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**Press Release**

16 November 2023

**SCOTTISH OPERA’S *OPERA HIGHLIGHTS* TOURS THIS SPRING TO 19 VENUES ACROSS SCOTLAND**

A vibrant new production of *Opera Highlights* goes on the road this February visiting 19 venues around Scotland, following a successful tour in the Autumn.

Scottish Opera’s 2023/24 Associate Artist, mezzo-soprano **Lea Shaw** (*Carmen* 2023), along with Emerging Artists tenor **Monwabisi Lindi** (*Daphne* 2023), soprano **Inna Husieva** and baritone **Ross Cumming** (both last seen in *The Barber of Seville*)perform in this one-of-a-kind show, created specifically for the Company each season.

From 11 February to 23 March, they will travel to Greenock, Dunlop, Stirling, Ardrishaig, Blairgowrie, Peterhead, Aboyne, Strathpeffer, Tongue, Stornoway, Poolewe, Dornie, Ballachulish, Tobermory, Johnstone, Middleton, Duns, St Andrews and Largs.

Accompanying them on piano is Music Director **James Longford**. **Laura Attridge** (*The Miserly Knight* and *Mavra* 2022), returns to direct the new cast, and designs are by **Ana Inés Jabares-Pita**.

The playlist, devised by Scottish Opera’s former Head of Music **Derek Clark**, cleverly combines a fabulous collection of much-loved classics with a treasure trove of lesser-known pieces. These include music from Verdi’s *La traviata*, Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, Puccini’s *La bohème*, Arthur Sullivan’s *HMS Pinafore* and Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin*, alongside works by Kurt Weill and William Walton. Audiences also have the chance to hear **Toby Hession’s** short opera, entitled ‘In flagrante’.

Celebrating love and life, this production of *Opera Highlights* is set at a wedding, and the show explores the stories that happen in the margins of this kind of occasion. The characters – four guests and four staff members – will find their narratives interweaving as the day progresses, with audiences following them through a series of intimate exchanges via a rich programme of operatic gems. The variety of musical styles span three centuries of history, and include a series of arias, duets, trios, and quartets together with a delicate overarching narrative devised by the Company.

Director **Laura Attridge** said: ‘I’m so looking forward to getting back into the rehearsal room with a brilliant new cast and Musical Director for *Opera Highlights*. We had a fantastic response from audiences who attended performances in the Autumn, and I can’t wait to share this joyful show with new communities across Scotland.’

Audiences praised the Autumn *Opera Highlights* tour, with one member calling it ‘an amazing musical experience’, whilst another praised the ‘extremely high’ standard of singing.

*Opera Highlights* is kindly supported by [**Friends of Scottish Opera**](https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/support-us/memberships/friends/),**JTH Charitable Trust** and **The Scottish Opera Endowment Trust.**

Tickets are on sale now at [www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/opera-highlights-202324/](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/opera-highlights-202324/)

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[www.scottishopera.org.uk](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/)

You can follow Scottish Opera on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, You Tube and Tik-Tok **@ScottishOpera**

**Creative team**

Director  **Laura Attridge**

Designer  **Ana Inés Jabares-Pita**

**Cast**

Soprano **Inna Husieva**

Mezzo Soprano **Lea Shaw**

Tenor  **Monwabisi Lindi**

Baritone **Ross Cumming**

Music Director/Pianist **James Longford**

**Performance diary**

Sunday 11 February, Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock

Tuesday 13 February, Dunlop Village Hall

Thursday 15 February, Albert Halls, Stirling

Saturday 17 February, Ardrishaig Public Hall

Tuesday 20 February, Blairgowrie Town Hall

Thursday 22 February, Peterhead Leisure and Community Centre

Saturday 24 February, Aboyne and Glen Tanar Memorial Hall (The Victory Hall)

Tuesday 27 February, Strathpeffer Pavilion

Thursday 29 February, Tongue Village Hall

Saturday 2 March, An Lanntair, Stornoway

Tuesday 5 March, Poolewe Village Hall

Thursday 7 March, Dornie and District Community Hall

Saturday 9 March, Ballachulish Village Hall

Tuesday 12 March, An Tobar and Mull Theatre, Tobermory

Thursday 14 March, Johnstone Town Hall

Saturday 16 March, Middleton Village Hall

Tuesday 19 March, Duns Volunteer Hall

Thursday 21 March, The Byre Theatre, St Andrews

Saturday 23 March, Barrfields Pavilion – Vikingar!, Largs

Notes to Editors

**Scottish Opera**

Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. The Company was founded in 1962 by Sir Alexander Gibson with the goal ‘to lay the treasures of opera at the feet of the people of Scotland’, opening with performances of *Madama Butterfly* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The 2022/23 season marked its 60th Anniversary.

Scottish Opera’s performance repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly commissioned world premieres, balancing favourites with under-explored works. The Company collaborates with the world’s finest singers and creatives, together with The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and choruses for each opera. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, a Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards, a 2017 UK Theatre Award, and a 2020 RPS Award. The Company took operas to Brooklyn in 2017 and Adelaide in 2020, and the 2022/23 season saw productions first staged at Scottish Opera appearing in Santa Fe, Madrid, Toulouse, and Los Angeles. The 60th Anniversary Season included the UK fully staged premiere of Osvaldo Golijov’s *Ainadamar* and the Company premiere of Puccini’s *Il trittico*.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland to ensure performances are within reach of as many of the country’s dispersed population as possible. This is one of the most extensive touring programmes of any European opera company and a much-valued contribution to Scotland’s cultural and artistic life, particularly in remote and island communities.

The Company’s Education & Outreach programme, the oldest in Europe, includes an annual in-person and digital Primary Schools Tour, bringing children the opportunity to perform their own specially commissioned piece alongside 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 performances offering audio description and specially-devised shorter Access performances.

Scottish Opera is committed to making opera for all, presenting opera at the highest possible standards in theatres across the country, outdoors on tour, and digital audiences around the world. The Company’s 2021 production of *The Gondoliers*, filmed live at Festival Theatre Edinburgh, is available on BBC iPlayer. Scottish Opera’s 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 Donizetti’s *L’elisir d’amore*, Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, Menotti’s *The Telephone*, *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, *Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep*, and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*.

Renowned for their flexibility and craftsmanship, Scottish Opera productions are frequently presented by opera houses across the globe. Two of our 60th Anniversary productions are presented by Welsh National Opera: Osvaldo Golijov’s *Ainadamar* is in Cardiff, Llandudno, Bristol, Plymouth, Birmingham, Milton Keynes and Southampton from September to November 2023. Puccini’s *Il trittico* can be seen in Cardiff in June 2024.

Following on from a run at the Opera Comique in Paris, Detroit Opera perform our 2019 production of Missy Mazzoli’s *Breaking the Waves* in April 2024 (having just presented *Ainadamar).* In addition, our 2014 production of Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale* is performed twice in Canada: at Vancouver Opera in February 2024, and at Canadian Opera Company in Toronto in April and May 2024.Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.

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