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##### Press Release

7 April 2022

**GILBERT & SULLIVAN’S**

***THE GONDOLIERS* BY SCOTTISH OPERA AND D’OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY TO BE BROADCAST**

**ON BBC FOUR THIS EASTER SUNDAY**

On Easter Sunday (17 April), the new Scottish Opera production of Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Gondoliers,* described by audiences as ‘wonderful and heartwarming’*,* is scheduled to be broadcaston BBC Four at 8pm.

This co-production with D'Oyly Carte Opera and State Opera South Australia is directed by **Stuart Maunder**, Artistic Director at State Opera South Australia. G&S aficionado **Derek Clark**, Head of Music at Scottish Opera, conducts an ensemble cast that includes ENO Harewood Artist **William Morgan**,former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist **Mark Nathan,** **Ellie Laugharne,** **Ben McAteer,** **Sioned Gwen Davies***,* **Arthur Bruce**,and G&S favourites **Yvonne Howard** and **Richard Suart**. Also in the cast is 2021/22 Emerging Artist **Catriona Hewitson**.

The film, directed by **Jonathan Haswell**, was made at a performance at Festival Theatre Edinburgh on October 28, during the show’s Scottish tour last year. After the broadcast, those in the UK will be able to watch the film, packed with favourites including the ‘A Regular Royal Queen’ quartet, ‘Take a pair of sparkling eyes’ and ‘Dance a Cachucha’, on BBC iPlayer for five years. This broadcast is part of the BBC’s Sunday Night Performance strand – showcasing some of the best of the UK’s dance, theatre, music and spoken word in specially made films for television every week of the year.

*The Gondoliers* satirises the ruling classes and their position within society, with the tale of two happy-go-lucky gondoliers who discover that one of them is the heir to the throne of a distant kingdom. In a show packed full of fun, the gondoliers set off to rule with an idealistic – if somewhat chaotic – plan. Set and Costume Designer **Dick Bird** embraces the absurdity of Gilbert’s libretto by bringing the story to life with fabulously inventive props – which are never quite what they seem – and exquisitely detailed costumes to transport audiences to Venice’s Grand Canal.

Director **Stuart Maunder** said: ‘*The Gondoliers* is an undoubted masterpiece of the baker’s dozen that are The Savoy Operas. It’s a brilliant romp, with glorious music, a sumptuous design and a cast to die for. It’s madcap, gossamer thin and with real heart and the perfect chance for a whole new audience to experience one of the greatest pieces of music theatre in the English language. *The Gondoliers’* fusion of infectious melody, topsy-turvy wit and heartfelt sentiment is a combination that never ages – indeed, perhaps it’s something we need now more than ever.

‘Directing this glorious piece, with this stellar cast and creative team has been, for me, the best way to beat those Covid blues. The first time back in a theatre, the first time many had been onstage for the best part of two years made for a joyous celebration from day one of rehearsal. That joy, delight and play is captured beautifully in this performance. So proud.’

Scottish Opera General Director, **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘I am very pleased that this marvellous production, so full of joy and fun, is going to be available on the BBC for our many audiences across the United Kingdom who were unable to attend our live performances in Scotland and London. Beautifully sung and staged with great affection and respect for Gilbert & Sullivan’s original delightful intent yet completely delicious for our modern audiences. Enjoy!’

*The Gondoliers* is supported by Scottish Opera’s ‘Play a Supporting Role’ Appeal, Garfield Weston Foundation (Weston Culture Fund) and The Michael Bishop Foundation.

*The Gondoliers* cast list

Marco Palmieri **William Morgan**

Giuseppe Palmieri **Mark Nathan**

Gianetta **Ellie Laugharne**

Tessa **Sioned Gwen Davies**

The Duchess of Plaza-Toro **Yvonne Howard**

The Duke of Plaza-Toro **Richard Suart**

Don Alhambra del Bolero **Ben McAteer**

(The Grand Inquisitor)

Casilda **Catriona Hewitson\***

Antonio **Arthur Bruce**

Luiz  **Dan Shelvey**

Inez **Cheryl Forbes**

Giorgio **Oskar McCarthy**

Fiametta **Zoe Drummond**

Vittoria **Frances Gregory**

Giulia **Grace Wain**

Francesco **Osian Wyn Bowen**

\* Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2021/22

*The Gondoliers* Creative Team

Conductors **Derek Clark** & **Jonathon Cole-Swinard**

Director **Stuart Maunder**

Set and Costume Designer **Dick Bird**

Lighting Designer **Paul Keogan**

Choreographer **Isabel Baquero**

Assistant Choreographer **Lucy Burns**

Film Director **Jonathan Haswell**

-ENDS-

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

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

Notes to Editors

All productions are created and performed in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

The Company’s Opera 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*, Janáček’s *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, Menotti’s *The Telephone* and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*.

Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland.

The Company's performance repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly-commissioned world premieres, working in collaboration with the world's finest singers and creatives, alongside The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and choruses. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, a Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards and a Herald Angel, as well as a 2020 RPS Award. In 2021 the Company returned to live audiences with Sir David McVicar’s new production of Verdi’s *Falstaff* performed in Glasgow and at Edinburgh International Festival.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland, from the largest-scale theatres to the smallest of rural venues, to ensure we are within reach of as many of our country's very dispersed population as possible. Our specially-adapted 40-foot long trailer brings ‘Pop-up Opera’ performances to thousands of people each year in a range of inspiring and unexpected community locations. In the summer of 2021 the Company performed nearly 200 shows of its Pop-up Opera Roadshow, to socially distanced audiences of 11,014 people. 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 and Outreach programme, which celebrated 50 years in 2021, includes an annual Primary Schools Tour, bringing upper primary-aged children the opportunity to perform their own specially-commissioned piece, alongside three 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.

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