

Dr Lindy Hume AM

Director | Artistic Director | Festival Director

CV 2022



Born: 25th August 1961
Home: Tathra, NSW / Port Sorell, Tasmania
Contact: lindyhume@yahoo.com
Phone: +61419530743
Website: lindyhume.com
Current role: Artistic Director, Ten Days on the Island, Tasmania 2019/2023

Career Summary

2023-2024 Creative Director and Artistic Advisor, Opera Australia Sydney Summer Season 2024

2019-2023 Artistic Director, Ten Days on the Island, Tasmania (app.2017)

2021, 2022 Creative Director, Four Winds Festival, Bermagui NSW

2012-2017 Artistic Director, Opera Queensland

2010-2012 Festival Director/CEO, Sydney Festival (appointed 2008)

2007-2009 Australia Council Fellowship (Theatre Board)

2004-2007 Artistic Director, Perth International Arts Festival (appointed 2002)

2004 American directing debut (Houston, Texas)

1996-2001 Artistic Director, OzOpera

1996 Artistic Director, Victoria State Opera (until merger with Opera Australia)

1996 European directing debut (Antwerp, Belgium)

1993-1996 Artistic Director, West Australian Opera

1992 Graduate Diploma of Arts Administration, University of SA

1985-current Opera/theatre director (Australia)

1980-1988 Assistant director/choreographer

1977-1980 Dancer

Academic

- Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Creative Industries, Education and Social Justice, QUT (2021)
- Adjunct Professor, School of Creative Arts and Media, University of Tasmania (2020-23)
- Honorary Doctor of Letters, Faculty of Humanities, University of Western Australia (2007)
- Graduate Diploma in Arts Administration, Graduate School of Management, University of SA (1992)

Awards

- Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2021 Australia Day Honours. Citation: For significant service to the performing arts, particularly to opera.
- Australia Council Theatre Board Fellowship (2007-2009)
- Helpmann and Green Room Awards - Best Direction of an Opera, Best Opera Production (Batavia 2001)

Boards, Panels (selection)

- Board Member - Northern Rivers Performing Arts NORPA (2017-2019)
- Board Member - Regional Arts NSW (2010-2016)
- Chair - South East Arts (2009-2015)
- Board member - Major Performing Arts Board, Australia Council for the Arts (October 2008 - 2012)
- Board member - West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (2003-2006)

Publications

- *Restless Giant: Changing Cultural Values in Regional Australia* (Currency House Platform Paper 50, February 2017)
- *The Bigger Picture: Toward a Landscape-Oriented Creative Practice* (PhD thesis, QUT 2021)
- Articles, essays and opinion pieces in media outlets and journals.

Signature strengths:

- Life-long experience working in the arts in Australia/NZ and internationally.
- Direction of 12 Australian multi-arts festivals; major, medium and small scale; from big cities (Sydney, Perth) to regional communities (Bermagui, Burnie).
- Track record of commissioning and developing successful new Australian works of scale in multi-arts festival and opera contexts.
- Specialist focus (PhD, publications) on the arts in regional Australia.
- Excellent writing, presenting, public speaking and facilitating skills. Strong strategic, business, governance and advocacy proficiencies.
- Articulating and implementing a strong, inspiring vision underpinning a shared culture of social and artistic purpose from rehearsal studio to boardroom.
- Creator of audience-friendly contemporary festival, opera and theatre experiences of high quality and intelligence that are boldly theatrical, inclusive and oriented toward humanist narratives.
- Decades-long advocate and mentor for women in the arts; active advocate for addressing gender bias, racial stereotyping and misogyny in opera.
- Track record of foregrounding socially engaged practice, contemporary First Nations cultures, community-focused projects, participatory and non-arts collaborations in opera and festival program

Values/principles:

- Excellence, Community, Integrity, Adventure, Empathy.
- Collaborative leadership: orient to landscape, not portrait.
- Read the room: context is everything.
- Plant seeds for the future: identify and invest in the potential of people, new work, brilliant ideas, alternative ways of working, emerging talent.

