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**Press Release**

25 May 2021

**SCOTTISH OPERA RETURNS TO LIVE PERFORMANCE AT EDEN COURT WITH ITS POP-UP OPERA ROADSHOW**

Scottish Opera kicks off its 2021 Pop-up Opera roadshow at Eden Court, Inverness in what will be the Company’s first live performance in nine months. Following the success of last Autumn’s Pop-up tour, this year twelve socially distanced outdoor shows take place over four days from Thursday 10 June to Sunday 13 June, condensing three fun-filled Gilbert & Sullivan classics and all their frivolity into 30 minute performances, with audiences able to choose from *The Mikado*, *The Gondoliers* and *Iolanthe.*

Featuring some of Gilbert & Sullivan’s wittiest lyrics and best- known tunes, the shows are an ideal opportunity for anyone new to opera to try a taster. While past productions of Pop-up Operas have accommodated both the audience and performers inside the mobile Theatre Royal trailer, this year performances are al fresco with a covered mobile stage and audiences out front in the open air, seated in household bubbles in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

Cleverly re-scored by Scottish Opera’s Head of Music, **Derek Clark,** the shows are brought to life by storyteller **Allan Dunn**, along with singers **Stephanie Stanway**, **Andrew McTaggart,** instrumentalists **Andrew Drummond Huggan** and **Sasha Savaloni,** with a series of colourful illustrations helping guide the audiences through the wacky stories of Gilbert & Sullivan.

Scottish Opera General Director **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘I am thrilled that we can make our return to live performance at Eden Court and welcome back audiences in Inverness who have always been so supportive of our touring shows. The roadshow is at the heart of what we do as a company, travelling the highways and byways of Scotland to local communities and making opera accessible to all, so we are delighted to have the opportunity to return to this in a safe manner. We look forward to seeing everyone at our outdoor performances very soon and hopefully indoors at Eden Court in the near future.’

Eden Court Chief Executive, **James Mackenzie-Blackman**, said: ‘We are delighted to be welcoming back Scottish Opera for their pop-up operas. The performances were hugely successful in 2020. Scottish Opera will always be the company who bought live performance back to Eden Court first after the pandemic and I will always be grateful for that. If you’re new to opera this is the perfect event to come and try it out!’

Pop-up Opera is supported by Garfield Weston Foundation (Weston Culture Fund),Backstage Trust, D’Oyly Carte Opera Trust, The Cross Trust, The Thistle Trust, Scottish Opera Endowment Trust and Scottish Opera’s Education Angels.

Tickets will be on sale at Scottish Opera’s website <https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/> from June 2. Further dates and locations for Pop-up performances can also be found on the Scottish Opera website.

Notes to Editors

All performances are being produced in line with Scottish Government guidelines. Live outdoor events are subject to social distancing measures and guidelines at the time of performance.

**Tour Dates**

**Eden Court, Inverness:**

10 June Mikado 12pm, Iolanthe 2.30pm and 4.30pm

11 June Iolanthe 12pm, Gondoliers 2.30pm and 4.30pm

12 June Gondoliers 12pm, Mikado 2.30pm and 4.30pm

13 June Mikado 12pm, Iolanthe 2.30pm and 4.30pm

**Show Descriptions:**

**A Little Bit of The Gondoliers**

Two gorgeous gondoliers, dozens of adoring girls and the lost heir to the kingdom of Barataria: it can mean just one thing – trouble. Float away with us to Venice for one of Gilbert & Sullivan’s wittiest satires... It’s all about love, actually!

**A Little Bit of HMS Pinafore**
Aboard the ship HMS Pinafore, Josephine, the captain’s daughter, is in love with one of the crew. Her father definitely doesn’t approve. Overturning social order and parental wishes alike, the couple plan to elope. But a surprise confession soon leaves everything in doubt…

**A Little Bit of Iolanthe**
Iolanthe is banished by the Fairy Queen for marrying a mortal. Now, 25 years later, two worlds again collide when her son announces he’s in love. Unfortunately, his beloved is a popular girl and he has some serious competition… Light-hearted G&S satire at its best, Iolanthe is full of fun.

**A Little Bit of The Mikado**
The Mikado has decreed that flirting should be punishable by death. But when his son Nanki-Poo falls for the beautiful Yum-Yum, it looks like someone might be heading for the executioner’s block!

**A Little Bit of Pirates of Penzance**
A young man bound by an overactive sense of duty, a soft-hearted pirate king with a hopeless band of rogues at his side, a beautiful young girl, a very modern major-general and an ineffectual bevy of policemen add a plot hinging on the technicalities of having a birthday on the 29th of February... What could possibly go wrong?

The Company’s Opera on Screen productions are available to watch at [www.scottishopera.org.uk/what-s-on/opera-on-screen/](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/what-s-on/opera-on-screen/).

The collection includes Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, *Opera Highlights*, Janáček’s *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, Menotti’s *The Telephone* and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*.

Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland.

The Company's performance repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly-commissioned world premieres, working in collaboration with the world's finest singers and creatives, alongside The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and choruses. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, a Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards and a Herald Angel, as well as a 2020 RPS Award nomination.

Scottish Opera's work caters for audiences of all ages – ranging from babies to people living with dementia – and our Young Company and Emerging Artist programme support the talent of the future.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland, from the largest-scale theatres to rural venues with a capacity as low as 22, to ensure we are within reach of as many of our country's very dispersed population as possible. A miniature mobile opera house – literally, opera performed inside a converted 40-foot-long trailer on the back of a lorry – brings ‘Pop-up Opera’ performances to thousands of people each year in a range of inspiring and unexpected community locations. This represents the most extensive touring programme of any opera company in Europe and is a much-valued contribution to Scotland’s cultural and artistic life, particularly in remote and island communities.

The Company’s Education and Outreach programme, which celebrates 50 years in 2021, includes an annual Primary Schools Tour, bringing upper primary-aged children the opportunity to perform their own specially-commissioned piece, alongside three professional singers. Around 120 schools and 9,000 pupils take part each year.

Scottish Opera aims to be inclusive and affordable through availability of free and cheap tickets, as well as access performances including audio description, and performances which cater to those living with Dementia.

In the year to 31 March 2020, 116,960 people experienced Scottish Opera as audience members or as participants, across all of Scotland’s 32 Local Authority areas:

• 56 mainstage opera performances in Scotland plus tours to Belfast, London and Australia

• 8% of ticket buyers for mainstage opera performances in Scotland aged under 26

• 2,422 people watched specially-created opera productions for babies or toddlers

• 40,177 people participated in school’s workshops and performances

• 1,123 people living with Dementia participated in projects.

Scottish Opera is core funded by The Scottish Government

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**For additional press details please contact:**

Julie McLaughlin, Press Officer, 0141 242 0552, **julie.mclaughlin@scottishopera.org.uk**