



PRESS RELEASE

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***THE TRIAL* BY PHILIP GLASS PREMIERES IN SCOTLAND**

Iconic composer **Philip Glass's** operatic take on Franz Kafka's nightmarish novel *The Trial* is being staged in Scotland for the first time at the beginning of next year.

Opening on 24 January 2017 at Theatre Royal Glasgow for three performances, *The Trial* then moves to King's Theatre Edinburgh in February for a further two dates.

For this Scottish Opera co-production, **Philip Glass** has worked with librettist and playwright **Christopher Hampton**, who won the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay in 1989 for *Dangerous Liaisons*.

A co-commission and co-production with Music Theatre Wales, The Royal Opera and Theater Magdeburg, supported by Scottish Opera's New Commissions Circle, *The Trial* captures the chilling drama, paranoia and absurdity of the story of Josef K, a man arrested and tried for an unknown crime. The opera received its world premiere at the Linbury Theatre of the Royal Opera House, in October 2014, and toured to theatres in England, Wales and Germany.

Sung in English, the superb ensemble cast includes **Nicholas Lester** (*Don Pasquale* 2014), **Paul Carey Jones** (*Inés de Castro* 2015), and three of Scottish Opera's Emerging Artists 2016/17 - **Emma Kerr**, **Hazel McBain**, and **Elgan Llyr Thomas**.

The Trial is directed by **Michael McCarthy**, Artistic Director of Music Theatre Wales, and conducted by

Scottish Opera's Head of Music, **Derek Clark**. The production is designed by **Simon Banham**, with lighting by **Ace McCarron**.

Philip Glass said: 'The horrors of bureaucracy and the fact of turning them into a black comedy – I think from that point of view, there's absolutely a message in *The Trial*. But it's not just gags about a world that has become unhinged, over-complicated, over-supervised, so that it's impossible for a sensible person even to find his way to the courthouse.'

Christopher Hampton called Kafka's novel 'one of the great prophetic pieces of work of the 20th century.' He continued: 'If you look at the world now, it's hard not to think that Kafka got it pretty spot on. Both Philip and I insisted on the humour in the piece. I think the danger of adapting something like *The Trial* is that you somehow fall into solemnity, because it's such an iconic work – but I think Kafka did have a very sharp sense of humour.'

Director **Michael McCarthy** said: 'When Philip Glass offered to write a new opera based on *The Trial* I knew we would be in for a treat. Having already directed his adaptation of another Kafka tale, *In The Penal Colony*, and his setting of Edgar Allen Poe's haunting tale *The Fall of The House of Usher*, it was clear his music would convey the dramatic intensity of the story, and would be a perfect fit for the misunderstood – or is it misunderstanding? – Joseph K, a man lost in an incomprehensible world. We've all been there! The unexpected element was the humour Philip also brought to the opera – truly reflecting the book itself rather than its reputation. This is a vibrant, theatrical new opera that demonstrates how well Glass and Kafka combine, and it's a story that will never lose its relevance.'

Alex Reedijk, Scottish Opera's General Director added: 'It was a pleasure and a privilege for us at Scottish Opera to work with two such amazing talents – composer Phillip Glass and playwright Christopher Hampton – in co-commissioning what has proved to be a wonderful 21st century opera, based on an iconic 20th century literary classic. It's a thrill now to bring *The Trial* to Scottish audiences following its immensely successful performances in England, Wales and Germany, and we are delighted to continue Scottish Opera's great track record in bringing new opera to the stage.'

-ENDS-

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Cast List

Josef K	Nicholas Lester
Guard1/Block	Daniel Norman
Guard 2/Usher/Clerk of Court/Priest	Paul Carey Jones
Inspector/Uncle	Michael Druiett
Frau Grubach/Washerwoman	Emma Kerr*
Fräulein Bürstner/Leni	Hazel McBain*
Magistrate/Assistant/Lawyer Huld	Gwion Thomas
Titorelli/Flogger/Student	Elgan Llyr Thomas*

* Scottish Opera Emerging Artist

Creative Team

Conductor	Derek Clark
Director	Michael McCarthy
Designer	Simon Banham
Lighting	Ace McCarron

Performance Diary

Theatre Royal Glasgow, 282 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 3QA

Tue 24 Jan, 7.15pm

Thu 26 Jan, 7.15pm

Sat 28 Jan, 7.15pm

King's Theatre, 2 Leven Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9LQ

Fri 3 Feb, 7.15pm

Sat 4 Feb, 7.15pm

Notes to Editors

Scottish Opera is Scotland's national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. It was founded by Alexander Gibson in 1962 and was inaugurated with a production of *Madama Butterfly* at the King's Theatre in Glasgow.

Notable achievements include the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Inés de Castro* at the 1996 Edinburgh International Festival and complete Ring cycles at the 2003 Edinburgh International Festival, which won the 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera Production. Recent commissions include *Five:15 Operas Made in Scotland* (2008-10); *The Lady from the Sea*, *Clemency*, the double bill of *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* (winner of a South Bank Sky Arts Award) which premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival and 2016's *The Devil Inside* by Stuart MacRae and Louise Welsh.

Scottish Opera is committed to bringing the widest possible range of opera, performed to the highest possible standards, to the maximum audience throughout Scotland and the UK. Each year it performs in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness, as well as smaller theatres, village halls and community centres throughout the country.

Scottish Opera's Education and Outreach Department was the first of its kind of any opera company in Europe. It operates an extensive programme which involves over 8,000 primary school children every year, as well as many other activities including adult learning and free *Unwrapped* taster sessions.

Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.



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