



ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

2 MAY 2013

Chance to Dance pupils and Youth Opera Company join in their first ever double bill at the Royal Opera House Friday 31 May at 5.30pm, Saturday 2 June at 2pm and 5.30pm Linbury Studio Theatre

Almost 80 young people aged between 9 and 11 who are current members of the ROH's Chance to Dance programme and Youth Opera Company will perform in a unique double bill of dance and music/singing in the Linbury Studio Theatre.

Royal Ballet soloists **Kristen McNally** and **Thomas Whitehead** have adapted a special version of **Kenneth MacMillan's** controversial ballet *The Rite of Spring* and the Youth Opera Company will present a new work, *Gone Fishing*. This is an arrangement of musical works into a narrative piece by composer **Richard Taylor**. It is the first time that these two companies have shared a performance providing an opportunity for these talented young people to showcase their skills and gain stage experience at the Royal Opera House.

30 children aged 9-10 will take part in this adaptation of Kenneth MacMillan's *The Rite of Spring* which includes some of the existing choreography together with creative input from the children themselves. The role of 'The Chosen One' will be performed by Royal Ballet dancers

Tristan Dyer and **Valentino Zuchetti** who are being coached by former Director of The Royal Ballet **Monica Mason** who famously performed the role when she was a dancer with the Company. Costumes will include some historical pieces from past productions of *The Rite of Spring*.

Soprano **Sarah Redgwick** will join the Youth Opera Company in *Gone Fishing*, a unique work created especially for this performance. Richard Taylor uses pieces of music from composers through the ages, from **Monteverdi** and **Rameau**, to **Handel**, **Mozart** and **Rossini**, to **Benjamin Britten** and **Kurt Weill** and more contemporary composers including **John Adams** and **Michael Nyman**. It is a challenging piece for young voices and the chorus members have had to master singing in French, German, Spanish and English. The set by designer **Bernadette Roberts** was built at the **Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop** in Thurrock. Six players from the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House and Southbank Sinfonia graduates will provide musical accompaniment.

Tickets are £5, £3 standing www.roh.org.uk 020 7304 4000

Notes to Editors:

Chance to Dance

Chance to Dance was launched in 1991 by Royal Opera House Education and provides an opportunity for young people to experience ballet and to attend classes for those who might not otherwise have thought of, or had access to ballet. The programme runs in the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark and, since September 2012, in Thurrock. The children are recruited through school workshops and have the chance to see a demonstration by members of The Royal Ballet and to attend creative dance workshops in their school. Children who show a natural aptitude and a combination of physical skills, musicality, creativity and enthusiasm for dance and who are not already attending ballet classes are invited to join the

Chance to Dance Company.

For up to four years (from Year 3-6) they receive free weekly dance classes at a local venue (out of school time), attend professional performances and dance alongside members of The Royal Ballet in an annual performance at the Royal Opera House.

Since the project's inception, over 20,000 children have participated in *Chance to Dance* activities. Of those, over 1000 children and their families have joined the project and benefited from opportunities to develop their individual abilities and creativity participate in dance related activities and experience the excitement of live performances by professional dancers at the Royal Opera House. Some have continued into full-time dance training and careers as performers.

Youth Opera Company

The Youth Opera Company was formed in September 2010 and currently has 49 members aged 9-11 years old, drawn from across London and the South-East. They were selected from an initial group of more than 400 school children through an extensive series of participatory workshops. The Company has been led by co-artistic directors **David Stevenson** and **Karen Gillingham** and vocal director **Suzi Zumpe**. The company have recently performed in revivals of *La bohème* by The Royal Opera and will perform in *Carmen* next season.

For further information please contact:

Sara Parsons

Press Officer, ROH2 and Education

Tel: 020 7212 9504

Mob: 07939 593454

Sara.parsons@roh.org.uk