplified instrument	The keyboard is an electronic instrument that requires amplification to be heard. It is a modern version of the piano which belongs to both the string and percussion family as it has keys that are attached to small felted hammers that hit strings.
Drum Kit, Timpani, Crash Cymbals, Glockenspiel, Triangle, Vibraslap, Tambourine, Shaker, Woodblocks, Cow Bell, Orchestral Bass Drum, Ratchet, Tam-Tam		Percussion family	These instruments make sound by being shaken or hit with mallets. Some of these instruments can be tuned (glockenspiel, marimba, xylophone, timpanis etc...) which means they can produce sounds with different pitches. Most percussion instruments are untuned.



## **BUMPING-IN THE SET**

When the set is installed in either the rehearsal room or on the stage in the theatre, the process is called a 'bump-in'. Similarly, when the set is taken out of a venue, the process is called a 'bump-out'.

In the case of *The Lyrebird's Voice*, which is being performed in three separate venues, the set will be bumped-in one day before the opera is performed. Once the set and lighting are installed, the cast, creative team and orchestra rehearse the work in the performance space, which usually differs quite a bit from the rehearsal space.

### **Rehearsals**

The rehearsal process inside the theatre usually occurs in the following order:

#### **Piano Technical Rehearsal**

This rehearsal is for the stage managers who have the chance to run through the opera to make sure all the technical cues and cast entrance and exit cues are correct. This rehearsal is accompanied by a piano.

#### **Sitzprobe**

Sitzprobe is a German word that is translated literally as 'sitting down rehearsal'. It is the first time the cast come together with the orchestra and sing through the opera. The cast do not wear their costumes or perform any of their actions. This can happen in the theatre or much earlier when the production is in the rehearsal room.

#### **Piano Dress Rehearsal**

The Piano Dress Rehearsal is for all the cast, stage management and crew to run through the production. The cast are dressed in their costumes and are accompanied by the piano. In opera, this rehearsal is often called the Director's Rehearsal because they run this rehearsal to ensure everything is how they planned.

#### **Stage Orchestral Rehearsal**

The Stage Orchestral Rehearsal is the first time the cast and orchestra come together to rehearse the work on stage. The cast are usually in costume and will perform all their actions. The conductor runs this rehearsal to ensure the music and singing is the best it can be before the audience sees the opera.

#### **General Rehearsal**

The General Rehearsal is a final run-through of the opera before its first public performance. The cast are dressed in their costumes with full hair and make-up and are accompanied by the orchestra. Sometimes a small audience is in attendance at these rehearsals, which gives the rehearsal more of a performance feel.

## WORKSHOP 4 – ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY ONE: SINGING PRACTICE

Across the last three workshops, we've learnt to sing the Bird Chorus from *The Lyrebird's Voice*. Keep practising the excerpt so you can sing along with the cast members and orchestra during the performance. Remember to follow these steps:

1. Practise saying words in the correct rhythm
2. Listen to the melody
3. Take a deep breath and support with your diaphragm
4. Sing the melody.

The music can be found in Appendix A on page 29 of this resource.

### ACTIVITY TWO: LET'S LEARN TO CONDUCT MUSIC

Want to have a go at being the conductor? A conductor leads the orchestra and the performers of an opera, and their job is to interpret the emotions and moods of the piece whilst keeping everyone at the same tempo.

Read through the instruction below which explains how a conductor keeps everyone at the same tempo:

#### TIME SIGNATURE

**4**  
**4**

#### STEP 1



Move your right hand down from your right shoulder to beside your waist. Beat 1 is at the bottom of this movement.

#### STEP 2



Sweep your right hand to your left. Beat 2 is at the end of this movement.

#### STEP 3



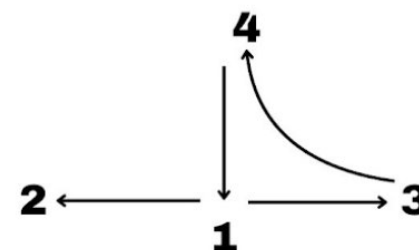
Now sweep your right hand to the right, past the central axis. Beat 3 is at the end of this movement.

#### STEP 4



Bring your right hand back to where you started in a curved motion. Once you have returned to the starting position, this is beat 4.

#### COMPLETE THE PATTERN



This is what all the actions look like when you place them together in a sequential motion.



