



PRESS RELEASE

6 August 2018

SCOTTISH OPERA MAKES LAMMERMUIR FESTIVAL DEBUT WITH BRITTEN'S *THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE*

Scottish Opera is performing at the award-winning Lammermuir Festival in East Lothian for the first time this September, with a new semi-staged performance of Benjamin Britten's *The Burning Fiery Furnace*.

Soloists, chorus and instrumentalists perform Britten's colourful and exotic Church Parable in Haddington's mediaeval St Mary's Parish Church, telling the tale of Nebuchadnezzar and the three Israelites. This timeless biblical work was premiered in 1966.

Singing the role of Nebuchadnezzar is **Ben Johnson**, who is joined by **David Stout** (*La bohème* 2017) as Abbot; **William Morgan** (*Opera Highlights* 2018) as Misael; **Benedict Nelson** as Ananias and **Lancelot Nomura** (*Ariadne auf Naxos* 2018) as Azarias. Scottish Opera Head of Music **Derek Clark** conducts and **Jenny Ogilvie** directs. The performance also features five boy trebles aged between 9 and 12 as The Acolytes.

Lammermuir Festival, established in 2010 by Artistic Directors Hugh Macdonald and James Waters, runs from 14 to 23 September in beautiful venues around East Lothian. The festival won the 2017 Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Best Concert Series and Festival, and features several of Scotland's leading ensembles, internationally renowned musicians and exciting new talent.

Stuart MacRae is Composer in Association at Lammermuir Festival and his new piece 'I am Prometheus', the second of his three festival commissions inspired by the Prometheus myth, will be premiered by Joshua Ellicott, Emily Hoile and the Hebrides Ensemble at this year's festival. In January 2019, Scottish Opera premieres Stuart's new opera *Anthropocene* with a libretto by **Louise Welsh** at Theatre Royal Glasgow.

Scottish Opera General Director **Alex Reedijk** said: 'We are very proud to be sharing with Lammermuir Festival a new semi-staging of Britten's *The Burning Fiery Furnace*. This new partnership between Scottish Opera and one of the UK's premiere boutique festivals in an amazing mediaeval church will see the performance of an extraordinary work by one of the 20th century's greatest composers. One of Britten's three church parables, it is a tale that makes a powerful emotional impact that belies its brevity and scale.'

Hugh Macdonald and **James Waters**, Artistic Directors of Lammermuir Festival added: 'We are simply thrilled to welcome Scotland's national opera company to the Lammermuir Festival. The opportunity to present operatic work of this quality is the fulfilment of a dream for us.'

The Burning Fiery Furnace Creative Team

Conductor	Derek Clark
Director	Jenny Ogilvie

The Burning Fiery Furnace Cast

Nebuchadnezzar	Ben Johnson
Abbot (Astrologer)	David Stout
Misael	William Morgan
Ananias	Benedict Nelson
Azarias	Lancelot Nomura
Herald/Leader of the Courtiers	Douglas Nairne

Performance Diary

Britten's *The Burning Fiery Furnace*

21 September, 8pm

St Mary's Parish Church, Haddington

More information and tickets are available from www.lammermuirfestival.co.uk

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www.scottishopera.org.uk

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; complete Ring cycles at the 2003 Edinburgh International Festival, which won the 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera Production; and the Achievement in Opera Award at the 2017 UK Theatre Awards for Sir David McVicar's production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*. 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 *Unwrapped* taster sessions.

Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.



The Lammermuir Festival was founded in 2010, based on a conviction that historic architecture and beautiful landscape can be an ideal environment in which to experience great music and music-making. This year (2018) is the 9th festival. It was the recipient of the prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society Award in 2017 for the Festivals and Concert Series category. Artistic Directors are James Waters and Hugh Macdonald, and its patron is pianist, Steven Osborne. The 2018 Lammermuir Festival is funded by The Lamp of Lothian, Creative Scotland and East Lothian Council.

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