



**PRESS RELEASE**

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

## **SCOTTISH OPERA ANNOUNCES 2016/17 SEASON**

- **New productions of *Pelléas and Mélisande*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *La bohème* and *The Elixir of Love***
- **Sir Thomas Allen's hit production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* opens the Season**
- **World premiere of *The 8<sup>th</sup> Door*, a specially devised companion piece to *Bluebeard's Castle* created by Vanishing Point's Matthew Lenton and Scottish Opera Composer in Residence Liam Paterson**
- **Scottish premieres of Philip Glass's *The Trial* and Giacomo Puccini's *Le Villi***
- **Four operas in concert presented in *The Sunday Series* at Theatre Royal Glasgow, featuring early and rarely-performed works by masters of operatic writing**
- **Renowned director Sir David McVicar and director/designer team Renaud Doucet and André Barbe return**
- **Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* – in a new arrangement for orchestral quintet – tours to 17 venues around Scotland and Opera Highlights takes to 38 the total number of venues visited**

In this rich and diverse 2016/17 Season, the first to be announced since **Stuart Stratford** formally took up post as Music Director, Scottish Opera continues to develop its strong creative relationships and partnerships, presenting seven fully staged productions and four operas in concert.

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

**Alex Reedijk**, General Director said: 'There is a wonderful variety of work on offer for audiences this season. We take great pride in the fact we have built on the successes of the past by reviving a hit production, but also continue to create new work for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is thrilling that directors such as Sir Thomas Allen and Sir David McVicar are returning to work with us, alongside the visionary Matthew Lenton, who is making his operatic directorial debut in a Scottish Opera and Vanishing Point co-production. Young musical talent is also being nurtured with the launch of our *Opera Sparks 2018* competition.'

**Stuart Stratford**, Music Director, added: 'I am delighted as Music Director to present opera to audiences all over Scotland. I have been very involved in the casting of the programme, and there are some incredible talents - from Scotland as well as around the world - taking to the stage. *The Sunday Series* programme promises to introduce audiences to lesser known works by composers including Debussy and Rossini, and we believe our performance of Puccini's *Le Villi* will be a Scottish premiere. I'm excited also to have the opportunity to travel Scotland conducting *The Elixir of Love*, taking the company's passion for music to all corners of the country.'

Opening the Season is **Sir Thomas Allen's** staging of *The Marriage of Figaro*, a revival of his 2010 interpretation of Mozart's masterpiece. Beautiful period designs by **Simon Higlett** provide the backdrop to this timeless comedy of social revolution and change. Renowned director **Sir David McVicar** directs a new production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*, and is joined by **Rae Smith** and **Paule Constable**, the design team behind *War Horse*, and Music Director **Stuart Stratford** who conducts. In a new co-production between Scottish Opera and internationally acclaimed Scottish theatre company **Vanishing Point**, comes Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*. Directed by Vanishing Point's founder **Matthew Lenton**, it is presented in a double-bill with a new piece of music theatre, which he also directs and has co-created with Scottish Opera Composer in Residence, **Liam Paterson**. Entitled *The 8<sup>th</sup> Door*, it is a fascinating companion piece to Bluebeard's disturbing story. Director **Renaud Doucet** and designer **André Barbe**, the team behind 2014's *Don Pasquale*, return with a new production of Puccini's classic *La bohème*, inspired by the Jazz Age of Josephine Baker.

In another co-commission with Music Theatre Wales, following on from the success of 2016's *The Devil Inside*, Scottish Opera gives the Scottish premiere of Philip Glass's *The Trial*, based on Kafka's nightmarish novel. Directed by **Michael McCarthy**, it was created by Glass in collaboration with **Christopher Hampton**, who won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay in 1989 for *Dangerous Liaisons*.

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* tours to 17 smaller Scottish venues in the Autumn, with **Stuart Stratford** and Scottish Opera's Head of Music **Derek Clark** sharing conducting duties in a new arrangement for five players from The Orchestra of Scottish Opera, who accompany a cast of soloists and a small chorus. The popular *Opera Highlights* – featuring four singers and a pianist – also travels around the country with a cast of fresh young talent, including two Scottish Opera Emerging Artists.

