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**Press Release**

20 November 2020

**SCOTTISH OPERA ANNOUNCES A PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY FOR WINTER 20/21**

* **Two filmed productions: Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* conducted by Scottish Opera’s Music Director Stuart Stratford, directed by Roxana Haines and Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, conducted by David Parry and directed by Daisy Evans**
* **Scottish Opera Young Company’s world premiere of *Rubble* by composer Gareth Williams and writer/director Johnny McKnight, specially commissioned for the Scottish Opera Outreach and Education Department’s 50th Anniversary in 2021.**

Scottish Opera has unveiled a programme of digital and live performance as part of its 2020/21 Winter activity, including filmed productions of Così fan tutte and Hansel and Gretel.

The Company also celebrates the 50th Anniversary of its renowned Outreach and Education department in 2021. To mark this milestone, Scottish Opera Young Company gives the world premiere of the new opera *Rubble*, created by composer **Gareth Williams** and writer/director **Johnny McKnight**. SOYC members are already meeting via Zoom to prepare for this new live production in July 2021.

General Director **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘It has been a difficult year for many in the arts. However, we have all continued to adapt and do what we do best, by bringing some much-needed entertainment to audiences. Scottish Opera is delighted to be able to continue doing so by offering a programme of exciting digital performances over the coming months. We also look forward to returning to the stage and welcoming audiences back into the theatre. We’re hopeful that we will be able to celebrate our pioneering Outreach and Education Department’s 50th anniversary with the planned live performances of *Rubble* in 2021. Since 1971, the Department has run countless projects, engaged with people in every corner of Scotland and encouraged meaningful and transformative experiences for all, no matter their age, background or ability.’

All productions are being produced in line with government guidelines on social distancing at the time of filming and any planned live performances will be dependent on restrictions in place at the time.

**WINTER 20/21 ACTIVITY**

The first digital production from Scottish Opera is Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, which will be available to view online from **13 December 2020**. Filmed at Glasgow’s Theatre Royal this new concert performance, directed by **Roxana Haines**,reimagines Mozart’s comedy of infidelities as a game for today, in which lovers’ loyalties are put to the ultimate test. Reality TV or social experiment? Two sisters, their fiancés and a man with a point to prove about fickle young couples. Can their relationships withstand the pressure?

Sharp and witty, Mozart’s sparkling score captures the quartet’s joys and heartaches in some of his most captivating music. Music Director **Stuart Stratford** conducts The Orchestra of Scottish Opera, chorus and the Company’s 2020/21 Emerging Artists – soprano **Catriona Hewitson**, mezzo soprano **Margo Arsane**, tenor **Shengzhi Ren** and baritone **Arthur Bruce\*** – performing alongside 2019/20 Emerging Artist, **Charlie Drummond** and Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artist, **Michael Mofidian**.

In January 2021, Scottish Opera presents a digital concert performance of Humperdinck’s operatic take on *Hansel and Gretel*, directed by **Daisy Evans** (*The Telephone,* EIF 2020) in a translation by **David Pountney** and withorchestral reduction arranged by **Derek Clark**. Also filmed at Glasgow’s Theatre Royal, **David Parry** conducts a cast including Kathleen Ferrier Award-winner **Kitty Whately** as Hansel, **Rhian Lois** (*La bohème 2020*) as Gretel, ENO Harewood Artist **Nadine Benjamin** as Gertrude and The Witch, **Phillip Rhodes** as Peter and **Charlie Drummond** as Sandman and Dew Fairy.

The Company is delighted to welcome another group of aspiring young singers to Scottish Opera Young Company. The new SOYC members have already begun their time with the Company via Zoom, and will work with a range of opera professionals – including directors, choreographers, conductors, stage managers and vocal coaches – towards a final performance. As part of the Scottish Opera Outreach and Education Programme’s 50th anniversary celebrations, this year’s Young Company members give the world premiere of *Rubble*, by composer **Gareth Williams**, in Glasgow on **31 July and 1 August, 2021**. This specially commissioned work has lyrics by Scottish theatre legend **Johnny McKnight**, and is directed by **Roxana Haines** (*La bohème* 2020) and conducted by **Chris Gray**. Set in the 1980s this part horror, part black comedy takes inspiration from real-life events, telling the story of a group of young people searching the debris of the old children’s home. Soprano **Shuna Scott Sendall** *(Dido and Aeneas* 2018) will join members of Scottish Opera Young Company in this gripping new work.

Scottish Opera Young Company is supported by The Scottish Opera Endowment Trust, The Carntyne Trust, John S Cohen Foundation, Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust, The Hugh Fraser Foundation, Hope Scott Trust and Scottish Opera's Education Angels.

\*Robertson Trust Emerging Artist

**Digital Release Dates:**

Available to watch via Scottish Opera’s website [www.scottishopera.org.uk](http://www.scottishopera.org.uk)

***Così fan tutte***

13 December

Running time approx. 2 hrs 20 mins
Sung in Italian

 ***Hansel and Gretel***

January 2021

**Live Performance Dates:**

***Scottish Opera Young Company, Rubble***

**Glasgow**

31 July

1 August

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. In 1974 Scottish Opera purchased the Theatre Royal Glasgow, which reopened in 1975 as Scotland’s first national opera house. The Orchestra of Scottish Opera was founded in 1980.

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*; and a Herald Angel for the European premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking the Waves* at the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival. The 2020 production of *Nixon in China* was nominated at the 2020 Royal Philharmonic Society award.

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* (premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival), 2016’s *The Devil Inside*, with which Scottish Opera made its North American debut in Toronto, and 2019’s *Anthropocene*. *Ghost Patrol* won a South Bank Sky Arts Award, and *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* were nominated for an Olivier Award. In 2018 the company made its US debut with *BambinO* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and returned later that year to the city’s Brooklyn Academy of Music with Mark-Anthony Turnage’s *Greek.*

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 and dozens of other theatres, village halls and community centres. It also operates an extensive programme of outreach and education work which involves over 9,000 primary school children every year, as well as many other activities including adult learning and *Unwrapped* taster sessions. Scottish Opera receives core funding from the Scottish Government, as well as income from box office, and private and commercial support.

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