Artistic & Festival Director

Ten Days on the Island 2019-2023

I joined Ten Days on the Island in 2018 after an organisational review in 2017 directed it to refresh the brand's original regional Pan-Tasmanian remit and prioritise Tasmanian innovation and the development of new work by local artists within an international festival context. To amplify these priorities, Ten Days on the Island relocated its operations from Hobart to the coastal/industrial city of Burnie (population 20,000) in the North West of the state. This physical move, which surprised many observers, has proven to be strategically effective, while still a work-in-progress.

For 20 years Ten Days on the Island has forged an alternative path as an international festival by resisting the idea that 'mainland cities, particularly Sydney and Melbourne, were the arbiters of whatever came into Australia' (Elizabeth Walsh 2021). While embracing this history, the 3 festivals under my leadership depart significantly from the previous two decades' programming convention. Most obviously, from 2019 Ten Days on the Island evolved into *"An epic adventure spread over three action packed weekend programs, (North West, North East and South). Each weekend will have its own character while staying true to the Ten Days ethos: experiencing our extraordinary island through art that brings us together to celebrate our shared, diverse humanity and sense of place... Upon this foundation, international works are selected to complement, resonate with, and amplify the impact of locally made work..."* (Hume, 2018)

After a covid-impacted 2021 Festival focused almost entirely on local artists and featuring smaller venues spread across the island, limited international/national programming returns for 2023 (my final festival as Artistic Director) with a program featuring works of ambition and scale in parallel with the regional, site-specific, socially engaged practice and First Nations work that Ten Days audiences love and expect.

Opera Queensland 2012-2017

Opera Queensland presented the challenge of designing a future for a company in danger of being de-funded and a centuries-old artform under threat of irrelevance globally. Strategies to build community ownership of the company and shift outmoded perceptions included diversifying the artistic and audience experience and engaging more people across the state in creative and participatory projects. The 2012-2017 business plan was developed around values of Excellence, Community and Adventure and creating new opera experiences in diverse locations for new audiences. Over this period Opera Queensland gradually built local community engagement across Queensland, reshaped its artistic identity nationally, developed international co-productions and returned to financial health. In 2018, a recommendation of the 2017 National Opera Review to increase funding to Opera Queensland was implemented.

Key initiatives 2012-2017 included an expansion of regional touring activity across Queensland to incorporate skills development for local community choruses participating in professional productions. International co-productions of *Cenerentola*, *Barber of Seville* and *Rigoletto* took Opera Queensland's brand to NZ, Europe and America. Multiple creative collaborations with local arts organisations included Camerata of St John's, DanceNorth, Expressions Dance Theatre, La Boite Theatre, Shake & Stir Theatre, Brisbane Festival, Bleach Festival and Queensland Music Festival.

Sydney Festival 2010-2012

Sydney Festival's stellar international program 2010-2012 included theatre works of scale and lustre such as the Berlin Schaubühne *Hamlet*, Cheek By Jowl's *Tis Pity She's a Whore*, Kneehigh Theatre's *Red Shoes*, Peter Sellars' production of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex & Symphony of Psalms*, composers AR Rahman and Phillip Glass, choreographers Crystal Pite, Wayne McGregor and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, and many Australian Premieres including *The Manganiyar Seduction* and Mike Patton's *Mondo Cane*. Sydney Festival commissioned multiple new works and in 2010 won 5 Helpmann

Artistic & Festival Director

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Awards from 9 nominations including Best New Australian Work for *Smoke & Mirrors* in partnership with Spiegeltent International).

The 2010-2012 festivals reflected a deep, authentic relationship with the city I grew up in; to create space in Sydney's glamorous, party-city celebration for alternative narratives. Initiatives included a new festival hub in Sydney's Inner-West; an expansion of the Festival's Western Sydney program and, in partnership with Carriageworks, the Festival's first-ever curated celebration of Sydney's contemporary Indigenous cultures overseen by an Advisory Group led by Larissa Behrendt, Lily Shearer and other distinguished leaders. *Black Capital* was a collection of performances, symposia and exhibitions located in the heart of Redfern, featuring the decorated caravans of Brook Andrews *Travelling Colony* and the World Premiere of *I Am Eora*, directed by Wesley Enoch - the stories of Pemulwuy, Bennelong and Barangaroo exploring Sydney's racial history; a symposium on Black Theatre, and a free Family and Culture Day.

