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**Press Release**

4 August 2022

**SCOTTISH OPERA’S *OPERA HIGHLIGHTS* TOURS THIS AUTUMN TO 17 VENUES ACROSS SCOTLAND**

Scottish Opera’s hugely popular *Opera Highlights* is taking to the road this Autumn, travelling across Scotland from Castle Douglas to the North Isles of Shetland.

Starting on 22 September, and marking its 60th Anniversary, the tour forms part of the Company’s commitment to bring opera to over 60 communities across all points of the compass around Scotland this Season. This beautifully crafted show visits Dundee, Markinch, Fraserburgh, Forres, Banchory,Cullivoe, Lerwick, Linlithgow, Town Yetholm, Stranraer, Castle Douglas, Dunlop, Gartmore, Biggar, Lochailort, Gairloch and Durness.

Director **Emma Jenkins** and designer **Janis Hart** bring verve and creativity to this year’s original piano-accompanied production. The cast includes Scottish Opera’s 2022/23 Emerging Artists **Zoe Drummond** and **Osian Wyn Bowen** who both performed in *The Gondoliers* and *Utopia, Limited* 2022, alongside **Christopher Nairne** and **Shakira Tsindos,** led from the piano byScottish Opera’s 2022/23 Emerging Artist repetiteur **Kristina Yorgova**. With 1970s inspired costumes, join the cast as they transport to another world, where anything is possible. The production also features the world premiere of a new piece by Scottish Opera 2021/22 Emerging Artist and composer **Toby Hession**, with libretto by Emma Jenkins. Titled ‘Told By An Idiot’ it is a modern and humorous re-working of *Macbeth*.

Scottish Opera’s Head of Music **Derek Clark**, combines repertoire favourites, with a treasure trove of lesser-known pieces. The playlist includes much-loved classics from Mozart’s *The* *Magic Flute* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, Beethoven’s *Fidelio,* Verdi’s *Macbeth* and Bizet’s *The Pearl Fishers* Duet alongside music by Rimsky-Korsakov, Gounod and music written by Mendelssohn when he was just 12 years old. It is the ideal opportunity to experience a selection of *Opera Highlights* in a two-hour performance.

Director **Emma Jenkins** said: ‘Four young singers in search of an identity find themselves, like *Alice in Wonderland* or the children of *Narnia*, propelled along an operatic rollercoaster of love and loss, devotion and desire, jealousy and jubilation. The overriding theme of the *Opera Highlights* is LOVE. Love in all its forms, both positive and negative. Our singers put on and take off various roles as if possessed by the force of love in a fast-paced performance that celebrates not only the voice, but also ensemble work and physical theatre.  All this against the backdrop of Janis Hart's stunning design which combines a retro 70s feel with an anarchic theatrical space in which one feels that anything could happen!’

**Derek Clark** said:’ The programme is the usual mixture of the familiar and the less well-known, so we are confident that there will be something for everyone to enjoy, whether you are an experienced opera goer, or coming to see us for the first time.’

*Opera Highlights* is supported by The Friends of Scottish Opera and JTH Charitable Trust.

Tickets are on sale now at [www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/opera-highlights-202223/](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/opera-highlights-202223/)

The production will also be touring in the Spring from 14 February to 25 March 2023, travelling to: East Kilbride, Crail, Garvald, Perth, Stonehaven, Boat of Garten, Invergarry, Wick, Kirkwall, Ullapool, Torridon, Isle of Skye, Oban, Campbeltown, Bowmore, Gretna, Hawick and Ayr. Tickets go on sale winter 2022.

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

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

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**Cast**

Soprano **Zoe Drummond\***

Mezzo Soprano **Shakira Tsindos**

Tenor  **Osian Wyn Bowen\***

Baritone **Christopher Nairne**

Pianist **Kristina Yorgova\***

\*Scottish Opera 22/23 Emerging Artist

**Creative team**

Director  **Emma Jenkins**

Designer  **Janis Hart**

Assistant Director **Jim Osman**

**Performance diary**

Thursday 22 September, Marryatt Hall, Dundee

Saturday 24 September, Markinch Town Hall, Markinch

Tuesday 27 September, Dalrymple Hall, Fraserburgh

Thursday 29 September, Forres Town Hall, Forres

Saturday 1 October, The Barn Banchory, Banchory

Tuesday 4 October, Cullivoe Hall, Yell

Wednesday 5 October, Mareel Theatre, Lerwick

Saturday 8 October, Linlithgow Academy, Linlithgow

Tuesday 11 October, Wauchope Hall, Town Yetholm

Thursday 13 October, Ryan Centre, Stranraer

Saturday 15 October, The Fullerton, Castle Douglas

Tuesday 18 October, Dunlop Village Hall, Dunlop

Thursday 20 October, Gartmore Village Hall, Gartmore

Saturday 22 October, Municipal Hall, Biggar

Tuesday 25 October, Glenuig Hall, Lochailort

Thursday 27 October, Gairloch Hall, Gairloch

Saturday 29 October, Durness Village Hall, Durness

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 marks 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 sees productions first staged at Scottish Opera appearing in Santa Fe, Madrid, Toulouse, and Los Angeles. The 60th Anniversary Season includes 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 year, 60 locations across the length and breadth of the country. Specially-adapted 40-foot long trailers bring Pop-up Opera performances to thousands of people each year. 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*, *Opera Highlights*, Menotti’s *The Telephone*, and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*. A new commission will be announced in 2023.

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