MELBA'S WILL

LEAVING A LEGACY

Our story

It began with our namesake Dame Nellie Melba GBE, one of Australia's most celebrated icons.

Nellie was a visionary, a world-conquering soprano on stage and a convention-defying trailblazer off stage. Among her many passions, she was dedicated to nurturing the development of young singers and taught for many years at Melbourne's Albert Street Conservatorium of Music (later renamed the Melba Conservatorium of Music). She immortalised this passion through a generous bequest, where she established a singing scholarship '... in the hope that another Melba may arise'.

In 1931 this visionary gift established our first perpetual singing scholarship, which is still offered today through Melba Opera Trust.

Continuing Nellie's vision, a legacy gift to Melba Opera Trust represents a timeless gesture of support. It is a commitment to sustaining world-class training and precious pathways for exceptional young opera singers. It is also an investment in the future of opera in Australia and internationally, enriching the opportunities and experiences for artists and opera audiences alike.

Just as Dame Nellie Melba's foresight has created our future, you too can make a lasting impact with a gift in your will.

Tom Nicholson and Nina Korbe. Image: Charlie Kinross

More than a voice

Nellie once said, ‘in order to succeed in opera, you have to engage in the business of singing. A beautiful voice is not enough.’

This is at the heart of our philosophy: our artists are trained to be *more than a voice*, to be equipped with the skills they need to build sustainable careers.

It begins with the Melba Program, our year-long scholarship-funded training program supporting artists from around Australia through a bespoke course of artistic development, mentoring in business, professional and personal skill development, and performance experience.

Our pathways then extend to support artists at different stages of their careers through the Alastair Jackson International Opera Award, Dame Heather Begg Memorial Award and the Alumni Grant Program.

Following in Nellie’s footsteps, many of our talented alumni are realising their dreams and performing in opera houses around the world.

A gift for the future

Legacy gifts have the power to transform.

Our work is funded exclusively through the generosity of philanthropy.

If you choose to include us in your will, your gift will have a far-reaching and enriching impact on the support that we can offer artists.

You can feel secure knowing that your generosity will help singers, repetiteurs and the artform for generations to come.

Stacey Yang, image: Anna Kučera

‘My late partner and I wanted to support our families, friends, and certain organisations and charities following my death. For us, death does not mean the end of our usefulness: we can continue to nurture those who wish to live a fulfilling and happy life.

‘I have included Melba in my will for several reasons: I have always been fascinated by the life, career and beautiful voice of Dame Nellie Melba; I approve of the ethos of Melba Opera Trust, which is influenced by Melba’s own beliefs; and I respond to the warmth of the staff who create an atmosphere of respect, kindness and inclusion, not only for the Melba Artists themselves but also for the supporters of the organisation.’

David Ross-Smith

Looking after your bequest

We appreciate that leaving a bequest to an organisation represents a gesture of trust and faith. You have worked hard to create this gift, and you are entrusting us to ensure it is protected and used at it was intended.

Unless otherwise specified, estate gifts are invested in the Melba endowment which is perpetual. The income generated provides annual funding for our programs, whilst capital growth maintains the real capital value of the Fund over time.

Melba's Will Bequest Circle

As a bequestor, you will be a treasured member of the Melba community.

We encourage you to let us know about a gift in your will, so that we can thank you and invite you to join Melba's Will Bequest Circle.

You will have the opportunity to attend exclusive occasions, observe our program activity, meet visiting mentors and enjoy first-hand experiences that your legacy will help preserve.

With your permission, you will also be acknowledged in Melba's Will Bequest Circle in our publications.

Our pledge to you

Melba Opera Trust respects the intentions of its bequestors. To this end:

- We encourage all prospective bequestors to seek their own legal advice about their proposed gift.
- All information concerning the details of a bequest will be kept confidential unless permission to share this information is provided.
- Gifts of real property may be accepted by Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust. In such cases, the Trust reserves the right to realise the property after transfer to Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust and utilise the proceeds to support the Trust's mission and purposes.
- All matters relating to the stewardship of bequest funds is under the governance of the Board of Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust.

Getting in Touch

To find out more about including a gift in your will please contact:

Catherine McElhone
Philanthropy Manager
cmcelhone@melbaoperatrust.com.au
03 9944 2100

Melba Opera Trust (ABN 96 424 419 725)
melbaoperatrust.com.au

Caitlin Forrest and Caitlin Hulcup. image: David Ng.

Including Melba Opera Trust in your will

We encourage you to leave a gift to be used where it is most needed at the time it comes to us, but we understand you may wish for your gift to be directed to an area that's meaningful to you. This is a significant decision and we're here to guide you through the process.

There are four ways you can include Melba Opera Trust in your will.

Residuary

A residuary gift is the balance of your estate after personal commitments have been made.

Percentage

You can leave a percentage of your entire estate or the residue.

Pecuniary

You can specify a dollar amount.

A specific gift

Includes real estate, financial assets (such as shares), or other items of value.

Recommended wording

'I give _____ (fill in amount of money, percentage or residue of estate, details of property or shares) free of all duties and testamentary expenses to Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust, PO Box 16081, Collins Street West, Melbourne Victoria 8007 for its general purposes, and I direct that the receipt of the Secretary or other proper officer of Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust shall be sufficient discharge to my executors for this bequest.'

However, if you would like to give to a specific area of interest (for example a specific scholarship or program) additional alternative wording is available. Please contact our Philanthropy Manager, Catherine McElhone.

Bequests can be made through Melba to The Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship Fund and the Alastair Jackson International Opera Award.

'I know that the best of me will live'

Dame Nellie Melba

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