



PRESS RELEASE

19 December 2016

SIR DAVID McVICAR RETURNS TO SCOTTISH OPERA WITH *PELLÉAS AND MÉLISANDE*

Sir David McVicar makes a welcome return to Scottish Opera to direct Claude Debussy's extraordinary opera, *Pelléas and Mélisande*, for the first time in his career.

Rae Smith and **Paule Constable**, the design team behind the hit show *War Horse*, join him in a production that brings to life an enigmatic tale of love, honour, jealousy and loss, inspired by the paintings of Danish artist Villhelm Hammershøi.

Scottish Opera Music Director, **Stuart Stratford**, conducts an outstanding cast that includes soprano **Carolyn Sampson** (*The Rake's Progress* 2012) as Mélisande, Cardiff Singer of the World Song Prize winner **Andrei Bondarenko** as Pelléas, **Roland Wood** (*Il trovatore* 2015) as Golaud, **Alastair Miles** as Arkel, King of Allemonde, **Anne Mason** (*Il trovatore* 2015) as Geneviève, and **Jonathan May** as the Doctor.

Director **Sir David McVicar** said: ‘*Pelléas* is an opera unlike any other. Debussy’s lyrical, sensuous music casts an hypnotic spell whilst the drama is compelling and unbearably moving. *Pelléas* is a work that looks at things half-expressed and half-lived and conveys more than any other opera the tragic poignancy of existence.’

Alex Reedijk, Scottish Opera’s General Director added: ‘Scottish Opera is delighted to welcome back Sir David McVicar to direct his first production of Debussy’s extraordinary opera, and the design team of Rae Smith and Paule Constable, creators of *War Horse*. The company greatly values its close relationship with Sir David, who was last here directing *The Rake’s Progress* in 2012 and has also created acclaimed productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *La traviata* and *Der Rosenkavalier* for Scottish Opera.’

Audiences also have the chance to attend *Pelléas and Mélisande Unwrapped*, a free one-hour taster delving further in to the show and how it was created, as well as Pre-show Talks. Those who are visually impaired can enjoy the full opera experience at audio-described performances, which have live commentary that describes the action on stage without compromising the music.

This production is supported by Dunard Fund and The Alexander Gibson Circle.

-ENDS-

www.scottishopera.org.uk

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

Cast List

Pelléas	Andrei Bondarenko
Mélisande	Carolyn Sampson
Golaud	Roland Wood
Arkel, King of Allemonde	Alastair Miles
Geneviève	Anne Mason
Doctor	Jonathan May

Creative Team

Conductors	Stuart Stratford
Director	Sir David McVicar
Designer	Rae Smith
Lighting	Paule Constable
Movement Director	Leah Hausman

Performance Diary

Theatre Royal Glasgow, 282 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 3QA

Thu 23 Feb, 7.15pm

Sun 26 Feb, 4pm

Wed 1 Mar, 7.15pm

Sat 4 Mar, 7.15pm

Free events

Pelléas and Mélisande Unwrapped

Tue 28 Feb, 6pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Pre-show Talk

Sat 4 Mar, 6pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Touch Tour

Sat 4 Mar, 6pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Audio-described performance

Sat 4 Mar, 7.15pm

Festival Theatre, 13–29 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh EH8 9FT

Tue 7 Mar, 7.15pm

Thu 9 Mar, 7.15pm

Sat 11 Mar, 7.15pm

Free events

Pelléas and Mélisande Unwrapped

Wed 8 Mar, 6pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Touch Tour

Sat 11 Mar, 6pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Audio-described performance

Sat 11 Mar 7.15pm

Pelléas and Mélisande Pre-show Talk

Sat 11 Mar, 6pm

Notes to Editors

Scottish Opera is Scotland's national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. It was founded by Alexander Gibson in 1962 and was inaugurated with a production of *Madama Butterfly* at the King's Theatre in Glasgow.

Notable achievements include the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Inés de Castro* at the 1996 Edinburgh International Festival and complete Ring cycles at the 2003 Edinburgh International Festival, which won the 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera Production. Recent commissions include *Five:15 Operas Made in Scotland* (2008-10); *The Lady from the Sea*, *Clemency*, the double bill of *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* (winner of a South Bank Sky Arts Award) which premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival and 2016's *The Devil Inside* by Stuart MacRae and Louise Welsh.

Scottish Opera is committed to bringing the widest possible range of opera, performed to the highest possible standards, to the maximum audience throughout Scotland and the UK. Each year it performs in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness, as well as smaller theatres, village halls and community centres throughout the country.

Scottish Opera's Education and Outreach Department was the first of its kind of any opera company in Europe. It operates an extensive programme which involves over 8,000 primary school children every year, as well as many other activities including adult learning and free *Unwrapped* taster sessions.

Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.



For additional press details please contact:

Emily Henderson, Press Manager, 0141 242 0511, emily.henderson@scottishopera.org.uk

Eilidh Clark, Press Officer, 0141 242 0552, eilidh.clark@scottishopera.org.uk