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**Press Release**

18 August 2022

**SCOTTISH PREMIERE AND FIRST**

**FULLY-STAGED UK PRODUCTION OF**

**OSVALDO GOLIJOV’S GROUNDBREAKING OPERA *AINADAMAR* TAKES PLACE THIS OCTOBER**

* Co-presented with Opera Ventures, following their critically acclaimed productions of *Breaking the Waves* (Missy Mazzoli) in 2019 and *Greek* (Mark-Anthony Turnage) in 2017 at Edinburgh International Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York.

On 29 October, the Scottish premiere and first fully-staged UK production of *Ainadamar* takes place at Theatre Royal Glasgow, before transferring to Festival Theatre Edinburgh in November.

*Ainadamar*, (the Spanish pronunciation of the Arabic name ‘Ayn al-dam’, meaning ‘The Fountain of Tears’), by Argentinian composer **Osvaldo Golijov** and acclaimed American librettist **David Henry Hwang**, explores the life and work of playwright and poetFederico García Lorca*,* whose anti-fascist stance and open homosexuality led to his death in 1936 at the hands of Franco’s Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War.

Combining opera with flamenco dance and song, this new co-production with Opera Ventures (*Breaking the Waves* 2019 and *Greek* 2017), Detroit Opera, The Metropolitan Opera and Welsh National Opera, is directed by Olivier Award-winning choreographer and director **Deborah Colker** and designed by **Jon Bausor**. Known for her intensely physical dance work with Cirque du Soleil and the 2016 Olympics Opening Ceremony, as well as her own Companhia de Danca, Deborah is making her much-anticipated opera directorial debut.

Scottish Opera Music Director **Stuart Stratford** conducts the internationally celebrated mezzo-soprano **Samantha Hankey** in the role of Lorca. The story, which reimagines the political drama of the early 20th century, centres around Lorca, his muse Margarita Xirgu, sung by **Lauren Fagan**, and her student Nuria, sung by **Julieth Lozano.**

Director **Deborah Colker** said: ‘I believe I do like challenges. After so many creations, I find myself facing my first opera ever, and this fascinates and challenges me. Quoting the composer Richard Wagner, opera is the total art work.

‘*Ainadamar* is about love, freedom, friendship and death. Reflecting the intense Spanish spirit, the characters journey through memory, delirium and reality. I felt committed to Lorca’s poetry and to the idea of consecrating his history. Through the music created by Golijov, fulfilled with the Spanish spirit, I brought the soul and vitality of flamenco.

‘The relevance and contemporaneity of Lorca’s poetry is impressive. Lorca lingers through the centuries: born in the 19th century, dying in the 20th century and influencing us with his poetry in the 21st century. *Ainadamar* shows through its characters that the poetry and the struggle will perpetuate through time.’

Composer **Osvaldo Golijov** said:‘I loved witnessing Deborah Colker's gestation of this thrilling new production of *Ainadamar*. Her vision, together with Stuart Stratford’s kinship with Deep Song (cante jondo, traditional Andalusian music), the musical roots of *Ainadamar*, have revealed to me new dimensions in the opera.’

Those who wish to discover more about how the production was created can attend *Ainadamar* Pre-show Talks, which delve into the detail of the opera. Tickets are free but should be booked in advance. Audience members with a visual impairment can enjoy the full opera experience at Audio-described performances, which have a live commentary describing the action on stage without compromising the music. There are also free Touch Tours of the set, and a live audio introduction before the start of the performance.

*Ainadamar* is kindly supported by  [**Scottish Opera's New Commissions Circle**](https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/support-us/memberships/new-commissions-circle/)and **Sarah and Howard Solomon Foundation.**

**During *Ainadamar’s* Glasgow run, audiences also have the chance to see** an exhibition of work created by 10 artists in the Scottish Borders for the community project ‘Sweet Sounds in Wild Places’. On display in the Upper & Dress Circle foyer in Theatre Royal Glasgow, from 27 October to 5 November, and forming part of the 250th anniversary celebrations of Sir Walter Scott, the original images, 3D models, visuals and recordings were made as creative responses to themes in his novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and to the Donizetti opera inspired by it: *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

They explore issues such as loneliness, isolation and lack of empowerment, as well as the impact, for good and bad, that landscape and environment can have on our mental health and well-being.

