



ROYAL  
OPERA  
HOUSE

## OPERA AND MUSIC 2013/14 SEASON

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## THE ROYAL OPERA 2013/14 SEASON

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- **Kasper Holten and John Fulljames announce their second Season at the helm of The Royal Opera together with Music Director Antonio Pappano**
- **Seven new productions on the main stage with directors including Kasper Holten, Stephen Langridge and Stefan Herheim**
- **Five new commissions and two UK premieres in the Linbury Studio Theatre**
- **Celebrations of the Verdi and Wagner bicentenaries continue led by Antonio Pappano with new productions of *Les Vêpres siciliennes* and *Parsifal***
- **Celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Richard Strauss with performances of *Elektra*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and a new production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten***
- **The Season opens with *Turandot* – relayed live to cinemas worldwide. A further four Royal Opera productions (all new) will be screened live in the Royal Opera House Live Cinema Season.**

The Royal Opera continues its celebrations of the **Verdi** and **Wagner** bicentenaries with new productions of *Les Vêpres siciliennes* – a work not previously performed at Covent Garden – and *Parsifal*. Music Director **Antonio Pappano** will conduct both operas.

Verdi's first five-act opera written for the Paris Opéra, *Les Vêpres siciliennes* is directed by Norwegian director **Stefan Herheim** who makes his debut at Covent Garden with this monumental work. The production is a co-production with the Royal Danish Opera. Taking their lead from the opera's major Act III ballet 'Les Quatres Saisons', the creative team place particular emphasis on dance and the massive forces assembled for the production will include 32 dancers, including four principals from The Royal Ballet and four principals from The Royal Danish Ballet, and members of The Royal Ballet Upper School. The choreographer will be Royal Ballet Principal **Johan Kobborg**. Stefan Herheim's production relocates the opera from 13th-century Sicily to Paris in 1855 and will focus on the musical structure of the opera, linking it to the world of 19th-century theatre and, in particular, to French grand opera. **Philipp**

**Fürhofer**'s opulent 1850's opera house design provides the setting from which the opera unfolds. Herheim takes us over the threshold from the reality of the opera house into the dreamlike stories of the operas performed there. Working together with Stefan Herheim on this production is his regular collaborator, dramaturg **Alexander Meier-Dörzenbach**, with costume designs by **Gesine Völlm**. The star cast includes American tenor **Bryan Hymel** making his role debut as Henri, Russian soprano **Marina Poplavskaya** as Hélène, Uruguayan bass **Erwin Schrott** as Jean Procida and German baritone **Michael Volle** as Guy de Montfort.

Following the highly successful revival of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Minotaur* in the 2012/13 Season, **Stephen Langridge** returns to direct a new production of *Parsifal*, Wagner's last opera, working again with designer **Alison Chitty**. The broad sweep of the production sees Parsifal as the catalyst for the transformation of a society strangled by *schadenfreude* through to a position of compassion. New Zealand tenor **Simon O'Neill** sings the title role for the first time for The Royal Opera having sung Parsifal recently in Bayreuth and Vienna. The cast will also include German bass **René Pape** as Gurnemanz, Canadian baritone **Gerald Finley** making his role debut as Amfortas, and Jamaican bass **Willard White** returning to the role of Klingsor which he last sang for The Royal Opera in 2007. Following her acclaimed performances as Salome for The Royal Opera in 2010 and 2012, **Angela Denoke** sings the role of Kundry for the first time at Covent Garden.

Further new productions for the Season include **Kasper Holten**'s *Don Giovanni*, *Manon Lescaut* directed by **Jonathan Kent** and *Maria Stuarda* directed by **Patrice Caurier** and **Moshe Leiser**.

Having directed the classic mythical story of the seducer Don Giovanni for film (*Juan*), Kasper Holten now turns his attention to the Covent Garden stage, directing a new production of *Don Giovanni* for The Royal Opera. Set designs are by **Es Devlin** and video design is by **Luke Halls**.

A fine cast of leading Mozart singers has been assembled for this production which will be conducted by **Nicola Luisotti**, Music Director of San Francisco

Opera and Teatro di San Carlo, Naples. Leading Polish baritone **Mariusz Kwiecien**, acclaimed for his portrayal of Don Giovanni, takes the title role with Italian bass **Alex Esposito** returning as his Leporello, a role he last sang for The Royal Opera in 2012. Stylish French soprano **Véronique Gens** sings the role of Donna Elvira for the first time at Covent Garden with Swedish soprano **Malin Byström**, acclaimed as Fiordiligi here in 2012, as Donna Anna.