Lindy Hume's first Sydney Festival has been a Festival in which interesting new versions of great works have been allowed to talk to each other...This kind of playfulness is a feature of Hume's Festival, which brings together a good number of absorbing shows and lets them interact. The Australian, Feb 2010)

Hume has proven herself adroit at taking the Festival somewhere new without losing the best of where it's already been. AFR, Jan 2010)

With the opening weekend of the 2010 Festival, Hume has succeeded spectacularly...this was a party with art at its centre. The Australian, Jan 2010

*Lindy reminded us that while celebrity and sensation titillate this city, it's ideas that enrich it. She announced herself boldly in 2010 with *The Manganiyar Seduction*, the Schaubühne Hamlet and Peter Sellars' production of *Oedipus Rex & Symphony of Psalms*, setting the stage for three years of festivals born of deep thinking and intellectual argument (as well as the pure joy of many of the events). Her festivals have a hinterland – an infrastructure that holds the events together, making them so much more than the sum of their parts. With this year's *Black Capital* stream of events, she recognises without a skerrick of cringing second-guessing that our national story is inextricably bound with this land's Indigenous heritage. Sydney Writers Festival Newsletter, January 2012 Chip Rolley, Artistic Director*

Perth International Arts Festival 2004-2007

Four broad themes: Journey (2004), Transcendence and Transformation (2005), Earthly Pleasure (2006) and The Human Family (2007); were the starting point for this suite of Festivals. Major world artists/companies included Lepage's Ex Machina, NeedCompany, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, Akram Khan, Kronos Quartet, The Gotan Project, Prague Chamber Orchestra and Youssou N'Dour. In 2007 the festival achieved its (then) best box office result in 55 years and won national acclaim for the Wesfarmers Arts Commissions Series. Through this initiative, festival-led partnerships with resulted in World Premieres of a major new opera, ballet, symphony and theatre work in each festival. A parallel WA regional focus featured in each festival. In 2006, for the first time in the festival's history the Perth International Arts Festival was a celebration dedicated to local First Nations culture and language. Guided by a Noongar Advisory Group, through community consultation from 2004, six senior Noongar artists were commissioned to create *Ngallak Koort Boodja (Our Heart Country)*, an epic-scale canvas and cultural document, depicting animals, plants, ancestral spirits and landscapes within 14 circles representing the interrelated dialectical groups of the Noongar nation. The canvas was unveiled as part of the Opening Event for the 2006 Festival before going on public display across WA.

Socially, the Festival has arguably done more for black/white relations in Perth than any single event in the city's history. Hume has not needed a cultural policy to get on with the job of, in her words, 'making a real difference to the life and soul of our community'. Her courageous and mature 2006 festival has contributed more to the imaginative possibilities of the state's cultural life than any policy could. The Australian, March 2006

A fitting finale...four years of exceptional programming by Lindy Hume...Hume has brought the world to Perth while simultaneously celebrating local cultures... While developing major new works, she has also increased community involvement and facilitated a confident showcase for Indigenous culture – especially the local Noongar people... Hume's final festival was quite a swansong. Sunday Telegraph UK March 2007

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Director | Artistic Director | Festival Director
CV 2022

Artistic & Festival Director

continued

OzOpera 1997-2001

Upon the merger of Victoria State Opera with Opera Australia 1997, I took over the leadership of Opera Australia's touring arm OzOpera. While maintaining its core regional Australian touring function, during my time as Artistic Director I expanded the program with creative collaborations for artistic and audience development, teaming OzOpera with artists from theatre, film, video, visual arts and design with multi-genre collaborations such as the MDTV Project (with MusicArtsDance Films and ABCTV) and *Love Burns/Trouble in Tahiti* (with Melbourne Festival and Belvoir). During this period OzOpera created 'mini' operas from Melbourne citizens' short stories and award-winning new Australian operas including Paul Grabowsky's *Love in the Age of Therapy* and Richard Mills' *Batavia* (with Opera Australia and Melbourne Festival).

