



PRESS RELEASE

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SCOTTISH OPERA'S INTERGENERATIONAL MUSIC- MAKING PROGRAMME *SPINNING SONGS* COMES TO SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

Spinning Songs, Scottish Opera's unique, intergenerational music-making programme, is starting in South Lanarkshire at the end of January.

Pupils from West Mains School, an Additional Support Needs school for children with speech, language and communication needs, will be working with children from Halfmerke Primary School and Halfmerke Community Nursery, and an adult group from Bosfield Place retirement community in East Kilbride.

Led by performers **Andrew McTaggart**, **Daniela Hathaway** and répétiteur **Beth Jerem**, together they will create a series of original songs that reflect life in their local community, celebrating the past and exploring the future. Composer **Karen MacIver** will also be working with the three groups to help them write new songs.

Spinning Songs launched last year, and in December participants from Aberdeen's Gilcomstoun Primary School and Nursery, along with residents from Rosewell House and Fergus House care homes, performed at Aberdeen's newly re-opened Music Hall. The historic hall has undergone a £9 million transformation and to mark the occasion there were

performances from groups including the Music Hall Community Choir, aerial dancers and Aberdeen Performing Arts Youth Theatre, as well as *Spinning Songs* participants.

Jane Davidson, Scottish Opera's Director of Outreach and Education said: 'Connecting our youngest and oldest generations is a key factor in efforts to improve health and wellbeing for society as a whole. Sharing a sense of community and understanding your place in that community play a crucial role in building a culture that celebrates core elements of a successful society, such as creativity, diversity and compassion.

'At Scottish Opera, we have been seeing the positive impact of music participation on people with dementia or other cognitive impairments for over 10 years now. The *Spinning Songs* projects offers communities across Scotland the opportunity to bring together people of all ages to share stories and create songs that reflect their own community, whilst generating a lifelong love and appreciation of music and the arts.'

More *Spinning Songs* workshops will be announced later this year. For more information visit www.scottishopera.org.uk/join-in/spinning-songs, or contact Scottish Opera's Outreach and Education team on 0141 332 9559 or spinningsongs@scottishopera.org.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. In 2018, the Company made its US debut with *Bambino*

at the Metropolitan Opera New York, and returned to the city's Brooklyn Academy of Music with *Greek* in December.

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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