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**Press Release**

11 August 2025

**SCOTTISH OPERA’S PRODUCTION OF PUCCINI’S HEARTBREAKING MASTERPIECE LA BOHÈME TOURS TO GLASGOW, ABERDEEN, INVERNESS AND EDINBURGH THIS AUTUMN**

Renowned director/designer team **Renaud Doucet** and **André Barbe** return to Scottish Opera this autumn with their acclaimed production of Giacomo Puccini’s ravishing classic, La bohème.

Opening on 11 October at Theatre Royal Glasgow, the production tours to Aberdeen, Inverness and Edinburgh and features an innovative dual-time concept that moves between the flea markets of 1920s Paris and the modern-day French capital. It takes inspiration from the Jazz Age of Josephine Baker, the American dancer, singer, actress, spy and civil rights activist.

This Barbe & Doucet show is full of their trademark colour, character and style, and tells the story of four struggling bohemians, reimagined as part of the ‘Lost Generation’, the collection of writers and artists drawn to Paris after World War I, whose lives are changed when they meet a seamstress called Mimì. A blossoming romance becomes short-lived when they discover that Mimì is ill. Struggling to survive in the lavish yet unforgiving city, these charismatic characters are met with the harsh realities of poverty and fortune.

The design emphasises the contrast between the colourful carnival atmosphere and the starving artists' lives, creating a production that balances sentimentality with the bustling energy of Paris across different eras.

Scottish Opera Music Director, **Stuart Stratford**, who is celebrating ten years with the Company, conducts **Hye-Youn Lee** (*La traviata* 2024)asMimì, a role she originated in the 2017 production of La bohème.

Also in the cast are **Mario Chang** as Rodolfo in his Scottish Opera debut, **Roland Wood** (*The Strauss Collection* 2025) as Marcello, **Rhian Lois** (*The Merry Widow* 2025) as Musetta, **Callum Thorpe** (*Oedipus Rex* 2024) as Colline, Emerging Artist **Edward Jowle** (*Trial by Jury* & *A Matter of Misconduct!* 2025) as Schaunard and **Jamie MacDougall** (*Trial by Jury* & *A Matter of Misconduct!* 2025) as Alcindoro / Benoît.

Barbe & Doucet, who last worked with Scottish Opera on the 2024 production of Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale* said: ‘The story of *La bohème* is one we can all relate to. It seemed important to us to explore the theme of illness since, as a society, we are all under the weather at the moment and in need of healing. The flea market setting represents a little bit of what we are up against today – we seem to live life too fast, and, through antiques, people get a sense of going back to a less hectic time. This opera is not about nostalgia ­­­­­­– *La bohème* is not a museum piece – the story is timeless. Along with meeting new artists, we look forward very much to revisiting the production with Hye-Youn Lee with whom we had so much pleasure collaborating on the original staging.’

With tickets starting from just £23-£26.50, and 40% of all seats priced under £50, Scottish Opera ensures world-class opera remains accessible to everyone across Scotland. In addition,£15 tickets are available for under-26s and students at every performance. Over 800 free tickets have been provided to schools since 2022, often introducing pupils to live opera for the first time, and over 1,600 free tickets have been distributed to New Scots communities across Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and Edinburgh. Free tickets are also available for schools, colleges, and community groups, with travel subsidies where needed.

**To bring even more opera to Scottish audiences,** La bohème i**s presented alongside the double bill of Maurice** Ravel’s *L’heure espagnole* and William Walton’s *The Bear.* These concert stagings of two caustic comedies of infidelity are performed on the *La bohème* set and conducted by French opera expert **Alexandra Cravero** (*Thérèse* 2022). The director is **Jacopo Spirei**,anddesigns are by **Kenneth MacLeod**. **Opening on 18 October in Glasgow before touring to Edinburgh, these shows feature a cast that includes current and former Emerging Artists.**

Specially created Access performances of La bohèmerun alongside the mainstage productions in Glasgow and Edinburgh. With Dementia Friendly values at their core, Afternoon Access performances are for those who enjoy a more relaxed opera experience. Tickets are priced at just £12.50 (free for carers), these performances are open to all, including those who may be living with dementia or Long COVID, more comfortable at a shorter show, struggling to get to evening performances, or would simply benefit from the more relaxed atmosphere.