Spend time practising these motions with your class without music, and then use the sound file for the Bird Chorus to practise conducting this piece of music. Big gestures mean loudly and little ones mean quietly.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



## WORKSHEET: Explore and Explain

Visit the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's Learn Page which can be accessed here: <https://mslearn.com.au/>

Explore the different orchestral instruments and the sounds they make individually, as well as sound they make when they all play together.

Now complete the table below for some of the orchestral instruments that you will hear for *The Lyrebird's Voice* by circling or highlighting the correct answer.

Instrument	What family does it belong to?	Its key characteristics are?	What does it sound like?		
Violin	• Strings	Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed	Bright	Low	Graceful
	• Woodwinds		Metallic	High	Velvety
	• Brass	Originally made from wood or have a reed	Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
	• Percussion	Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece	Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
		Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet	Calm	Penetrating	Loud
Cello	• Strings	Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed	Bright	Low	Graceful
	• Woodwinds		Metallic	High	Velvety
	• Brass	Originally made from wood or have a reed	Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
	• Percussion	Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece	Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
		Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet	Calm	Penetrating	Loud
Flute	• Strings	Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed	Bright	Low	Graceful
	• Woodwinds		Metallic	High	Velvety
	• Brass	Originally made from wood or have a reed	Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
	• Percussion	Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece	Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
		Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet	Calm	Penetrating	Loud
			Sparkling		

Instrument	What family does it belong to?	Its key characteristics are?	What does it sound like?		
Clarinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strings</li> <li>• Woodwinds</li> <li>• Brass</li> <li>• Percussion</li> </ul>	<p>Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed</p> <p>Originally made from wood or have a reed</p> <p>Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece</p> <p>Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet</p>	Bright	Low	Graceful
			Metallic	High	Velvety
			Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
			Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
			Calm	Penetrating	Loud
			Sparkling		
French Horn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strings</li> <li>• Woodwinds</li> <li>• Brass</li> <li>• Percussion</li> </ul>	<p>Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed</p> <p>Originally made from wood or have a reed</p> <p>Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece</p> <p>Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet</p>	Bright	Low	Graceful
			Metallic	High	Velvety
			Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
			Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
			Calm	Penetrating	Loud
			Sparkling		
Trombone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strings</li> <li>• Woodwinds</li> <li>• Brass</li> <li>• Percussion</li> </ul>	<p>Generally made from wood and have strings that are plucked, strummed or bowed</p> <p>Originally made from wood or have a reed</p> <p>Made from metal and sound is made by buzzing your lips as you blow air into a mouthpiece</p> <p>Can be tuned or untuned and sound is made by shaking them or striking with a mallet</p>	Bright	Low	Graceful
			Metallic	High	Velvety
			Vibrant	Warm	Quiet
			Mellow	Whistling	Shrill
			Calm	Penetrating	Loud
			Sparkling		



# APPENDIX A

Use the music provided below to practise each section of The Bird Chorus from *The Lyrebird's Voice*.

Soprano


## The Bird Chorus

From *The Lyrebird's Voice*

Originally 'The Anvil Chorus' from the Opera *Il trovatore*

Composed by Giuseppe Verdi  
Arranged by Peter Rutherford

Pesante  $\text{♩} = 120$  **A**



Fly, fly a - bove to see if dan - gers are a - round us.

**B** **C**



If log - gers come, a - lert the crea - tures on the ground to flee. "Ev - 'ry bird must earn its place."



[LISTEN HERE](#)

# The Bird Chorus

From *The Lyrebird's Voice*  
Originally 'The Anvil Chorus' from the Opera *Il trovatore*

Composed by Giuseppe Verdi  
Arranged by Peter Rutherford

Pesante ♩ = 120

**A**

VOCALS

Fly, fly a - bove to see if dan - gers are a - round us.

Piano

7 **B**  
V.

**C**

If log - gers come, a - lert the crea - tures on the ground to flee. "Ev - 'ry bird must earn its place."

Pno.



[LISTEN HERE](#)



# APPENDIX B

Use the script below to create and practise your version of Scene 20 - Celebrations from *The Lyrebird's Voice* for Activity 3 in Workshop 2.

## SCENE 20 - Celebrations

*The birds have gathered in a safe part of the Australian forest to welcome Lord Emu into their community.  
They are celebrating their escape from the wild feral cats*

**LADY ROSELLA:**

(To Lord Emu) Hello sir, I'm Lady Rosella

**LADY LORIKEET:**

(To Lord Emu) and I'm Lady Lorikeet

**LADY ROSELLA & LADY LORIKEET:**

We really admire your fast feet.

