



PRESS RELEASE

6 January 2017

SCOTTISH OPERA PRESENTS DEMENTIA FRIENDLY PERFORMANCES OF *LA BOHÈME* IN GLASGOW AND EDINBURGH

Scottish Opera is staging two dementia friendly performances of Puccini's classic, *La bohème*: one at Theatre Royal Glasgow and one in collaboration with Festival Theatre Edinburgh.

This follows the Company's landmark production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, the UK's first dementia friendly opera performance, at Festival Theatre Edinburgh in November 2016, made possible by the pioneering work of Scottish Opera and the Festival Theatre, supported by the Life Changes Trust.

In the two dementia friendly performances of *La bohème*, the role of Mimì is performed by Glasgow-born soprano, **Nadine Livingston**, a former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist. She is joined by **Christopher Turner** as Rodolfo, **Adam Gilbert** as Marcello, **Nadine Benjamin** as

Musetta, **Božidar Smiljanić** as Schaunard, **Damien Pass** as Colline and **Jonathan Best** as Alcindoro.

The narrator is **Allan Dunn**, and Scottish Opera's Head of Music, **Derek Clark**, conducts.

Taking place at Theatre Royal Glasgow on Saturday 13 May at 3pm, and Saturday 3 June at 3pm at Festival Theatre Edinburgh, these specially abridged performances have a running time of one hour 45 minutes including an interval, and are carefully designed to make the theatrical experience more accessible to people living with dementia. Sound and lighting levels are adjusted for the comfort of the audience, and the cast is joined on stage by a narrator. Audiences will also be able to go in and out of the auditorium during the performance and see the show in the foyer areas on TV screens.

Alex Reedijk, Scottish Opera's General Director said: 'Scottish Opera is proud and excited to stage a second dementia friendly opera production, with two performances of Puccini's *La bohème* at Theatre Royal Glasgow and Festival Theatre Edinburgh. Our dementia friendly *The Marriage of Figaro*, a UK first presented with Festival Theatre Edinburgh, was a great success and we are pleased to continue opening up access to the arts to people living with dementia and bring another wonderful opera to a wider audience.'

Jane Davidson, Scottish Opera's Director of Outreach and Education added: 'Following a successful pilot project which saw the UK's first ever dementia friendly opera performance with *The Marriage of Figaro* in November, Scottish Opera is delighted to continue our innovative approach towards assisting people living with dementia to access our productions through this specially adapted version of *La bohème*, featuring a narrator linking key scenes and with adjustments to lighting and other special effects as appropriate.'

The performances are being staged as part of the run of Scottish Opera's *La bohème*, which opens on 9 May at Theatre Royal Glasgow, and tours to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Inverness. The dates also include audio-described performances and touch tours for audience members with visual impairment, free pre-show talks and Unwrapped events, free one-hour tasters to encourage first time attenders to opera.

Directed by **Renaud Doucet** and designed by **André Barbe**, the team behind 2014's hit *Don Pasquale* has set Puccini's romance amongst the jumble of Paris's famous flea markets. The Jazz Age of Josephine Baker provides the inspiration for this production that is full of their trademark colour, character and style.

The introduction of dementia friendly performances builds on Scottish Opera's existing work with people living with dementia. Since 2010, the Company's Education and Outreach Department has run the *Memory Spinners* programme in Glasgow, which uses music, storytelling, movement and the visual arts to help people with dementia and their carers relax and get creative. This successful programme also recently launched in Edinburgh with workshops and performances taking place at the Festival Theatre.

-ENDS-

www.scottishopera.org.uk

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

[Performance Diary](#)

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

La bohème (Dementia Friendly Performance)

Sat 13 May, 3pm

Tickets £10

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

La bohème (Dementia Friendly Performance)

Sat 3 June, 3pm

Tickets £10

[Cast List](#)

Mimi

Nadine Livingston

Rodolfo

Christopher Turner

Marcello	Adam Gilbert
Musetta	Nadine Benjamin
Schaunard	Božidar Smiljanić
Colline	Damien Pass
Alcindoro	Jonathan Best

Creative Team

Conductor	Derek Clark
Director	Renaud Doucet
Designer	André Barbe
Lighting	Guy Simard

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