Following their lavish production of *Tosca*, created in 2006 for The Royal Opera which is also seen again in the 2013/14 Season, **Jonathan Kent** is reuniting with designer **Paul Brown** to create a new production of *Manon Lescaut*, the tale of another of Puccini's unconventional heroines. *Manon Lescaut*, Puccini's first major success and a drama of passion and betrayal, tells the story of a young girl who faces temptation in the big city. The opera is based on the 18th-century novel by Abbé Prévost depicting the doomed infatuation of the young Chevalier des Grieux for the beautiful and captivating Manon. Puccini's music underlines the tragedy and passion of Manon's story as she descends from innocent to criminal. The opera was last seen at Covent Garden more than twenty years ago. Latvian soprano **Kristīne Opolais**, following her critically acclaimed debut at Covent Garden as Madama Butterfly and performances with The Royal Opera as *Tosca*, sings the fun-loving and impressionable Manon, with German tenor **Jonas Kaufmann** making his role debut at Covent Garden as her lover Des Grieux. British baritone **Christopher Maltman** sings the role of her cynical brother Lescaut, with Music Director **Antonio Pappano** conducting. Also in the same Season, there is the opportunity to hear Massenet's *Manon* in the first Royal Opera revival of Laurent Pelly's beguiling staging with Albanian soprano **Ermonela Jaho** and American soprano **Ailyn Pérez** sharing the title role, and American tenor **Matthew Polenzani** as Des Grieux.

The final new production of the Season is Donizetti's historical opera *Maria Stuarda*, showcasing one of the leading *bel canto* singers of her generation, American mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato**, in the role of Maria. This new production by **Moshe Leiser** and **Patrice Caurier**, with their regular design team of **Christian Fenouillat**, **Agostino Cavalca** and **Christophe Forey**, has both historical and contemporary resonances. The opera, with libretto by Giuseppe Bardi, is based on a play by Schiller, and gives a highly sympathetic

portrayal of Mary Queen of Scots in her last days. Central to the dramatic tension of the opera is the fictional confrontation between Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, invented by Schiller. The opera ends with a heartrending scene for Mary as she prepares to face the executioner. **Bertrand de Billy** conducts a cast that also includes **Carmen Giannattasio** as Queen Elizabeth and **Charles Castronovo** as Robert, Earl of Leicester. *Maria Stuarda* is a co-production with the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris and Teatr Wielki, Warsaw.

There is a strong emphasis on works from the 20th century throughout the Season, including the moving tragic French opera *Dialogues des Carmélites*, and Berg's psychological masterpiece *Wozzeck*. *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Poulenc's only full-length opera, will be seen at Covent Garden for the first time since 1983, conducted by **Simon Rattle**. Poulenc wrote some of his most haunting music for this opera based on a true story about an order of Carmelite nuns whose faith is put to the ultimate test when they are caught up in the turmoil and terror of the French Revolution. Following a decree dissolving all the religious houses, the Carmelite nuns take a vow of martyrdom and sing their way to the scaffold. **Robert Carsen** created this compelling and unconventional production, new to The Royal Opera, for Der Nederlandse Opera Amsterdam in 2001, working with designer **Michael Levine** to create a simple clear staging. The play of light and darkness is an important organizing visual element in the production and **Jean Kalman** has created beautiful and subtle lighting effects to match the radiant transcendent moments in the music. The impressive mainly female cast is headed by Czech mezzo-soprano **Magdalena Kožená** as the volatile yet visionary young novice and former aristocrat Blanche, with French mezzo-soprano **Sophie Koch** as Mère Marie, British soprano **Emma Bell** as Madame Lidoine, German soprano **Anna Prohaska** as Soeur Constance and American soprano **Deborah Polaski** making a welcome return to Covent Garden to sing Madame de Croissy.

Some of the crowd scenes in *Dialogues des Carmélites* will include participants from a community project involving **Streetwise Opera** and a group of unemployed young people.

**Keith Warner's** intense production of *Wozzeck* returns with an outstanding cast, under the baton of **Mark Elder**, with British baritone **Simon Keenlyside** singing the title role for the first time at Covent Garden and Finnish soprano **Karita Mattila** making her role debut as Marie. The remainder of the cast includes German tenor **Gerhard Siegel** as the Captain, British bass **John Tomlinson** as the Doctor and German tenor **Endrik Wottrich** as the Drum Major.

