

# Innocence

**ADELAIDE  
FESTIVAL AF**  
28 Feb – 16 Mar 2025

**Composer** Kaija Saariaho  
**Original Finnish Libretto** Sofi Oksanen  
**Multilingual Libretto** Aleksis Barrière  
**Conductor** Clément Mao-Takacs  
**Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**  
**Director** Simon Stone  
**Set Designer** Chloe Lamford  
**Costume Designer** Mel Page  
**Lighting Designer** James Farncombe  
**Sound Designer** Timo Kurkikangas  
**Assistant Director** Sybille Wilson  
**Choreographer** Arco Renz  
**Adelaide Chamber Singers and State Opera Chorus**  
**Chorus Master** Christie Anderson

Presented by Adelaide Festival in association with State Opera South Australia. A co-commission and co-production of Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, San Francisco Opera, Dutch National Opera Amsterdam, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden London, Finnish National Opera and Ballet Helsinki. In partnership with the Metropolitan Opera.

World premiere on 3 July 2021 at the Grand Théâtre de Provence in Aix-en-Provence. The world premiere in Aix-en-Provence was made possible thanks to the support of Karolina Blaberg.

*Performed in multiple languages with English surtitles.*

Duration 1hr 45mins, no interval.

28 Feb – 5 Mar 2025 / Festival Theatre

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## SYNOPSIS

The story occurs across two timelines. A wedding is being celebrated in Helsinki in the 2000s; in the world of memory, seven people recount a traumatic event they experienced ten years earlier. The connection between these realities is gradually revealed.

### ACT I

Tuomas and Stela are getting married in Finland. They met while Tuomas was vacationing in Romania. Stela is in love with her new country, 'where one can stroll safely at night', and Tuomas's parents, Henrik and Patricia, are excited to have a new member of the family. However, the parents cannot agree whether Stela be told about the family drama they call 'the tragedy'. The wedding is haunted by seven figures who tell of their trauma and the difficulty of recapturing normal life. Everything was turned upside down ten years earlier, while six of them were students in high school and the seventh taught them there.

### ACT II

Some of the employees of the wedding's catering service have fallen ill, and a Czech waitress, Tereza, is called in to help. As she arrives, Tereza realises

she already knows the groom's family ('That name ended my life ten years ago'). Tereza is amazed that their lives could have continued, while hers was forever interrupted. Tuomas' parents argue again: Patricia thinks they should invite their firstborn son to the wedding, even though Stela doesn't know of his existence. This is inconceivable to Henrik ('That boy doesn't belong to this family anymore!'). Later, he confesses to Tereza his disappointment in his son, but he does not seem to remember that he has met her before. He blames himself for his children's harsh upbringing - and that he taught his son to shoot.

The students and teacher reveal more about their current lives; it is revealed that one of them is Markéta, Tereza's daughter, who died in the tragedy.

### ACT III

Tereza speaks to Stela and realizes that the tragedy and the family's part in it have been hidden from the bride. Tereza reveals her identity to the father and accuses him of causing her daughter's death. Meanwhile, the priest attempts to comfort Patricia, who blames herself for raising a monster. Alone, the priest admits he noticed there 'was something wrong with that boy' but never said anything at the time. He does not believe that the son, who has been released from prison with a new name, can be redeemed.

Markéta and the other students remember that day when the shooter, Tuomas's brother, killed ten students and one teacher. Their memories morph into a recitation of the victims' names. Those who survived 'had to learn not to remind,' except when the media and politicians exploited the tragedy to their advantage.

## ACT IV

Tereza reveals the past events to Stela and the wedding guests. Tuomas wishes his brother was dead, but Patricia defends him, saying Markéta was also a monster because she bullied her son.

The students' memories reveal that Markéta and some of the other survivors constantly bullied the shooter. One of the students, Iris, who was a friend of the shooter, pushes back against the others' delusion that the bullying had nothing to do with the shooting. She blames them all for the tragedy.

## ACT V

Stela and Tuomas discuss the consequences of Tereza's revelations: Stela is ready to accept everything out of love for her fiancé, but Tuomas believes their new beginning is shattered. When the priest and his parents try to convince Tuomas to have faith in his future, Tuomas admits the truth: he, his brother and Iris conspired together to plan the shooting. At the decisive moment, Tuomas and Iris got cold feet, and the shooter carried out the plan alone, taking full responsibility. Despite it all, deep shame and love for the shooter live on in both of them. This revelation destroys the family's last hopes of escaping the past.

