



## PRESS RELEASE

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26 June 2018

# SCOTTISH OPERA'S SPECTACULAR PROMENADE PRODUCTION OF *PAGLIACCI* HEADS TO 'PAISLEY OPERA HOUSE' IN JULY

Scottish Opera's new production of Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* opens on 26 July for three performances in a huge tented structure at Seedhill Playing Fields, dubbed 'Paisley Opera House'. This immersive promenade staging of one of the world's most popular operatic works gives audiences the opportunity to experience opera in an exciting new way.

Staged festival-style with the audience following the action around the tent, this *Pagliacci* takes inspiration from commedia dell'arte and Paisley's own Sma' Shot Festival. It stars a Community Chorus recruited from Renfrewshire and the surrounding areas, who will perform side-by-side with a cast of international soloists, a professional chorus and The Orchestra of Scottish Opera.

Visionary director **Bill Bankes-Jones**, founder of *Tête à Tête* Opera, marshals the company of nearly 200 for this all-encompassing spectacular that puts the audience at the heart of the action. Food, drink and pre-show entertainments are available for an hour before the show begins.

Sung in English, *Pagliacci* tells the story of Canio, the leader of a troupe of travelling players, who discovers his wife, Nedda, is having an affair. His jealousy erupts before an unsuspecting audience, as the play-within-a-play takes a tragic turn.

Making his Scottish Opera debut, Trinidadian tenor **Ronald Samm** will sing the role of Canio, ex-Samling Scholar **Anna Patalong** is Nedda, and **Robert Hayward** (*Bluebeard's Castle*, 2017) will return to Scottish Opera as Tonio, the fool. Scottish Opera favourite **Samuel Dale Johnson** (*Eugene Onegin*, 2018) is Silvio and leading Scottish character tenor **Alasdair Elliott** (*Ariadne auf Naxos*, 2018) is Beppe. Scottish Opera Music Director **Stuart Stratford** conducts.

The Community Chorus has been rehearsing in Scottish Opera's Silver Cloud Studio in Hillington for six months, working with Assistant Director **Lissa Lorenzo**, Movement Director **Alex McCabe** and Community Chorus Master **Katy Lavinia Cooper**. The members range in age from teenagers to those in their 60s and include a retired Paisley social worker, a student from Portugal and a supermarket employee.

**Bill Bankes-Jones** said: 'I've been lucky enough to be involved in many operatic projects that have redefined working methods, and none has been more exciting than *Pagliacci*. Witnessing and connecting with the creativity of our community performers, and knowing what else is to come make this absolutely the most thrilling project to work on. I am sure that we will all be blown away by the performances, they'll be like nothing you have ever seen before.'

Chair of Renfrewshire Leisure, **Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes**, said: 'We are very excited to welcome Scottish Opera's production of *Pagliacci* to Paisley this summer. It will be great to see some of our local talented individuals and groups perform in what will surely be a fantastic and unique event at the aptly named 'Paisley Opera House'.

'The fact that Scottish Opera has chosen to bring this production to town shows how the legacy of Paisley's bid to be UK City of Culture 2021 is continuing to attract some of the finest artists and cultural organisations from around Scotland to Paisley to work with our local talent. It's set to be a fantastic event and something totally different for the town.'

**Ronnie Lamont**, *Pagliacci* Community Chorus member who works as a driving instructor in Hamilton, added: 'I am a member of Paisley Opera so I first heard about *Pagliacci* that way, and jumped at the chance to get involved. The rehearsals have been a lot of fun, and it's a treat to work with professional singers as well as the creative team. Having the opportunity to be a part of this Scottish Opera production is such a thrill and I can't wait for audiences in Paisley to see this very special show.'

Audiences have the chance to see two of the *Pagliacci* leads **Robert Hayward** and **Anna Patalong** in action on Saturday 7 July at Paisley's Sma' Shot Festival, performing excerpts from *Pagliacci*, to give a taste of what to expect when the show opens a few weeks later in 'Paisley Opera House'.

This production is supported by Scottish Opera Endowment Trust. Scottish Opera is grateful to Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Leisure for their support in presenting *Pagliacci*.

-ENDS-

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

### Cast

Canio/Pagliacci	<b>Ronald Samm</b>
Nedda/Columbina	<b>Anna Patalong</b>
Toni/Taddeo	<b>Robert Hayward</b>
Silvio	<b>Samuel Dale Johnson</b>
Beppe/Arlecchino	<b>Alasdair Elliot</b>

### Creative Team

Conductor	<b>Stuart Stratford</b>
Director	<b>Bill Bankes-Jones</b>
Set & Costume Designer	<b>Tim Meacock</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Robert B. Dickson</b>
Movement Director	<b>Alex McCabe</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Lissa Lorenzo</b>
Fight Director	<b>Raymond Short</b>
Community Chorus Master	<b>Katy Lavinia Cooper</b>
Translation	<b>Bill Bankes-Jones</b>

### Performance Diary

#### **Seedhill Playing Fields, Paisley**

Thu 26 July, 7pm

Sat 28 July, 7pm

Sun 29 July, 3pm

Doors open at 6pm for 7pm shows and 2pm for the 3pm show for food and entertainment.

Please note this is a promenade performance within a temporary venue. There will be very limited seating available on request for those who require it.

### Notes to Editors

#### **Scottish Opera biography:**

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.



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