Those who wish to discover more about how La bohème was created can attendPre-show Talks in all four cities on the tour, 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. At these performances, there are also free Touch Tours of the set, and a live audio introduction before the start of the performance.

La bohème is supported by **The Scottish Opera Syndicate.**

-ENDS-

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

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**Creative team**

Conductor **Stuart Stratford** & **Toby Hession**  
Stage Direction, Sets & Costumes **Barbe & Doucet**

Lighting Designer **Guy Simard**

**Cast**

Mimì **Hye-Youn Lee**  
Rodolfo **Mario Chang**  
Marcello **Roland Wood**  
Musetta **Rhian Lois**  
Colline **Callum Thorpe**  
Schaunard **Edward Jowle**  
Alcindoro / Benoît **Jamie MacDougall**

**Performance Diary**

**Theatre Royal Glasgow**

11 • 15 • 21 • 23 • 25 October 7.15pm

19 October 3pm

Relaxed Access performance 24 October 3pm

**His Majesty’s Theatre, Aberdeen**

30 October 7.15pm

1 November 3pm

**Eden Court, Inverness**

6 November, 7.15pm

8 November, 5pm

**Festival Theatre Edinburgh**

14 • 18 • 20 • 22 November 7.15pm

16 November 3pm

Relaxed Access performance 21 November 3pm

Pre-show talks

23 October, 1 November, 8 November, 20 November

Audio description / Touch Tours

19 October, 1 November, 8 November, 16 November

Notes to Editors

Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and largest performing arts organisation. The Company was founded in 1962 by Sir Alexander Gibson ‘to lay the treasures of opera at the feet of the people of Scotland.’ Repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly commissioned world premieres. For mainstage and concert productions, the Company collaborates with the world’s finest singers and creatives, The Orchestra of Scottish Opera, and choruses for each opera and co-produces work with opera companies around the world. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards, 2017 UK Theatre Award, 2020 RPS Award, 2023 International Opera Award nomination, and 2023 Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera.

The Company produces world-class work at every scale. Scottish Opera is a trailblazer in community arts, including ‘community opera’ combining chorus members of all backgrounds with a professional chorus, soloists, and The Orchestra of Scottish Opera. Productions include *Pagliacci* in Paisley (2018), *Candide* in Glasgow (2022), and *Oedipus Rex* at the Edinburgh International Festival (2024). The extensive touring programme ensures performances of Pop-up Opera and *Opera Highlights* are within reach of as many of Scotland’s dispersed population as possible.

The Company’s Outreach & Education programme, the longest running in Europe, includes in-person and digital Primary Schools Tours, enabling children to perform their own specially commissioned piece. Around 120 schools and 12,000 pupils take part in the live tour each year. The Emerging Artist programme gives early-career professionals comprehensive training for today’s opera industry. The groundbreaking Breath Cycle project for those living with lung conditions won the 2025 Classical:NEXT Innovation Award. Scottish Opera aims to be inclusive through the availability of free and subsidised tickets, audio-described performances, and Access performances with Dementia Friendly values at their core.

Scottish Opera is committed to presenting opera at the highest possible standards across Scotland and worldwide. Recent recordings featuring The Orchestra of Scottish Opera include *Utopia, Limited* (NAXOS 2025), *The Seal Woman* (Retrospect Opera 2025), and *Shamus O’Brien* (Retrospect Opera 2024). The Company’s 2021 production of *The Gondoliers* is available on BBC iPlayer, and the 2025 production of *Trial by Jury* / *A Matter of Misconduct!* is free to view on OperaVision worldwide (both productions filmed live at Edinburgh’s Festival Theatre). *Josefine*, by Samuel Bordoli and Antonia Bain, is the UK’s first newly commissioned opera for animation and has won numerous awards at international film festivals since its world premiere in July 2024.

**Scottish Opera is core funded by The Scottish Government.**

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