In the epilogue we see glimpses of some survivors' dreams for a more hopeful future. Markéta appears one last time and asks her mother to 'let her go'.

## CAST

**The Waitress (Tereza)** Jenny Carlstedt

**The Mother-in-Law (Patricia)** Claire de Sévigné

**The Father-in-Law (Henrik)** Tuomas Pursio

**The Bride (Stela)** Faustine de Monès

**The Bridegroom (Tuomas)** Sean Panikkar

**The Priest** Teddy Tahu Rhodes

**The Teacher (Cecilia)** Lucy Shelton

**Student One (Markéta)** Erika Hammarberg

**Student Two (Lilly)** Christina AF Klinteberg Herresthal

**Student Three (Iris)** Julie Hega

**Student Four (Anton)** Rowan Kievits

**Student Five (Jerónimo)** Camilo Delgado Diaz

**Student Six (Alexia)** Marina Dumont

## ACTORS

Issy Commber, Laura Henderson, Nicholas Cannon, Liam Goodes, Nicky Tsz Tung Li, Rhys Stewart, Ollie Xu

## COVERS

**Waitress (Tereza)** Cassandra Seidemann

**Mother-in-Law (Patricia)** Rachelle Durkin

**Father-in-Law (Henrik)** David Greco

**The Bride (Stela)** Jessica Dean

**The Bridegroom (Tuomas)** Andrew Goodwin

**The Priest** Pelham Andrews

**The Teacher (Cecilia)** Catriona Barr

**Student One (Markéta)** Millicent Brake

**Student Two (Lilly)** Michaela Eaton

**Student Three (Iris)** Victoria Coxhill

**Student Four (Anton)** Macintyre Howie-Reeves

**Student Five (Jerónimo)** Christian Evans

**Student Six (Alexia)** Sophie Schumacher

**Chorus Master** Christie Anderson

## STATE OPERA SOUTH AUSTRALIA CHORUS

**Sopranos** Brooke Window, Alexandra Bollard, Millicent Brake, Imogen Tonkin, Victoria Coxhill, Ella Moeck, Michaela Eaton, Kate Price

**Mezzos** Georgia Simmons, Rachel Bruerville, Sophie Schumacher, Monique Lymn, Courtney Day, Emma Woehle, Riana Chakravarti, Courtney Turner

**Tenors** Graham Yuile, Michael Denholm, Philip Houghton, Rhys Williams, Kit Tonkin, Martin Penhale, Kim Worley, Anish Nair, Chris Gann

**Basses** Andrew Bettison, Aidan Foyel, Edward Vaught, Christian Evans, Nikolai Leske, Timothy Wilson, Jesse van Proctor, Chris Gann

**Conductor** Clément Mao Takacs

**Director** Simon Stone

**Assistant Director** Sybille Wilson

**Set Designer** Chloe Lamford

**Costume Designer** Mel Page

**Lighting Designer** James Farncombe

**Sound Designer** Timo Kurkikangas

**Choreographer** Arco Renz

**Assistant Conductor** Joshua van Konkelenberg

**Repetiteurs** Michael Ierace, Anthony Hunt, Euan Safey, Joshua van Konkelenberg

**Technical Manager** Frédéric Lyonnet

**Set up Supervisor** Cyrille Laurent

**System Engineer** Franck Boulet

**Master Electrician** Maxime Chassang

**Stage Manager** Héloïse Sérazin

**Stage Manager** Adrien Rigal

**Props Manager** Gregory Wattebled

#### **FOR ADELAIDE FESTIVAL**

**Program Executive – Opera** Jess Thomas

**Program Assistant (State Opera)** Elisabet Cada

**Production Manager** Bruce Bolton

**Stage Manager** Hollee Gunter

**Assistant Stage Manager/Props**

Charlotte Welden, Brock Roberts, Claire Edmonds-Wilson

**Rehearsal Assistant Stage Manager/Props**

Ashley Ng, Taylor Dawson

**Production Secondment (AC Arts)** Hannah McGuire

**Sound Consultant** Adam Budgen

**Head of Wardrobe (State Opera)** Tracey Richardson

**Wardrobe Assistant and Maintenance (State Opera)** Denise Strawhan

**Dressers** Anna Perry, Damien Pignotti, David Adams, Kent Green, Sue Nicola, Tammy Wheeler

**Head of Wigs & Make Up** Jana DeBiasi

**Wigs & Make Up** Beverley Freeman, Bonnie Charles, Dina Giaccio, Teresa Scriva

**Surtitle Operator** Catriona Herriott

#### **SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**State Opera South Australia**