**DAME SCARLETT, DAME SPINEBILL & DAME YELLOW-TUFT:**

(To Lord Emu) So tall, you're so graceful, with feathers so fine. So much more pretty coverage than mine!

**LORD KOOKABURRA:**

(To Lord Emu) My dear chum, Lord Emu, you're one great big and brave bird!  
Would you fancy some breakfast? You can share some of my worms

**LORD EMU:**

Dear birds, I'm flattered and shattered!  
But I feel I have finally found my place.

**ALL:**

We're one! Although we are all different birds, we all have our own ways to soar and fly.  
So strong! If we learn to accept one another, together we will be strong!

**LADY LYREBIRD:**

(To Lord Emu) With your fast legs

**LORD EMU:**

(To Lady Lyrebird) And your good ideas

**LADY LYREBIRD & LORD EMU:**

Our birds will have no need to fear!

**ALL:**

We're one! Although we are all different birds, we all have our own ways to soar and fly.  
So strong! If we learn to accept one another,  
Together we'll be strong! Strong! Strong!  
Together we'll be strong! Strong! Strong!  
Together we'll be strong!



# CURRICULUM LINKS

## ALIGNED TO VICTORIAN CURRICULUM 2.0

WORKSHOP 1	IMAGE REFERENCES
Activity1: Music Level 1 & 2, Developing Practices VC2AMU2D01 Activity 2: Music Level 3 & 4, Creating VC2AMU4C01 WORKSHEET: Music Level 3 & 4, Exploring VC2AMU4E01	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singing_honeyeater">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singing_honeyeater</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red-tailed_black_cockatoo">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red-tailed_black_cockatoo</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyrebird">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyrebird</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainbow_lorikeet">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainbow_lorikeet</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosella">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosella</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kookaburra">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kookaburra</a>  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emu">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emu</a>  <a href="https://www.livescience.com/57267-echidna-facts.html">https://www.livescience.com/57267-echidna-facts.html</a>
WORKSHOP 1	
Activity 1: Music Level 1 & 2, Developing Practices VC2AMU2D01 Activity 2: Drama Level 1 & 2, Creating VC2ADR2C01; Drama Level 3 & 4, Developing Practices VC2ADR4D01 Activity 3: Drama Level 5 & 6, Creating VC2ADR6C01; Drama Level 5 & 6, Presenting VC2ADR6P01 WORKSHEET: Drama Level 5 & 6, Exploring VC2ADR6E01; English Level 2, Language (Text Structure & Organisation) VC2E2LA04; English Level 2, Language (Language for Expressing and Developing Ideas) VC2E2LA09; English Level 2, Literature (Creating Literature) VC2E2LE05; English Level 2, Literacy (Analysing, Interpreting and Evaluating) VC2E2LY09	
WORKSHOP 3	
Activity1: Music Level 1 & 2, Developing Practices VC2AMU2D01 Activity 2: Visual Arts Level 3 & 4, Exploring VC2AVA4E01; Visual Arts Level 3 & 4, Developing Practices VC2AVA4D01 WORKSHEET: Visual Arts, Level 5 & 6, Exploring VC2AVA6E01; Visual Arts, Level 5 & 6, Creating VC2AVA6C01	
WORKSHOP 4	
Activity 1: Music Level 1 & 2, Developing Practices VC2AMU2D01 Activity 2: Music Level 5 & 6, Developing Practices VC2AMU6D01 WORKSHEET: Music Level 5 & 6, Exploring VC2AMU6E01	
VICTORIAN TEACHING AND LEARNING MODEL 2.0	
Activity 1 has been aligned to the key elements of the new Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0.	
<p>Elements of Learning: Each week students are asked to activate prior knowledge of the song they have learnt (Knowledge and Memory) before learning new sections (Retention and Recall). In each workshop they are asked to perform what they have learnt with the workshop facilitators. They will also have the opportunity to sing along with the performers when they watch the opera (Mastery and Application).</p> <p>Elements of Teaching: Through Explicit Teaching students have new learning modelled to them (I do) before they are asked to join in (we do). This practice of gradual release allows for the teacher to check the level of understanding and correct any misconceptions. Through practice in the classroom, students have the opportunity to work independently (you do) on the song learnt. With the opportunity to sing along with the cast when they watch the opera, the program is providing the opportunity for Supported Application and allowing students to display their mastery of the song learnt.</p>	



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