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##### Press Release

3 May 2022

**scottish opera presents new ACCESS PERFORMANCES OF**

***don giovanni* in INVERNESS, EDINBURGH, ABERDEEN AND GLASGOW**

This May and June, Scottish Opera is offering new Access afternoon shows of *Don Giovanni*, which are specially created for those who enjoy a more relaxed theatre experience. Everyone is welcome, and particularly those who are living with dementia, recovering from an operation, have breathing difficulties, have a young baby, can only travel to the theatre in the daytime, or would simply benefit from the laid back and spacious nature of these productions.

These fully-staged, shorter versions of Mozart’s masterpiece run alongside the Company’s full-length performances directed by **Sir Thomas Allen** at Eden Court Inverness, Festival Theatre Edinburgh, His Majesty’s Theatre Aberdeen and Theatre Royal Glasgow.

While the Company has performed Dementia Friendly shows in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow previously, this is the first time it has offered this type of performance — which have the same values at their core — at Eden Court Inverness.

With doors opening 45 minutes before the start, it allows time to get settled in before the performance begins. The brighter lighting levels in the auditorium let audience members come in and out as they please, and there is no need to keep quiet or sit still during the show. Quiet areas will also be made available if audience members need a break during the performance, with the option to watch from TV screens around the theatre if they do not wish to sit in the auditorium. There are wheelchair spaces and extra staff on hand to help. Sung in Italian with English supertitles, the *Don Giovanni* Access performances are narrated by Assistant Director **Mark Burns**, helping guide audiences through the story as it is performed.

Scottish Opera’s General Director **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘Scottish Opera is determined to help everyone return to the thrill and entertainment of live performance, no matter how their lives may have changed in the past three years. Everyone is always welcome to attend the theatre, and with these more relaxed performances we aim to make it even easier and more comfortable to help with any anxieties people may have about being in a theatre for the first time since the pandemic.

‘We also hope these performances encourage those who wouldn’t normally attend to feel more relaxed and enjoy their theatre experience, without the worry of making noise, crowded spaces or restricted movement. We are delighted to work with our venue partners in Inverness, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow in delivering Access *Don Giovanni*.’

**Rebecca Holt**, Eden Court Chief Executive said: ‘We are delighted to be offering one of Scottish Opera’s Access shows at Eden Court for the first time as part of the upcoming run of *Don Giovanni*. These performances offer an opportunity to experience the show in a more relaxed environment, which we hope will help in making people feel more comfortable returning to the theatre or giving opera a go for the first time. Scottish Opera has had an important long-standing relationship with Eden Court for a number of years, and we’re pleased to be developing that partnership in a way which opens up performances to more people.’

Scottish Opera staged the UK’s first dementia friendly opera performance in November 2016 at Festival Theatre Edinburgh, with *The Marriage of Figaro*. The Company has since developed these pioneering shows to allow an even wider audience to enjoy as easy and stress-free opera experiences as possible.

With music curated by Scottish Opera’s Head of Music **Derek Clark** he also conducts The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and a full cast of singers. These include former Scottish Opera Emerging Artists **Arthur Bruce** (*The Gondoliers* 2022) and **Shengzhi Ren** (*Opera Highlights* 2022), along with **Tim Dickinson**, **Elena Xanthoudakis** (*Elisir d’amore* 2009), **Edwin Kaye**, **Katherine Crompton, Annie Reilly** (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream* 2022), and **Colin Murray**.

Designed by award-winning **Simon Higlett**, the revival productionis set in the backstreets of 17th century Venice. Full of corruption, lust and darkness, it’s the perfect hunting ground of the amorous, Don Giovanni. It is here that the Don meets and sets his sights on Donna Anna, but when her father intervenes, it costs him his life at the hands of the Don Giovanni’s brute violence. As the shadows close in and the mistakes of his past begin to catch up with him, the Don’s tangled web of lies and betrayal begin to unravel.

Tickets for Access performances, which are kindly supported by The Scottish Opera Syndicate, are priced £10, and are free for school groups (booking fees may apply.) For more information visit [www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/access-don-giovanni/](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/access-don-giovanni/)

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

You can follow Scottish Opera on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram **@ScottishOpera**

Performance Diary

**Eden Court, Inverness**

Friday 27 May, 3pm

**Festival Theatre Edinburgh**

 Friday 10 June, 3pm

**His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen**

 Friday 17 June, 3pm

**Theatre Royal Glasgow**

Friday 24 June, 3pm

Notes to Editors

All productions are created and performed in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

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 Donizetti’s *L’elisir d’amore*, 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. In 2021 the Company returned to live audiences with Sir David McVicar’s new production of Verdi’s *Falstaff* performed in Glasgow and at Edinburgh International Festival.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland, from the largest-scale theatres to the smallest of rural venues, to ensure we are within reach of as many of our country's very dispersed population as possible. Our specially-adapted 40-foot long trailer brings ‘Pop-up Opera’ performances to thousands of people each year in a range of inspiring and unexpected community locations. In the summer of 2021 the Company performed nearly 200 shows of its Pop-up Opera Roadshow, to socially distanced audiences of 11,014 people. 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 and Outreach programme, which celebrated 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 performances offering audio description, and specially-devised shorter access performances.

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