In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Richard Strauss (1864), The Royal Opera will present three of his operas in the 2013/14 Season, all with librettos by Hugo von Hofmannsthal on mythical themes: *Elektra*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. *Die Frau ohne Schatten* will be a new production by the internationally renowned German director **Claus Guth**. Guth focuses on the dreamlike quality of the work, presenting the whole story in psychoanalytical terms giving a cool lucid reading that goes straight to the core of Strauss's exotic fable. This co-production opened at La Scala, Milan in 2012. The three principal female singers – American soprano **Emily Magee** as the Empress, German mezzo-soprano **Michaela Schuster** as the Nurse and Russian soprano **Elena Pankratova** as Barak's Wife – return to the roles they originally created, with South African tenor **Johan Botha** (who also sang at La Scala) as the Emperor, and Danish baritone **Johan Reuter** as Barak. The production is conducted by **Semyon Bychkov**.

**Antonio Pappano** returns to conduct *Ariadne auf Naxos* in **Christof Loy's** inventive production which was first presented to mark the start of Pappano's tenure as Music Director of The Royal Opera in 2002. **Karita Mattila** sings the role of Ariadne/Prima Donna, her second role for The Royal Opera in the Season, newcomer Canadian soprano **Jane Archibald**, one of today's leading exponents of the role, is Zerbinetta and Italian-German tenor **Roberto Saccà** takes on the role of Bacchus/The Tenor.

The first of the 2013/14 Season's Richard Strauss offerings is **Charles Edwards's** production of *Elektra*, first seen at Covent Garden in 2003. Following his performances of *Salome* for The Royal Opera in 2012, **Andris Nelsons** conducts a cast which includes American soprano **Christine Goerke**, a much applauded *Elektra* worldwide, who sings the role for the first time at

Covent Garden just over a decade after her debut with The Royal Opera as Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*). The cast also includes Canadian soprano **Adrienne Pieczonka** as Chrysothemis, and **Michaela Schuster** as Klytämnestra.

The Season also includes two of **David McVicar**'s productions, *Faust* (2004) and *Le nozze di Figaro* (2006). The opulent production of *Faust* sets the action in Gounod's France in the 1850s, with Maltese tenor **Joseph Calleja** in the title role, Russian soprano **Anna Netrebko** as Marguerite, and Welsh bass-baritone **Bryn Terfel** and British baritone **Simon Keenlyside** re-creating the roles they sang when this production was new in 2004, Méphistophélès and Valentin respectively. David McVicar's acclaimed production of *Le nozze di Figaro* transposes the action to a French château around the time of the July 1830 revolution. Conducting honours for Mozart's uplifting exploration of love and the class system are shared between **John Eliot Gardiner** and **Colin Davis**. Two casts of leading Mozart singers are assembled including Welsh soprano **Rebecca Evans** and British soprano **Sally Matthews** who both sing the Countess for the first time at Covent Garden, while Swedish soprano **Camilla Tilling** sings the role of Susanna for the first time at Covent Garden, and **Gerald Finley** who returns to the role of Count Almaviva which he created in 2006, sharing the role with British baritone **Christopher Maltman** who sings Almaviva for the first time with The Royal Opera.

The Season will also include a range of popular operas including Puccini's *Tosca* conducted by **Plácido Domingo**, *Turandot* and *La bohème*, as well as *La traviata*, *Carmen* in two castings with the Youth Opera Company providing the children's chorus, and a return of Laurent Pelly's delightful production of *La Fille du régiment*.

Other great singers returning to The Royal Opera this Season include **Elīna Garanča** and **Roberto Alagna** in *Carmen*, **Angela Gheorghiu** and **Vittorio Grigolo** in *La bohème*, **Diana Damrau** singing her first Violetta in *La traviata* for The Royal Opera, **Dmitri Hvorostovsky** and **Simon Keenlyside**, also in *La traviata*, **Juan Diego Flórez** and **Patricia Ciofi** in *La Fille du régiment* and **Roberto Alagna**, **Thomas Hampson** and **Sondra Radvanovsky** singing the principal roles in *Tosca*. **Kiri Te Kanawa** returns to the Covent Garden stage,

celebrating her 70th birthday performing the role of the Duchesse de Crackentorp in *La Fille du régiment*.

In addition **Jonas Kaufmann** will give a recital on the main stage on Sunday 6 April 2014.