With the World Premiere of Love in the Age of Therapy, OzOpera opened the last of an extraordinary succession of memorable productions initiated by its artistic director, Lindy Hume. The Australian, October 2002

OzOpera's warehouse production of Handel's Orlando.... was elegant, spectacular, and regarded by many as proof that under the Artistic Direction of Lindy Hume this experimental arm of Opera Australia had found its purpose. The Bulletin, November 1999

Opera / Theatre Director

Europe, UK and America

NP = New production

- 2022 Barbican London *A Winters Journey* (Schubert) Musica Viva Australia
- 2022 Opera Philadelphia *Rigoletto* (revival of 2012 NZO production)
- 2021 Welsh National Opera *Madama Butterfly* NP
- 2019 Seattle Opera *Rigoletto* and *La Cenerentola*, (revivals of NZO productions)
- 2018 Oper Leipzig *Carmen* NP
- 2017 Seattle Opera *Barber of Seville* (co-production with NZO and Opera Qld)
- 2017 Royal Swedish Opera Stockholm *La Cenerentola* NP
- 2016 Oper Leipzig *La Cenerentola* (production purchased from NZO/OO)
- 2016 Seattle Opera *Le Comte Ory* NP
- 2016 San Diego Opera *La Cenerentola* (revival of NZO/OO production)
- 2014 Oper Leipzig *Don Pasquale* NP
- 2013 Houston Grand Opera *Die Fledermaus* (revival of 1997 OA production)
- 2012 Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin *La Boheme* (revival of 2001 production)
- 2009 Houston Grand Opera *Rigoletto* NP
- 2005 Opera Theatre St Gallen, Switzerland *Norma* NP
- 2005 Aldeburgh Productions, UK *Albert Herring* NP
- 2004 Houston Grand Opera *Barbiere di Siviglia* April NP
- 2002 Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London *Così fan tutte* NP
- 2002 Opera Theatre St Gallen, Switzerland *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Previn) NP
- 2002 Aldeburgh Festival, UK *Phaedra* (Britten) and *Savitry* (Holst) NP
- 2001 Opernhaus Halle/Handel Festspiele Halle *Radamisto* (Handel) NP
- 2001 Staatsoper Unter Den Linden, Berlin *La Boheme* (Live EuroTelecast ZDF) NP
- 1997 Muziektheater Transparant - Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels and Netherlands tour *Tolomeo* (Handel) NP

Opera / Theatre Director

continued

Australia and New Zealand

The following is a summary - repertoire details available on request

Opera Australia (Artistic Director OzOpera 1996-2001)

11 new productions between 1988 and 2001

New Zealand Opera

8 new productions between 1992 and 2023

Victoria State Opera (Artistic Director 1996, until merger with OA)

8 new productions between 1888 and 2007

Opera Queensland (Artistic Director 2012-2017)

12 new productions between 1990 and 2018

West Australian Opera (Artistic Director 1993-1996)

12 new productions between 1986 and 2018

State Opera of SA

7 new productions and revivals between 1988 and 2022

Pinchgut Opera

5 new productions between 2006 and 2022

Perth International Arts Festival (Artistic Director 2004-2007)

2006 *Candide* (Bernstein) staged concert performance

2005 *The Magic Flute* (Mozart), with West Australian Opera – Opera in the Park

2005 *St Matthew Passion* (Bach) staged concert performance

Musica Viva

2022 *A Winters Journey* (Schubert) Australian national tour and Barbican, London

Black Swan Theatre Company

2007 *Life x3* (Yasmina Reza) Black Swan Theatre Company

The Australian Ballet

2001 *Carmina Burana* (Orff) The Australian Ballet, Melbourne, Sydney 2001

Selected reviews for opera productions:

Madama Butterfly – Welsh National Opera 2021

Director Lindy Hume brings into sharp focus the more disturbing aspects of Puccini's opera. ... not simply the sexist mores where *Cio-Cio-San* is a commodity, but the supremacist, imperialist and colonialist attitudes in the characters embodying male entitlement and coercion...Hume's approach makes for a more disturbing experience than the romantic pull-at-the-heartstrings this work is assumed to be. (**** *The Guardian*, 27 September)

WNO's intelligent, insightful and, finally, piercingly emotional modern-day interpretation of this squalid story of exploitation and callousness. Tiny details take on epoch-defining significance. As *The Star-Spangled Banner* sounds in the orchestra, Pinkerton flourishes a credit card to pay for *Butterfly*. (**** *The Times*, 27 September)