-ENDS-

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

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

**Cast**

Margarita Xirgu **Lauren Fagan**

Federico García Lorca **Samantha Hankey**

Nuria **Julieth Lozano**

Ruiz Alonso **Alfredo Tejada**

José Tripaldi **John Savournin**

Torero **Dan Shelvey**

Maestro **Colin Murray**

**Creative team**

Composer **Osvaldo Golijov**

Libretto **David Henry Hwang**

Conductor **Stuart Stratford**

Director / Choreographer **Deborah Colker**

Designer **Jon Bausor**

Lighting Designer **Paul Keogan**

Projection Designer **Tal Rosner**

Flamenco Choreographer **Antonio Najarro**

Assistant Director **Fernanda Cavalcanti**

**Performance diary**

Theatre Royal Glasgow

29 October, 2 & 5 November, 7.15pm

Pre-show talk and Touch Tour, 5 November, 6pm

Audio-described performance, 5 November, 7.15pm

Festival Theatre Edinburgh

8,10 & 12 November, 7.15pm

Pre-show talk and Touch Tour, 12 November, 6pm

Audio-described performance, 12 November, 7.15pm

Notes to Editors

**Scottish Opera**

Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. The Company was founded in 1962 by Sir Alexander Gibson with the goal ‘to lay the treasures of opera at the feet of the people of Scotland’, opening with performances of *Madama Butterfly* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The 2022/23 season marks its 60th Anniversary.

Scottish Opera’s performance repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly-commissioned world premieres, balancing favourites with under-explored works. The Company collaborates with the world’s finest singers and creatives, together with The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and choruses for each opera. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, a Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards, a 2017 UK Theatre Award, and a 2020 RPS Award. The Company took operas to Brooklyn in 2017 and Adelaide in 2020, and the 2022/23 season sees productions first staged at Scottish Opera appearing in Santa Fe, Madrid, Toulouse, and Los Angeles. The 60th Anniversary Season includes the UK fully-staged premiere of Osvaldo Golijov’s *Ainadamar* and the Company premiere of Puccini’s *Il trittico*.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland to ensure performances are within reach of as many of the country’s dispersed population as possible – this year, 60 locations across the length and breadth of the country. Specially-adapted 40-foot long trailers bring Pop-up Opera performances to thousands of people each year. This is one of the most extensive touring programmes of any European opera company and a much-valued contribution to Scotland’s cultural and artistic life, particularly in remote and island communities.

The Company’s Education & Outreach programme, the oldest in Europe, includes an annual in-person and digital Primary Schools Tour, bringing children the opportunity to perform their own specially-commissioned piece alongside 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 committed to making opera for all, presenting opera at the highest possible standards in theatres across the country, outdoors on tour, and digital audiences around the world. The Company’s 2021 production of *The Gondoliers*, filmed live at Festival Theatre Edinburgh, is available on BBC iPlayer. Scottish Opera’s On Screen productions are available to watch at [www.scottishopera.org.uk/what-s-on/opera-on-screen](http://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*, Menotti’s *The Telephone*, and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*. A new commission will be announced in 2023.

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**Opera Ventures**

Opera Ventures is a transformational charity founded by John Berry CBE to develop major new opera projects in partnership with arts organisations worldwide, with a focus on living composers.

Creating and staging new productions of contemporary opera is one of the biggest challenges in the performing arts today, especially in an environment where reduced public funding has forced opera houses and festivals to do less and take fewer risks. Opera Ventures has been set up specifically to respond to this challenge. With its own combination of artistic vision, producing expertise and a focused network of philanthropists Opera Ventures creates powerful new productions which can be shared by several partners. Thereby harnessing and coordinating the existing infrastructures of internationally recognised organisations.

www.[operaventures.org](http://operaventures.org/)

For Opera Ventures:

Artistic Director:  John Berry CBE

Executive Director/Producer:  Loretta Tomasi OBE

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