



ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE

PRESS RELEASE

MAY 2013

**BP BIG SCREENS 2013 - FREE BALLET AND OPERA
BEAMED LIVE TO 22 LOCATIONS AROUND THE UK
DIRECT FROM THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE**

www.roh.org.uk/bpbigscreens

The Royal Opera House is delighted to announce that this year's **BP Big Screen** performances are The Royal Ballet's *Mayerling* on Thursday 13 June at 7.30pm, and The Royal Opera's *La rondine* on Thursday 11 July at 7.30pm and *Tosca* on Thursday 18 July at 7.30pm. 2013 marks the first of a new five-year commitment from BP to support the live and free screenings from the Royal Opera House. These world-class productions of opera and ballet will be beamed live from Covent Garden to 22 locations throughout the UK including two new venues, MediaCityUK in Salford and Talaton House in East Devon, and a return to Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets.

Every BP Big Screen is a unique experience and this year will be no different. Kenneth MacMillan's *Mayerling* will mark the final performance at the Royal Opera House of much-loved Royal Ballet Principal **Mara Galeazzi** in the role of Mary Vetsera.

Fresh from her 20th year singing with The Royal Opera, **Angela Gheorghiu** returns to the BP Big Screens with *La rondine*. Gheorghiu has performed the role of Magda, one of her signature roles, in every revival since the creation of this production and has been described as 'simply entrancing.'

There are very few operas as famous or popular as Puccini's *Tosca* and after over 470 performances this operatic great shows no sign of tiring. It is a must see for anyone wanting to try opera for the first time.

New for all three BP Big Screens in 2013 will be UK broadcaster **Alan Titchmarsh**, a live anchor from the Royal Opera House alongside a special guest presenter down among the crowd in Trafalgar Square.

The BP Big Screens are the perfect way to share world-class opera and ballet with friends and family for free. The three productions will feature exclusive backstage films, competitions and live interaction, and will bring some of the Royal Opera House's best performances live to special locations across the UK. Whether audiences are new to ballet and opera or already devotees, the BP Big Screen relays offer a wonderful opportunity for you to enjoy the very best performances from the Royal Opera House.

KENNETH MACMILLAN'S *MAYERLING*: The Royal Ballet LIVE at 7.30pm on Thursday 13 June. Presented by Alan Titchmarsh.

A dark drama of political intrigue, twisted romance and morbid obsession, set to dramatic music by Liszt. *Mayerling* was created for The Royal Ballet by Kenneth MacMillan, one of the 20th century's greatest choreographers, and is a signature work for the Company. This performance will feature Royal Ballet Principals **Edward Watson**, **Mara Galeazzi** and **Sarah Lamb**.

GIACOMO PUCCINI'S *LA RONDINE*: The Royal Opera LIVE at 7.30pm on Thursday 11 July. Presented by Alan Titchmarsh.

Glamorous 1920s Paris provides the backdrop for some of Puccini's most exquisite music in this romantic and elegant production, starring **Angela Gheorghiu** as the beautiful courtesan Magda and **Charles Castronovo** as her eager young suitor Ruggero. Operalia winner **Sabina Puértolas** and former Royal Opera Artist **Edgaras Montvidas** sing the comic lovers Lisette and Prunier.

GIACOMO PUCCINI'S *TOSCA*: The Royal Opera LIVE at 7.30pm on Thursday 18 July. Presented by Alan Titchmarsh.

Passion, intrigue, revenge, a beautiful diva and fabulous music – *Tosca* is one of the great opera experiences. This story is a thrilling and heartwrenching tale of passionate love, jealousy, murder and suicide featuring **Martina Serafin** as the tragic Tosca and **Aleksandrs Antonenko** as her lover Cavaradossi, with **Scott Hendricks** as the evil Baron Scarpia who plots their destruction.

Kasper Holten, Director of The Royal Opera House, said: ‘These al fresco summer big screenings, now in their 26th year, are a highlight of our performing Season. To be able to offer world-class performances absolutely free and to so many venues across the UK fills us with pride. We first screened a live performance on a Big Screen in Covent Garden Piazza 1987 and this year we’re broadcasting to 22 different venues. This incredible growth in this free scheme would not be possible without the support of BP and we’re exceptionally grateful to them.’

Kevin O’Hare, Director of The Royal Ballet, said: ‘The free BP Big Screens are an absolute treat for anyone who enjoys music and dance and also the perfect way for new audiences to get a taste of what we have to offer at the Royal Opera House. I hope that all who attend bring their friends and family, as these productions, packed with emotion and beauty, are experiences to share. Thank you to BP, whose generous support makes this all possible.’