Following the sell-out success of previous years' operas in concert and the popularity of the Sunday afternoon concerts, this Season's *The Sunday Series* features performances of early and lesser-known works by masters of operatic writing with The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and world-class guest singers. Curated by Music Director **Stuart Stratford**, these performances at Theatre Royal Glasgow complement the Season's staged productions and include Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*, Debussy's *L'enfant prodigue*, Rossini's *La scala di seta*, and Puccini's *Le Villi*.

Scottish Opera welcomes back a talented array of conductors including **Tobias Ringborg**, **Timothy Burke**, **David Parry** and **Sian Edwards**. Starring in the title role of *The Marriage of Figaro* is **Ben McAteer**, a former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist, who received critical and audience acclaim for his role in *The Devil Inside* (2016). He is joined on stage by two Jette Parker Young Artists, **Samuel Dale Johnson** and **Anna Devin**, and by Scottish Opera favourite **Donald Maxwell**. *Pelléas and Mélisande* sees soprano **Carolyn Sampson** (*The Rake's Progress* 2012) and Cardiff Singer of the World Song Prizewinner **Andrei Bondarenko** take to the stage in the title roles, while internationally in-demand stars **Karen Cargill** and **Robert Hayward** sing Judith and Bluebeard in *Bluebeard's Castle*. *La bohème* has a similarly impressive cast with **Hye-Youn Lee** (*Madama Butterfly* 2014) starring as the fated Mimì and **Luis Gomes**, winner of 2015's Grand Prize at the Verbier Festival Academy and a Covent Garden regular, as Rodolfo.

*The Trial* boasts a superb ensemble cast including **Nicholas Lester** (*Don Pasquale* 2014), **Paul Carey Jones** (*Inés de Castro* 2015) and three of Scottish Opera's 2016/17 Emerging Artists, whilst *The Elixir of Love* cast includes **Ellie Laugharne** (*The Pirates of Penzance* 2013), Welsh tenor **Elgan Llŷr Thomas**, winner of 2015's coveted Stuart Burrows International Voice Award, and baritone **James Cleverton**.

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

The Scottish Opera Emerging Artists programme once again nurtures young operatic talent offering a period of full-time work with the Company to help launch their careers. This year's artists include soprano **Hazel McBain**, mezzo-soprano **Emma Kerr**, tenor **Elgan Llyr Thomas**, director **Jim Manganello** and composer **Liam Paterson**. Audiences will have the opportunity to see the Emerging Artist singers perform at two recitals during the year in Glasgow.

Young opera lovers and families have plenty to look forward to with the world premiere of *The Little White Town of Never Weary*, an interactive musical adventure for children aged five to eight, inspired by the Jessie M. King book of the same name. It makes an extensive schools tour as well as public performances in Kirkcudbright and Glenrothes. There is also the chance to catch performances of Kurt Weill's *Down in the Valley* and *Der Jasager*, and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* by Scottish Opera Connect, Scotland's only youth opera company.

There is an opportunity for young composers and librettists to write for the Connect Company in *Opera Sparks 2018*, a new competition for people aged 26 and under to create a 15-minute opera to be performed during the Scottish Government's Year of Young People 2018.

Audiences can get even more involved with the Company's productions through the Pop-Up Opera Roadshow, Primary Schools Tour and the Community Choir, which is open to adults of all ages who wish to enjoy singing in a multitude of musical genres. The Memory Spinners group, for people with dementia and their carers, continues to meet weekly in Glasgow, and is also being introduced in Edinburgh. Pre-show talks, where audiences can find out more about the opera they are seeing, will once again be on offer as well as Opera Unwrapped, free one-hour tasters delving further in to the shows and how they are created.

-ENDS-

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

## Notes to Editors

Further information on the season can be found at [www.scottishopera.org.uk](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk) (from 27 April)

Tickets on public sale from all venues on 30 May (season subscriptions on sale 5 May)

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 10,000 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.

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***



## Performances

### **The Marriage of Figaro**

12 Oct, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
14 Oct, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
16 Oct, 4pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
18 Oct, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
20 October, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
22 Oct, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow  
27 Oct, 7.15pm, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen  
29 Oct, 7.15pm, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen  
1 Nov, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness  
3 Nov, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness  
5 Nov, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness  
9 Nov, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh  
11 Nov, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh  
13 Nov, 4pm, Festival Theatre Edinburgh  
17 Nov, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh  
19 Nov, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

