

media release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## **TSO wins prestigious Helpmann Award for *Tristan und Isolde***



The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra's acclaimed concert performance of *Tristan und Isolde* featuring Nina Stemme and Stuart Skelton was awarded 'Best Symphony Orchestra Concert' at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Helpmann Awards held in Sydney on Monday night.

The TSO saw off competition from the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, nominated twice for different concerts, and the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra to win the prestigious award, presented in the ceremony at The Capitol Theatre attended by a star-studded audience who represented the finest of Australia's performing arts industry.

Accepting the award from opera luminaries Richard Mills AM and Emma Mathews, TSO Managing Director Nicholas Heyward highlighted the importance of staging such a high profile concert in Tasmania and paid tribute to Chief Conductor and Artistic Director Marko Letonja for his key role in attracting stars the calibre of Stemme and Skelton.

'I'm thrilled to see the TSO recognised for this remarkable concert,' Mr Heyward said, 'The combination of Marko, Stuart and Nina and our orchestra of forty-seven hugely talented musicians made for one of the best concerts in TSO history.'

The concert, which took place on November 19, 2016 at Federation Concert Hall in Hobart conducted by Letonja, featured world-renowned Swedish soprano Stemme and Australian heldentenor Skelton reprising their roles as Wagner's star-crossed lovers, direct from The Metropolitan Opera in New York. Renowned mezzo-soprano Monika Bohinec was also featured in the role of Brangäne.

A major cultural coup for Tasmania, concert-goers travelled from all over the country as well as overseas to attend the one-off performance which was greeted with a resounding and spontaneous standing ovation.

Established in 2001 by [Live Performance Australia \(LPA\)](http://www.helpmannawards.com.au) the annual Helpmann Awards, celebrate and promote the Australian live performance industry, similar to the Tony Awards on Broadway and the Olivier Awards in London, and acknowledge distinguished artistic achievement and excellence in the many disciplines of Australia's vibrant live performance sectors.

The TSO was previously recognised with a 2016 Helpmann Award in the category 'Best Australian Contemporary Concert' for its contribution to the concert 'Kate Miller-Heidke and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra with visuals by Amy Gebhardt' which was part of MOFO 2016.

MONA also took home an award, winning 'Best Contemporary Music Festival' for MOFO.

The TSO performs 'Colours of the East' conducted by Letonja with soloist Alina Ibragimova next Friday, August 4 at 7.30pm, Federation Concert Hall.

[www.helpmannawards.com.au](http://www.helpmannawards.com.au)

**TSO tickets available [www.tso.com.au](http://www.tso.com.au) or 1800 001 190.**

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