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##### **Press Release**

23 March 2023

**SCOTTISH OPERA TRAVELS TO LOCATIONS FROM DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY TO THE WESTERN ISLES AND MORE THIS SUMMER WITH POP-UP OPERA TOUR**

This summer Scottish Opera’s popular Pop-up Opera tour kicks off on 27 May at the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, with 30 minute shows for all the family, including **A Little Bit of… *Die Fledermaus* and**A Little Bit of… *Eugene Onegin.*

Experience opera on a miniature scale with performances brought to life by a storyteller, two singers, instrumentalists, and a sumptuous set of specially created illustrations. Touring to venues in Linlithgow, South Lanarkshire, Glasgow, the Isle of Lewis, Strathpeffer, Dornoch, Dundee and Aberdeenshire (venue TBC). School children can also look forward to the tour popping up in primary schools across these locations for free performances of *Puffy MacPuffer and the Crabbit Canals.*

An ideal opportunity for anyone new to opera to try a taster of these classics, a series of colourful illustrations help guide audiences through the plot. Cleverly re-scored by Scottish Opera’s Head of Music, **Derek Clark**, the stories are brought to life by storyteller **Allan Dunn**, along with singers **Jessica Leary** and **Andrew McTaggart**, and cellist **Andrew Drummond Huggan,** guitarists **Sasha Savaloni** and **Ian Watt**.

Scottish Opera’sDirector of Outreach & Education, **Jane Davidson**, said: ‘This year, the Pop-up Opera company are coming off their trailer and back inside schools and community halls across the country, with a blend of weekday visits to primary schools and week-end performances in public venues. Travel is still very much at the heart of our programme, introducing primary pupils to the adventures of a very small boat with a very big heart as *Puffy MacPuffer* sets sail on the Scottish canal network from Inverness to Crinan and from Grangemouth to Glasgow.

‘For older audiences, it’s time travel, as we journey back to the last decades of the nineteenth century with two contrasting love stories. Will it be the doomed love affair of Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* or perhaps a glass of champagne with the original Batman— better known as *Die Fledermaus*by Johann Strauss II. The magic of time travel makes it possible to catch both in one afternoon!’

Scottish Opera’s General Director, **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘Pop-up Opera is at the heart of what we do as a company, bringing opera to as many people as possible no matter their geographical location, ensuring everyone can enjoy a live musical experience.

‘During the pandemic, Pop-up Opera highlighted the importance of our national touring profile as it allowed local venues, whilst unable to open their doors, to facilitate our live performances in their carparks and open spaces. Between 2020 and 2021 we presented 246 sold out Pop-up performances to communities across Scotland, which attracted an audience of over 13,000. For many, it was the first time they had come to a live show since 2019, many braving wind and rain to attend.

‘Therefore, it is with great joy that we are back on the road as we continue our commitment to tour to communities across Scotland, with these bite-sized productions offering an excellent introduction to opera, this time in schools and local venues.’

Strauss’s Die Fledermaus (The Bat) is a rip-roaring comedy filled with deceit, betrayal, and Viennese waltzes. At Prince Orlofsky’s New Year’s Eve party, Dr Falke is out for playful revenge on his friend Eisenstein, who once left him in a drunken stupor after a night out at a fancy dress ball. Left to stagger home alone the next morning, still in his bat costume, the locals laughed behind Dr Falke’s back, but now is his chance for payback. Falke plots to expose Eisenstein’s flirtatious ways to his wife Rosalinde, who is disguised as a Hungarian countess. The end result is hilarity – and lots of champagne.

Also on offer is Tchaikovsky’s sweeping music which perfectly captures the desperation and raw emotion of Pushkin’s much-loved masterpiece, *Eugene Onegin*. In this timeless story of first love and missed opportunities, the lovesick young Tatyana sends a heartfelt letter to the young, handsome neighbour who recently moved next door. However, the arrogant Eugene thoughtlessly spurns her affections. After a heart-stopping duel between friends and the passing of many years, perhaps there is a second chance for love.

Created specifically for five to eight year olds, with music & songs by **Marion Christie**, *Puffy MacPuffer and the Crabbit Canals* is a tale of the five waterways that link Scotland from the North Sea to the Atlantic. Like most families, each one is different: Caledonian – the longest; Crinan – the most beautiful; Monklands – hard working; Union – the fastest; and of course the wise old Forth & Clyde. Each one thinks they’re the best. Can an ordinary little puffer boat make them think again?

Pop-up Operais supported by **Friends of Scottish Opera**.

Tickets are on sale at <https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/shows/pop-up-opera-2023/> from 23 March.

Dates and locations of the tour are listed below.

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

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

Cast

Storyteller **Allan Dunn**

Soprano **Jessica Leary**

Baritone **Andrew McTaggart**

Cello **Andrew Drummond Huggan**

Guitar **Sasha Savaloni / Ian Watt**

With Illustrations by **Mar Hernandez**, **Essi Kimpimäki** and **Iain Piercy**

Performance Diary

Public performances

**A’ the Airts Community Arts Centre, Sanquhar**

Saturday 27 May, 1pm & 3pm

**Glencairn Memorial Institute, Moniaive**

Sunday 28 May, 1pm & 3pm

**Linlithgow Burgh Halls**

Saturday 3 June, 12pm & 2pm

**David Livingstone Birthplace, Blantyre**

Sunday 4 June, 12pm, 2pm & 4pm

**Springburn Auditorium**

Sunday 11 June, 12pm, 2pm & 4pm

**An Lanntair, Stornoway**

Saturday 17 June, 2pm & 4pm

**West Church Hall, Dornoch**

Saturday 24 June,2pm & 4pm

**Strathpeffer Pavillion**

Sunday 25 June, 2pm & 4pm

**Little Theatre Dundee**

Sunday 2 July 2pm & 4pm

Notes to Editors

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.

**For additional press details please contact:**

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