Among the artists making their debuts with The Royal Opera during the 2013/14 Season are American soprano **Lise Lindstrom**, one of the leading Turandots of her generation, who will be seen in Andrei Serban's production, which will be also relayed to cinemas worldwide. Italian bass-baritone **Luca Pisaroni** sings the role of Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), a role he has sung for the Metropolitan Opera, New York, in Vienna and for the Salzburg Festival. Two Ukrainian artists make their debuts with The Royal Opera this Season: Ukrainian soprano **Oksana Dyka** sings Tosca following performances in the role in Rome and La Scala, Milan, while Ukrainian bass **Alexander Tsymbalyuk** sings the role of the Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*), having sung the role on tour at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow with Daniel Barenboim. Argentinian soprano **Veronica Cangemi** sings Micaëla (*Carmen*), following her London appearances at the Barbican as Morgana (*Alcina*) and Angelica (*Orlando furioso*). Italian tenor **Riccardo Massi** sings Cavaradossi (*Tosca*) having made his debuts in the role in Munich and Paris. Italian baritone **Sebastian Catana** sings the role of Scarpia, having made his debut in the role in a new production at Oper Leipzig in 2011.

New to Covent Garden are three conductors, Greek born **Teodor Currentzis**, who conducts performances of *Tosca*; Hungarian conductor, **Henrik Nánási**, General Music Director of the Komische Oper Berlin, who conducts *Turandot* in September, and German conductor **Cornelius Meister**, Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, who conducts *La bohème*.

**Meet the Young Artists** week will run from Monday 14 to Saturday 19 October and will feature the **Jette Parker Young Artists** in a fully-staged production of Montsalvatge's charming *El gato con botas* (*Puss in Boots*) together with Berio's *Folk Songs*. At the end of the Season, on Sunday 20 July, the Jette Parker Young Artists' Summer Performance will showcase the talents

of the current members of the programme including sopranos **Dušica Bijelić**, **Anush Hovhannisyan** and **Kiandra Howarth**, mezzo-sopranos **Nadezhda Karyazina** and **Rachel Kelly**, tenors **David Butt Philip** and **Luis Gomes**, baritones **Michel de Souza** and **Ashley Riches**, conductors **Michele Gamba** and **Paul Wingfield** and pianist **Helen Nicholas**. Both events will include guest appearances by Jette Parker Principal **Jihoon Kim**.

## **BBC RADIO 3 BROADCASTS**

The following operas will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 during the 2013/14 Season.

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

ELEKTRA

LES VÊPRES SICILIENNES

WOZZECK

PARSIFAL

CARMEN

DON GIOVANNI

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN

FAUST

DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

MANON LESCAUT

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

MARIA STUARDA

## **OPERA IN THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE LIVE CINEMA SEASON**

Five live operas are part of the Royal Opera House Live Cinema Season presented in association with Bank of America Merrill Lynch:

**Tuesday 17 September 2013**

**Puccini *Turandot***

Marco Berti / Lisa Lindstrom / Eri Nakamura / Raymond Aceto

Conductor: Constantinos Carydis / Stage Director: Andrei Serban

**Monday 4 November 2013**

**Verdi *Les Vêpres Siciliennes***

New Production

Marina Poplavskaya / Erwin Schrott / Bryan Hymel / Michael Volle

Conductor: Antonio Pappano / Stage Director: Stefan Herheim

**Wednesday 18 December 2013**

**Wagner *Parsifal***

New Production

Simon O'Neill/René Pape/Gerald Finley/Willard White/Angela Denoke

Conductor: Antonio Pappano / Stage Director: Stephen Langridge

**Wed 12 February 2014**

**Mozart *Don Giovanni***

New Production

Mariusz Kwiecien / Alex Esposito / Malin Byström / Véronique Gens

Conductor: Antonio Pappano / Stage Director: Kasper Holten

**Tue 24 June 2014**

**Puccini *Manon Lescaut***

New Production

Kristine Opolais/Jonas Kaufmann/Christopher Maltman/Maurizio Muraro

Conductor: Antonio Pappano / Stage Director: Jonathan Kent

**LINBURY STUDIO THEATRE**

The Royal Opera has commissioned five new works for the Linbury Studio Theatre and will present two UK premieres.

For Christmas 2013, **Julian Philips** has created a new opera for family audiences: *How the Whale Became*, to a libretto by **Edward Kemp** based on stories from *The Dreamfighter and other creation tales* by Ted Hughes. The production will be directed by **Natalie Abrahami** with designs by **Tom Scutt**.