Des Violaris, BP’s UK Director for Arts and Culture, said: ‘BP is delighted to continue its support for the BP Big Screens. Being able to connect people and communities across the UK with the highest quality opera and ballet for free is at the core of our relationship with the Royal Opera House. Every year we see more and more people engage with the BP Big Screens, enjoying these regular events with friends and family who haven’t previously had an opportunity to experience these art forms. We hope that the skies will stay clear this summer so that even more people can discover the BP Big Screens.’

To find out if there is a screen near you visit www.roh.org.uk/bpbigscreens

To find out more about the Royal Opera House visit www.roh.org.uk.

ENDS

Notes for Editors

BP AND ROH

BP has been the longest running supporter of the Royal Opera House, starting the relationship in 1989 with initiatives including the Schools' Matinee programme and the Chance to Dance scheme. BP have supported the Big Screen live relays of opera and ballet performances direct from Covent Garden since 2000 and last year announced their commitment to a further five years of sponsorship. The generous ongoing support of BP has enabled the Royal Opera House to reach as many people as possible around the country with live performances, allowing them to experience the very best of opera and ballet in their home town, for free. As always, BP has combined support for the screenings with studies and analysis of the benefits of the screenings and associated education work.

BP SUPPORT FOR UK ARTS & CULTURE

In the UK, BP is a major supporter of the arts, with a programme that spans over 35 years. In 2011 BP announced its investment of almost £10 million in extending its long term partnerships with the British Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Royal Opera House and Tate Britain over the next five years. Taken together, these agreements represent one of the most significant long-term corporate investments in UK arts and culture www.bp.com

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Over the last Season 7.5 million people have engaged with the work of the Royal Opera House. The commitment to enabling as many people as possible to experience and enjoy world-class opera and ballet will continue as we present our work over new platforms from cinema to online streaming and broadcasts with the BBC and free BP Big Screens. Other access initiatives include the Student Standby Scheme, Welcome Performances for families and the Schools' Matinees.

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THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE BP BIG SCREENS

PROGRAMME 2013

Dates and Locations

The Royal Ballet

MacMillan's *Mayerling*
THURSDAY 13 JUNE, 7.30pm

You can see *Mayerling* live and free at the following BP Big Screen venues:

Trafalgar Square, London | Victoria Park, Tower Hamlets | Centenary Square, Bradford | The Hayes, Cardiff | Transport Museum, Hales St, Coventry | Millennium Square, Leeds | Exchange Square, Manchester | Centre Square, Middlesbrough | Guildhall Square, Portsmouth | MediaCityUK, Salford | Castle Square, Swansea | Wharf Green, Swindon | General Gordon Square, Woolwich | Walthamstow Town Square, Waltham Forest

The Royal Opera

Puccini's *La rondine*
THURSDAY 11 JULY, 7.30pm

You can see *La rondine* live and free at the following BP Big Screen venues:

Trafalgar Square, London | Canary Wharf, London | Centenary Square, Bradford | Millennium Square, Bristol | The Hayes, Cardiff | Transport Museum, Hales St, Coventry | Lyric Square, Hammersmith | Millennium Square, Leeds | Exchange Square, Manchester | Centre Square, Middlesbrough | The Piazza, Plymouth | Guildhall Square, Portsmouth | MediaCityUK, Salford | Castle Square, Swansea | General Gordon Square, Woolwich | Walthamstow Town Square, Waltham Forest

The Royal Opera

Puccini's *Tosca*

THURSDAY 18 JULY, 7.30pm

You can see *Tosca* live and free at the following BP Big Screen venues:

Trafalgar Square, London | High House Production Park, Purfleet | Canary Wharf, London | Duthie Park, Aberdeen | City Hall, Donegall Square, Belfast | Centenary Square, Bradford | Millennium Square, Bristol | The Hayes, Cardiff | Transport Museum, Hales St, Coventry | Talaton House, East Devon | Lyric Square, Hammersmith | Millennium Square, Leeds | Exchange Square, Manchester | Centre Square, Middlesbrough | The Piazza, Plymouth | Guildhall Square, Portsmouth | MediaCityUK, Salford | Castle Square, Swansea | Wharf Green, Swindon | General Gordon Square, Woolwich | Walthamstow Town Square, Waltham Forest