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**Press Release**

19 October 2021

**SCOTTISH OPERA ANNOUNCES SPRING AND SUMMER PROGRAMME FEATURING NEW**

**AND REVIVAL PRODUCTIONS AND**

**AN OPERA IN CONCERT DOUBLE BILL**

* **New production of Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, directed by Dominic Hill of Citizens Theatre**
* **Sir Thomas Allen revives his production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni***
* **Opera in Concert performances of Rachmaninov’s *The Miserly Knight* and Stravinsky’s *Mavra,* conducted by Scottish Opera Music Director, Stuart Stratford**
* **Emerging Artists recitals in St Andrews and Glasgow**
* **New *Opera Highlights* production directed by John Savournin, touring to 18 venues across Scotland**
* **National Opera Studio performance at Theatre Royal Glasgow**
* **Festive musical adventure for 3 to 7 year olds, *Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep***
* ***The Last Aliens*, a Primary School Tour for 5 to 7 year olds encouraging engagement with climate change**

Following a packed year of both indoor and outdoor performances, which included *Falstaff*, La bohème, *Così fan tutte* and *Opera Highlights*, Scottish Opera is announcing a busy 2022 Spring and Summer. This includes a new production by **Dominic Hill**,a revival by renowned director and baritone, **Sir Thomas Allen**, an Opera in Concert double bill, curated and conducted by Scottish Opera Music Director, **Stuart Stratford**, and an *Opera Highlights* tour. This exciting programme follows on from the previously announced performances of *The Gondoliers* and *Utopia, Limited*, *The Puccini Collection* concert and the Company’s Outreach and Education productions *of Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep* and *The Last Aliens*.

A truly international line-up of singers appear including **Margo Arsane, Arthur Bruce, Alexey Dolgov, Charlie Drummond, Alasdair Elliot, Alexey Gusev, Anush** [**Hovhannisyan,**](https://www.anushhovhannisyan.co.uk/) **David Junghoon Kim, Alexander Krasnov, Hye-Youn Lee, Monica McGhee, Shengzhi Ren, Dan Shelvey, David Shipley, Elgan Llŷr Thomas, Sinéad Campbell-Wallace, Keel Watson, Kitty Whately, Roland Wood, Dingle Yandell,** and **Lawrence Zazzo.** There’s also the chance to see the Company’s 2021/22 Season Emerging Artists, **Glen Cunningham, Catriona Hewitson** and **Lea Shaw**, in action.

**Alex Reedijk**, Scottish Opera General Director, said: ‘We are delighted to present a great array of operatic works over the next six months, including full-scale shows brought to the stage by brilliant directors, Dominic Hill and Sir Thomas Allen, as well as two concert performances, expertly curated by Stuart Stratford, and wonderful Outreach and Education projects for children of all ages. This is as well as a commitment to *Opera Highlights*, with 18 venues being announced over the winter. I really do hope you can join us for what promises to be a fascinating and entertaining collection of live performances across Scotland.’

**Stuart Stratford**, Scottish Opera Music Director, added: ‘We have an exciting and varied repertoire for the next part of our year, beginning in December with *The Puccini Collection*. A concert programme of some of Puccini’s greatest hits, it features large sections from *Manon Lescaut*, *Tosca*, La bohème and *La* *Fanciulla del West*. For this, we are delighted to welcome back Roland Wood and Sinéad Campbell-Wallace.

‘I am thrilled that we are able to finally stage our wonderful new production of Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Widely regarded as one of his greatest dramatic works, it combines his clarity of storytelling with unique, radiant, shimmering orchestral and vocal colours. A fabulous cast including many Scottish Opera regulars and our Emerging Artists, it will be the first time that Lawrence Zazzo, as Oberon, has sung with us.

‘*Don Giovanni* makes a welcome return in Sir Thomas Allen’s timeless production, with Roland Wood and Jonathan McGovern sharing the title role. *The Miserly Knight* and *Mavra* form an excursion into the depths of Russia with two little known works. In *The Miserly Knight*, Rachmaninov is heard at his finest in this Pushkin short story of greed and moral decay. *Mavra*, which is also based on a Pushkin work, shows the young neo-classical Stravinsky at his most witty and succinct with a comedy of timing and location.’

