

29 May 2018

***PELLÉAS AND MÉLISANDE* NOMINATED FOR THE SOUTH BANK SKY ARTS OPERA AWARD**

Scottish Opera's production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande* has been nominated for The South Bank Sky Arts Award for Opera.

Sir David McVicar made a welcome return to Scottish Opera to direct Claude Debussy's iconic opera for the first time in his career. He was joined by **Rae Smith** and **Paule Constable**, the design team behind the hit show *War Horse*, creating a production inspired by the paintings of Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershøi that brought to life this enigmatic tale of love, honour, jealousy and loss.

Pelléas and Mélisande delighted critics and audiences alike in February 2017, as part of the Company's 2016/17 Season. The production went on to win the UK Theatre Award 2017 for Achievement in Opera, and was also shortlisted for a Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award.

Scottish Opera's Music Director, **Stuart Stratford**, conducted The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and an outstanding cast including soprano **Carolyn Sampson** (*The Rake's Progress* 2012) as Mélisande, Cardiff Singer of the World Song Prize winner **Andrei Bondarenko** as Pelléas, **Roland Wood** (*Il trovatore* 2015) as Golaud, **Alastair Miles** as Arkel, **Anne Mason** (*Il trovatore* 2015) as Geneviève, and **Jonathan May** as the Doctor.

Alex Reedijk, Scottish Opera General Director said: 'We are delighted that *Pelléas and Mélisande* has been nominated for The South Bank Sky Arts Award for Opera. Having previously won the UK Theatre Award for Achievement in Opera and been shortlisted for a Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, I am extremely proud of Scottish Opera and everyone involved in making this fantastic production including the wonderful cast and the superb playing by The Orchestra of Scottish Opera. Sir David McVicar's superb

creative energies and Stuart Stratford's musical insight came together to create a production that spoke to audiences and critics alike.'

Also shortlisted alongside *Pelléas and Mélisande* are Glyndebourne's *Hamlet* and The Grange Festival's *Albert Herring*.

The South Bank Sky Arts Awards is the only awards ceremony in the world to celebrate every area of the arts, with awards for Literature, Dance, TV Drama, Film, Classical Music, Comedy, Pop, Opera, Visual Art and Theatre. Presented by Lord Melvin Bragg and now in its 22nd year, the awards ceremony will take place on Sunday 1 July at the Savoy Hotel in London, and will be televised on Sky Arts the following week.

-ENDS-

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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; complete Ring cycles at the 2003 Edinburgh International Festival, which won the 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera Production; and the Achievement in Opera Award at the 2017 UK Theatre Awards for Sir David McVicar's production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*. 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 *Unwrapped* taster sessions.

Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.



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