Hume isn't afraid to press the emotional buttons either. Snipe all you like at Puccini's 'manipulative' score but plenty of handkerchiefs will surely have had a workout when Sorrow added his toy dinosaur to *Butterfly's* flower arrangement. No spoilers, but the final minutes were as swift, inexorable and brutal as anything on stage or screen. This might not be the *Butterfly* you expect, but it hits you where it hurts. (*****Spectator*, 9 October)

Le Nozze di Figaro – New Zealand Opera 2021

Lindy Hume's staging of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, her seventh engagement with New Zealand Opera, marks a glorious, life-affirming return to mainstage productions. Once again, the Australian takes a feminist stance on a classic that English writer Virginia Woolf once hailed as the vindication of opera. (NZ Herald, June)

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CV 2022

Selected reviews for opera productions:

continued

Rigoletto – Seattle Opera 2019

Hume's *Rigoletto*, in which the interior of the Duke's palace looms over many of the opera's scenes, proved an ideal fit for the musical drama. Hers is an extremely attractive, unified, and unforced update that makes the opera more real and emotionally impactful than any production of *Rigoletto* I've witnessed. **(Classical Voice, August)**

Hume's theatrical vision...was exceptional. Sets range from a crushingly grand representation of the Duke's palace (complete with banks of video screens) to sketchy glimpses of a bus shelter, a dive bar, rooms in *Rigoletto*'s shabby home, often in disquieting motion as if to emphasize the fragility of the powerless...this is a production as nasty as the piece itself, and works in a way which conventional productions regularly fail to do. **(Vancouver Sun, August)**

The Barber of Seville – Seattle Opera 2017

Australian stage director Lindy Hume's inventive imagination is at the core of it. a zany creation that is incredibly funny, unexpectedly lit and wildly colorful, yet true to the story and never overreaching into farce **(CityArts October)**

La Cenerentola – Seattle Opera 2019

The well-travelled production which opened Saturday... is as fresh and magical as it must have been when first seen. It's the concept and imagination of stage director Lindy Hume which makes this production so delicious, ably abetted by designer Dan Potra, lighting with some wonderful effects by Matthew Marshall. **(Bachtrack, October)**

Theodora – Pinchgut Opera 2016

Lindy Hume's restrained production creates a reserved, solemn, dramatic space where the emphasis on representations of piety naturally focuses attention back on the music at the spiritual centre. Of all the Pinchgut productions to date, this was the most rewarding for its restrained, purposeful drama and seraphic musical refinement. **(SMH December)**

Iphigénie en Tauride – Pinchgut Opera 2014

A near perfect production. Director Lindy Hume... moulds her characters with a rare simplicity to form arresting tableaux. The women's chorus, for example, fans out behind Iphigénie like an extension of her train, or grabs Orestes in a jail-like mesh of arms, gilding the drama with elegant hysteria. **(SMH, December)**

St Matthew Passion – Opera Queensland 2013

This *St Matthew Passion* is given to us in the fullness of what it should be, superb musical drama, superbly realised by Lindy Hume and Opera Queensland. **(Crikey.com.au, March)**

Rigoletto – New Zealand Opera 2012

Director Lindy Hume has crafted such a detailed world that the "most unexpected twist" promised by the publicity material is the density of the world rather than the twists and turns of the plot. **(The Lumière Reader, May)**

The Love of the Nightingale – West Australian Opera / Perth International Arts Festival 2007

Director Lindy Hume, the driving force behind this commission, brought clarity and depth to the plot, ensuring its humanity ultimately shone through. The triumph of *Nightingale* confirms the Mills-Hume partnership as an unassailable creative force in Australian music drama. **(The Australian, February)**

La Bohème, Staatsoper Unter Den Linden, Berlin 2002

If the destinies of Rodolfo and his friends go to our hearts deeper than usual in this new production, it is mainly thanks to the Australian director Lindy Hume. Her work is modern in the best sense of the term; in many respects surprising, refreshingly unconventional and nevertheless always true to the spirit of Puccini's opera. Maybe she should be even more pleased with the silence that overcame the audience, breaking only moments later into the final applause, than the bravos that followed. **(Das Opernglas, February)**