**2021/22 Productions**

***A Midsummer Night’s Dream***

Opening on February 22 isa new production of Benjamin Britten’s atmospheric *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, directed by **Dominic Hill**, Artistic Director of Citizens Theatre, with three performances at Theatre Royal Glasgow and a further three at Festival Theatre Edinburgh.

Dominic, who last directed *Macbeth* for Scottish Opera in 2014, returns to the Company to bring his Shakespearean expertise in the telling of this tale of four lovers lost in the woods, fairies, magic and comedy, in an otherworldly mix of imagination and reality.

Scottish Opera Music Director **Stuart Stratford** conducts a dynamic cast that includes 2021/22 Scottish Opera Emerging Artist **Catriona Hewitson** as Tytania,widely praised for her performances in the Company’s recent productions of Così fan tutte and L’elisir d’amore, and **David Shipley** (*Rigoletto*2018), as Bottom, alongside countertenor **Lawrence Zazzo** as Oberon. Also in the cast are Scottish tenor and broadcaster, **Jamie MacDougall** (*Falstaff* 2021); former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist **Elgan Llŷr Thomas** (*Falstaff* 2021); **Dingle Yandell** (*Tosca* 2019); **Jonathan McGovern** (*The Telephone* 2020)and 2021/22 Emerging Artists, **Lea Shaw** and **Glen Cunningham**, who both recently toured with *Opera Highlights*.They are joined by a children’s chorus.

Set in a post-war world, designs for the production are by **Tom Piper**, famed for the *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* installation at the Tower of London. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is supported by Scottish Opera’s Alexander Gibson Circle.

***Don Giovanni***

On May 15, a revival of renowned baritone and director **Sir Thomas Allen’s** dark and atmospheric production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* opens at Theatre Royal Glasgow, before touring to Inverness, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Scottish Opera Music Director **Stuart Stratford** conducts an exciting cast that includes **Roland Wood** (*Falstaff* 2021) and **Jonathan McGovern** (*The Telephone* 2020), sharing the role of the titular anti-hero. They are joined by **Hye-Youn Lee** (*Nixon in China* 2020), **Kitty Whately** (*Hansel and Gretel* 2021), and **Keel Watson**. Set in the backstreets of 17th century Venice, designs are by **Simon Higlett**, who worked with Sir Thomas as designer for his stunning production of *The Magic Flute* for Scottish Opera in 2019.

*Don Giovanni*, last staged by the Company in 2013, is supported by The Scottish Opera Syndicate.

**Opera in Concert**

On March 18 at Perth Concert Hall, is a double bill Opera in Concert performance of Sergei Rachmaninov’s *The Miserly Knight,* a brooding story of a miser destroyed by greed, and Igor Stravinsky’s *Mavra*, a sharp-edged comedy that parodies the romances of its day. Both are adapted from stories by Russian poet, playwright, and novelist Alexander Pushkin.

Rachmaninov’s *The Miserly Knight* tells the tale of a father and son ruined by a hoarded treasure, with disguises, duels, and a near-poisoning featuring in the action. It showcases the composer’s extraordinary talent for orchestration, with soloists including **Alexander Krasnov**, **Alexey Dolgov, Alexey Gusev** (*Opera Highlights* 2021) and **Alasdair Elliot** (*Pagliacci* 2018), accompanied by The Orchestra of Scottish Opera, conducted by **Stuart Stratford**.

Igor Stravinsky’s *Mavra,* featuring soprano**Anush** [**Hovhannisyan** (*La traviata* 2017), sees two lovers go to outrageous lengths to be together, but they may not have thought through the practicalities.](https://www.anushhovhannisyan.co.uk/)

These performances are supported by Scottish Opera Endowment Trust and Friends of Scottish Opera.

Before this, on 12 December, there is the chance to celebrate the festive season with Scottish Opera in Dundee’s Caird Hall. Conducted by **Stuart Stratford**, *The Puccini*

*Collection* features favourite arias, ensemble numbers and orchestral interludes from Giacomo Puccini’s timeless operas. Soloists **Sinéad Campbell-Wallace** (*Tosca* 2019), Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2021/22 **Catriona Hewitson** (*Così fan tutte* 2021), **David Junghoon Kim** (making his Company debut) and **Roland Wood** (*Falstaff* 2021), will be accompanied on stage by the full Orchestra of Scottish Opera.

