



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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MR RICHARD HICKOX

Today the Australian music community and opera lovers are mourning the sudden death of Richard Hickox, Music Director of Opera Australia.

Minister for the Arts, Peter Garrett said Richard Hickox's death came as a great shock and was met with deep sorrow to those who knew him and worked with him in the opera community.

"Richard was a much respected and admired conductor, who made an invaluable contribution to opera both in Australia and internationally. Those who have come into his care and experienced his generosity will feel his loss deeply," Minister Garrett said.

"I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Richard's wife, Pamela, and his children in this very difficult time.

"They can rightly feel great pride in Richard's many outstanding achievements and his contribution to Australian opera."

Mr Hickox had been music director of Opera Australia since 2005, following a distinguished conducting career in the United Kingdom. He conducted many memorable performances for Opera Australia, including his final performances of Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd* in September and October this year, which were unanimously acclaimed by critics and audiences.