

Placido Domingo's Operalia comes to Cape Town

With Rolex as presenting sponsor and the City of Cape Town and Southern Sun the main local sponsors of Placido Domingo's Operalia 2023, preparations for the competition in Cape Town from 30 October - 5 November 2023 are well underway, at the Artscape Opera House.



Alvaro Domingo, vice president of Operalia. Image supplied

Alvaro Domingo, vice president of Operalia, says that, certainly, a very important drawcard is that five of the 34 successful applicants from a total of 800, are from South Africa and all studied in Cape Town.

They are Nombulelo Yende (soprano), Siphokazi Molteno (mezzo soprano), Luvo Maranti (tenor), Thando Mjandana (tenor) and Sakhiwe Mkosana (baritone).

Explaining the rationale for staging this prestigious event in Cape Town, Domingo said: "In making the decision where to host the 30th anniversary competition, we took into account that South Africa has an international reputation for the quality of its singers such as previous Operalia winners Pretty Yende and Levy Sekgapane, the reputation and quality of the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra (CPO), the body of work of Cape Town Opera (CTO), and the versatility of the venue within the Artscape Theatre Centre, plus, needless to say, the inherent beauty of the city of course.

“When we discussed the details with the CPO’s CEO Louis Heyneman, we got his buy-in immediately since he sensed how important a distinguished competition such as Operalia, the foremost such competition in the world, would be to reinforce the city as an international cultural force.”

Geordin Hill-Lewis, mayor of Cape Town, was also quick to come on board, saying that Cape Town is the perfect destination thanks to its accent on culture and its gorgeous location.

“We look forward to welcoming the organizers, candidates and international visitors who have already made arrangements to come to Cape Town and thank Rolex and Operalia for their understanding of the fact that we can stage this foremost opera event with panache and efficiency.”

Southern Sun is assisting with reduced accommodation costs for the contingent of contestants, jurors, coaches and two conductors - Placido Domingo and Kamal Khan - and the Lady Linda Davies of the KT Wong Foundation will make it possible for 80 students to attend aspects of the competition.

The successful contestants come from 15 countries including South Africa, the US, UK, Germany, France, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Israel, South Korea, Malta, Russia, and the Ukraine; the jurors are mainly leading casting directors of opera houses in Europe and the US, as well as CTO’s artistic director Magdalene Minnaar, and the coaches are based in America.

The competition was founded in 1993 and has helped establish the careers of many singers like Yende, Sekgapanne and Metropolitan Opera star Sonya Yoncheva.

Each year Operalia is hosted in a different city and this year Cape Town joins the world’s cultural capitals such as London, Paris, Madrid, Hamburg, Tokyo, and Milan as a host city.

The competition, with total prize money of more than \$200,000 presents the perfect platform to promote Cape Town as a tourist and cultural destination. The hosts provide the orchestra, the venue, logistical support, and accommodation and catering for the competitors, jurors, and a small administrative team.

Ticket details

Booking for the preliminary rounds and finals is through Artscape Dial A Seat 021 4217695, on the Computicket website [here](#) and at Computicket outlets.

There are two quarter finals on 30 and 31 October 3pm and 2pm respectively and the semi-finals on 1 November at 4pm are R400. If still available, a combination ticket for all the preliminary rounds costs R500; tickets for the final round on 5 November are R1500.

The award ceremony takes place immediately after the judges’ deliberations when the final candidate has sung.

The final round of the competition will be livestreamed by medici.tv free of charge; the semi-finals will be streamed on the Operalia [Facebook](#) page.