With excerpts from well-known and well-loved works including *Tosca* ‘(‘Vissi d’arte’), *Turandot* (‘Nessun Dorma’) and *La bohème*, as well as rarer gems from *La Fanciulla del West*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Edgar*, there is plenty for newcomers and aficionados alike.

**Opera Highlights**

The much-loved *Opera Highlights* returns in February with an 18-date tour around Scotland. **John Savournin** directs a cast that includes Scottish soprano **Monica McGhee**, former Scottish Opera Emerging Artists **Margo Arsane** and **Shengzhi Ren**, who were both in *Così fan tutte* earlier this year,and **Dan Shelvey** (*The Gondoliers* 2021). This is a great chance for audiences to see Margo and Shengzhi perform in *Opera Highlights*, as they were originally scheduled to take part in the tour last year, before it was cancelled because of the pandemic. More details and venues will be announced soon.

*Opera Highlights* is supported by The Friends of Scottish Opera and JTH Charitable Trust.

**Emerging Artists and National Opera Studio**

As live performance begins to return to theatres, the Company is thrilled to once again be able to offer a group of young artists a period of full-time work at the beginning of their careers. The Emerging Artists have opportunities to perform with Scottish Opera in live productions throughout the year, as well as work in-house with Scottish Opera staff and visiting coaches to develop their skills.

There are two chances to see the Scottish Opera Emerging Artists 2021-22 next month, in St Andrews and Glasgow. Soprano **Catriona Hewitson,** mezzo-soprano **Lea Shaw**, tenor **Glen Cunningham** and repetiteur **Toby Hession**, will be performing in two lunchtime recitals on 24 and 25 November, at the University of St Andrews and the University of Glasgow.

On February 25, **Emma Jenkins** directs a performance by the Young Artists from the National Opera Studio, at Theatre Royal Glasgow. This collaboration with National Opera Studio provides the Young Artists a week-long residency in Glasgow, culminating in this special performance by some of the country’s most talented developing artists. National Opera Studio is supported by Scottish Opera Endowment Trust.

**Primary Schools Tour**

*The Last Aliens*, a Primary School Tour for Primary 5 to Primary 7 pupils encouraging engagement with climate change,is heading to over 50 schools around Scotland this Spring. This intergalactic adventure is a **funny and relevant story about saving Planet Earth, with five fantastic songs to learn.** Pupils learn the opera’s words and songs in their own classrooms, and then the Scottish Opera Teaching Artists team arrive at the school for a morning to teach them movement and choreography to prepare for a 30-minute performance in front of fellow pupils, friends and family.

Composed by **Alan Penman** with lyrics by **Ross Stenhouse**, teachers can sign up to access *The Last Aliens* online teaching resources to work through with their pupils. This programme of activities includes audio and video teaching aids, as well as a series of practical tasks and exercises grouped into three categories: Watch The Earth, Explore The Science and Understand The Opera, covering subjects including recycling, safe internet use, basic electrics, listening and rhythm, as well as group working, self-analysis, empathy and more.

All the introductory and teaching films feature members of the Company’s Primary Schools team, in character as the crew of the SOE (Scottish Orbital Expedition) craft. SOE has been tasked with monitoring the Earth’s Global Climate Change and gathering data on the impact this is having on the natural environment. By completing all the tasks and activities, the pupils can contribute their new found knowledge towards helping to build the case for convincing world leaders that immediate action is required to reverse the damage. The SOE team invite the pupils to join them in rehearsing and performing a brand new opera on the subject: *The Last Aliens*.

The opera **tells the story of a spaceship arriving in orbit around Earth; the occupants have travelled all the way across the galaxy** to convince everyone of the need to join together and take action to protect the planet for future generations. Down on the planet’s surface, The Scientists and The Military are at complete loggerheads about what to do next and it all seems pretty bleak… until the visitors bring them a message that they can’t ignore.

