



ARTS

EDITOR **STEPHEN BEVIS**

• stephen.bevis@wanews.com.au

Composer hooked for lake songs

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A 200-voice community choir will open the Joondalup Festival tomorrow with the world premiere of four choral songs by visiting Italian composer Alberto Caruso and WA poet Vivienne Glance. Inspired by the landscape and history around Lake Joondalup, Banuru Songs will feature singers recruited from schools, church groups and amateur ensembles across the northern suburbs.

Caruso, who is creating an opera in New York with Irish novelist Colm Toibin, says he was delighted to have been commissioned by Joondalup Festival director Thomas de Mallet Burgess to write the music for Banuru Songs. Banuru is one of the six Aboriginal seasons, from February to March. "It was a great honour to be

asked to come to Australia for the first time," Caruso says. "Colm has been here to Perth and gave me some suggestions about beaches and other places to go."

Caruso, 45, knows De Mallet Burgess from the European opera circuit where the British-born De Mallet Burgess worked before moving to Perth last year. De Mallet

PICTURE **GERALD MOSCARDA**

Burgess, who has directed for the Royal Opera House Covent

Garden, Opera Ireland and Malmo Opera, now combines his role as cultural co-ordinator at the City of Joondalup with a freelance stage directing career:

"People seem very happy with the songs because they tell the story of the lake and places where they live," Caruso says. "They feel something special to have music about somewhere they walk every day."

Glance started working on Banuru Songs with Caruso in Rome last year and says his music has been very faithful to the words in her poems.

Caruso has written scores for feature films, documentaries, theatre and opera. His latest opera, with Toibin as the librettist, is based on the Irish writer's novel *The Master*, about the life of Henry James. Workshops were held at the Juilliard School in New York last year with potential production partners waiting in the wings.

Caruso, who was to meet WA Opera director Joseph Colaneri while in Perth, said he would love to see his opera produced here.

Banuru Songs will be performed at the Joondalup Festival hub of Central Park at 6pm, followed by a twilight lantern parade involving 600 people. The free festival ends on Sunday.



HONOUR Alberto Caruso and writer Vivienne Glance.