### **Opera Unwrapped**

19 Oct, 6pm, Glasgow  
28 Oct, 6pm, Aberdeen  
4 Nov, 6pm, Inverness  
10 Nov, 6pm, Edinburgh

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

**Pre-show Talk**

22 Oct, 6pm, Glasgow

29 Oct, 6pm, Aberdeen

5 Nov, 6pm, Inverness

19 Nov, 6pm, Edinburgh

**Pelléas and Mélisande**

23 Feb, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

26 Feb, 4pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

1 Mar, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

4 Mar, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

7 Mar, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

9 Mar, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

11 Mar, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

**Opera Unwrapped**

28 Feb, 6pm, Glasgow

8 Mar, 6pm, Edinburgh

**Pre-show Talk**

4 Mar, 6pm, Glasgow

11 Mar, 6pm, Edinburgh

**Bluebeard's Castle and The 8<sup>th</sup> Door**

28 Mar, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow

30 Mar, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

1 Apr, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

5 Apr, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

8 Apr, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

**Opera Unwrapped**

29 Mar, 6pm, Glasgow

6 Apr, 6pm, Edinburgh

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

**Pre-show Talk**

1 Apr, 6pm, Glasgow

8 Apr, 6pm, Edinburgh

**La bohème**

9 May, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

12 May, 7.15pm Theatre Royal, Glasgow

14 May, 4pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

16 May, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

18 May, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow

20 May, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow

25 May, 7.15pm, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen

27 May, 7.15pm, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen

31 May, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre. Edinburgh

4 June, 4pm. Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

6 June, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

8 June, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

10 June, 7.15pm, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

13 June, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness

15 June, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness

17 June, 7.15pm, Eden Court, Inverness

**Opera Unwrapped**

11 May, 6pm, Glasgow

26 May, 6pm, Aberdeen

1 Jun 6pm, Edinburgh

14 Jun 6pm, Inverness

**Pre-show Talk**

20 May 6pm, Glasgow

27 May 6pm, Aberdeen

10 Jun 6pm, Edinburgh

17 Jun 6pm, Inverness



**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

### **The Trial**

24 Jan, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow  
26 June, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
28 June, 7.15pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow  
3 Feb, 7.15pm, King's Theatre Edinburgh  
4 Feb, 7.15pm, King's Theatre Edinburgh

### **The Sunday Series: Operas in Concert**

23 Oct, 3pm, Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
5 Feb, 3pm, Debussy's *L'enfant prodigue*, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
2 April, 3pm, Rossini's *La scala di seta*, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
21 May, 3pm, Puccini's *Le Villi*, Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
7 Apr, 7.30pm, Rossini's *La scala di Seta*, Perth Concert Hall

### **The Elixir of Love**

21 Sep to 29 Oct  
Tour includes Motherwell, Stirling, Elgin, Ullapool, Stornoway, Thurso, Drumnadrochit, Ellon, Langholm, Newton Stewart, Kilmarnock, Greenock, Oban, Perth, Galashiels and Musselburgh.

### **Opera Highlights**

14 Feb to 18 Mar  
Touring to Easterhouse, Maybole, Dumfries, Banchory, Gairloch, Nairn, Durness, Ardross, Fraserburgh, Lanark, Strathmiglo, Brodick, Killin, Bathgate and Strontian.

### **The Little White Town of Never Weary**

28 May, 10.30am and 2pm, Parish Church Hall, Kirkcudbright  
11 Jun, 10am and 1.30pm, Auchmuty High School, Glenrothes  
Schools performances in Kirkcudbright, Musselburgh, Falkirk, Aberdeen and Glenrothes, from 26 May to 10 Jun.

### **Scottish Opera Connect**

5 Aug, 4pm and 8pm, Kurt Weill's *Down in the Valley* and *Der Jasager*, Queen's Cross Church, Aberdeen  
8 and 9 April, 4pm and 8pm, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Scottish Opera, Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow

**\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00:01, 27 APRIL 2016 \*\***

**Emerging Artists**

17 Nov, 1.10pm, University of Glasgow Concert Hall

2 Dec, 1pm, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

**National Opera Studio.**

3 Mar, 6pm, Theatre Royal Glasgow

**For additional press details please contact:**

Emily Henderson, Press Manager, 0141 242 0511, [emily.henderson@scottishopera.org.uk](mailto:emily.henderson@scottishopera.org.uk)

Eilidh Clark, Press Officer, 0141 242 0552, [eilidh.clark@scottishopera.org.uk](mailto:eilidh.clark@scottishopera.org.uk)