*The Last Aliens* Spring Tour runs from 31 January to 11 March 2022, and is supported by The Mickel Fund, Harbinson’s Charitable Trust, The Hayward Sanderson Trust and Scottish Opera's Education Angel, with thanks to the Educational Institute of Scotland for a donation towards the cost of the production.

***Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep***

This December, Scottish Opera presents *Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep*, a festive musical adventure specially created for children aged 3 to 7, at the Company’s Edington Street Production Studios in Glasgow.

Running for a total of 28 performances from 3 to 20 December, this 45-minute, family friendly show immerses its young audience in live music, along with interactive puppetry that encourages the children to sing, dance and get involved in the production. Midweek performances are for school groups, while weekend shows will be available for the public to attend.

Revived from the 2013 production directed by **Lisa Gregan**, the music is written by former Scottish Opera Composer in Residence, **Gareth Williams** with words by **Ross Stenhouse** (*Tiny Chef* 2019). The story invites children to help Farmer MacNeep and his sheepdog Flossie on their search party to find his favourite sheep, Laa-mie and Baa-mie, on a cold, snowy, winter evening. But unbeknown to Farmer MacNeep the clever pair build themselves a cosy cave in the snow to weather the winter months. However, worried for their safety, Flossie and Farmer MacNeep require the assistance of the audience along with their farmyard buddies if they are to find the lost duo in time for Christmas.

The shows are brought to life by revival director **Allan Dunn**, performed by soprano **Marie Claire Breen** and actor **Chris Alexander,** alongside cellist **Andrew Drummond Huggan** and percussionist **Darren Gallacher**.

*Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep* is supported by Garfield Weston Foundation (Weston Culture Fund), The W. A. Cargill Fund and Scottish Opera’s Education Angels.

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

Performances

**Emerging Artists recitals**

**University of St Andrews**

Wednesday 24 November, 1pm

**University of Glasgow**

Thursday 25 November, 1.10pm

***The Puccini Collection***

**Caird Hall, City Square, Dundee**

Sunday 12 December, 7.30pm

***Mister MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep***

Public Performance Diary

**Scottish Opera Production Studios, 40 Edington St, Glasgow**

Saturday 4 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Sunday 5 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Saturday 11 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Sunday 12 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Saturday 18 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Sunday 19 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Schools Performance Diary

Friday 3 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Wednesday 8 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Thursday 9 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Friday 10 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Wednesday 15 December ,10.30am and 1.30pm

Thursday 16 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Friday 17 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

Monday 20 December, 10.30am and 1.30pm

**National Opera Studio**

**Theatre Royal Glasgow**

Friday 25 February, 6pm

***A Midsummer Night’s Dream***

**Theatre Royal Glasgow**

Tuesday 22 February, 7.15pm

Thursday 24 February, 7.15pm

Saturday 26 February, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

**Festival Theatre Edinburgh**

Tuesday 1 March, 7.15pm

Thursday 3 March, 7.15pm

Saturday 5 March, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

***The Miserly Knight & Mavra***

**Perth Concert Hall**

Friday 18 March, 7.30pm

***Don Giovanni***

**Theatre Royal Glasgow**

Sunday15 May, 3pm

Wednesay18 May, 7.15pm

Saturday 21 May, 7.15pm

Thursday 23 June, 7.15pm

Saturday 25 June, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

Access *Don Giovanni*, Friday 24 June, 3pm

**Eden Court, Inverness**

Tuesday 24 May, 7.15pm

Thursday 26 May, 7.15pm

Saturday 28 May, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

Access *Don Giovanni*, Friday 27 May, 3pm

**Festival Theatre Edinburgh**

Sunday 5 June, 3pm

Tuesday 7 June, 7.15pm

Thursday 9 June, 7.15pm

Saturday 11 June, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

Access *Don Giovanni*, Friday 10 June, 3pm

**His Majesty’s Theatre, Aberdeen**

Thursday 16 June, 7.15pm

Saturday 18 June, 7.15pm (Audio described performance)

Access *Don Giovanni*, Friday 17 June, 3pm

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/.

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 over 200 shows of its Pop-up Opera Roadshow, to socially distanced audiences of over 8000. This represents the most extensive touring programme of any opera company in Europe and is 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 celebrates 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.

Scottish Opera is core funded by The Scottish Government

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