The Royal Opera has commissioned two leading contemporary composers to write new operas inspired by the Faust story to be performed alongside The Royal Opera's revival of Gounod's *Faust*. British composer **Luke Bedford**'s new work is written in collaboration with Scottish playwright **David Harrower**. British electronic pioneer, composer and sound artist **Matthew Herbert**'s opera *f4u5t* tells the story of a young composer frustratingly unchallenged by the demands of conventional music. When a stranger offers him a computer programme that will transmit not just emotion and texture but hard data, the musician accepts. Soon he is using his music to manipulate and physically control the world around him with thrilling but deadly consequences. Matthew's production integrates cutting-edge technology into the fabric of the musical score, blending instrumentalists and electronics in a live mix which will involve real-time integration of mobile phone technologies.

During the 2013/14 Season The Royal Opera will launch a collaboration with **Aldeburgh Music** and **Opera North** to commission operas from emerging composers with a flair for operatic creativity. The first commissions to be performed in a double bill are from British composer **Elsbeth Brooke** with a text by **Jack Underwood**, and from Spanish composer **Francisco Coll** with a text by **Meredith Oakes**. Francisco Coll currently studies with Thomas Adès who remarked about his pupil: 'His music displays an original and powerful sense of drama, and his ideas about music proceed from a strikingly individual and unusual mind.' Elspeth Brooke is a highly innovative composer who believes it is important to stay connected with the 'intuitive and emotional side of music making'. She has received commissions from leading ensembles such as London Sinfonietta and Rambert Dance Company. The operas will be

performed at Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Aldeburgh, in the Linbury Studio Theatre, and finally at the Howard Assembly Room, Leeds.

The first of the UK premieres given in the Linbury Studio Theatre in the 2013/14 Season is by acclaimed Australian electro-acoustic composer **Ben Frost** with libretto by **David Pountney**, adapting **Iain Banks**'s cult novel *The Wasp Factory*, about the disturbing acts of a psychopathic teenager living on a remote island. The Sacrifice Poles, Boiling Pool, Ice Chamber and Volt Room are all names Frank has given to places in his world – an isolated environment in which his father has left him to his own devices. As part of a self-invented warrior cult, Frank uses a homemade apparatus called the Wasp Factory to determine whom he will kill next and how. Frost himself directs. **Mirella Weingarten**'s set designs evoke a bleak, earthy landscape with atmospheric lighting by **Lucy Carter**. This opera has been commissioned by Bregenz Festival's Art of our Times programme, and is a co-production with the Royal Opera House, Hebbel-am-Ufer, Berlin, Holland Festival and Cork Midsummer Festival, with the support of the Capital Cultural Fund Berlin and Nordic Culture Point.

The Royal Opera will present the first UK performances of renowned Italian composer **Luca Francesconi**'s *Quartett*. Francesconi has created an epic musical canvas for **Heiner Müller**'s play *Quartett*, set in a bunker at the end of time, and inspired by characters from *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. Two characters are trapped in cycles of gratification and game-playing which lead inexorably to tragedy. The Royal Opera's new production is co-produced with London Sinfonietta and Opéra de Rouen, and directed by Associate Director of The Royal Opera **John Fulljames**. The virtuosic vocal parts are performed by two singers accompanied live by the London Sinfonietta and mixed live with recorded samples of a vast symphony orchestra and chorus.

**Music Theatre Wales** returns to the Linbury Studio Theatre bringing two radical works: the award-winning production of *Greek* by **Mark-Anthony Turnage**, a re-telling of the Oedipus story, first presented in its current production by Music Theatre Wales in 2011, and **Salvatore Sciarrino**'s *The Killing Flower (Luci mie traditrici)*, which tells the story of Renaissance madrigal master and murderer Carlo Gesualdo.

**The Opera Group** presents a new production of Austrian composer **H K Gruber's** *Gloria*, the story of a lonely pig-princess looking for love who is dazzled and wooed by a prince who turns out to be a butcher but at the last minute is saved from the chop by Rudi the wild boar. Gruber's music, deceptively simple and darkly ironic, sways between rustic folklore and jazz and is based on Rudolf Herfurtner's popular book, with a libretto translated by Amanda Holden. The production is directed by **Frederic Wake-Walker**, Artistic Director of The Opera Group.

Two British composers from the last century feature in English Touring Opera's Spring Season at the Linbury Studio Theatre. **Tippett's** *King Priam*, a meditation on fatherhood and the futility of war told from the perspective of the ageing king, returns to Covent Garden for the first time since 1962, along with **Britten's** first opera *Paul Bunyan*, a collaboration with W H Auden which re-creates the American folktale of lumberjack giant Paul Bunyan. **Michael Rosewell** conducts *King Priam* and **Philip Sunderland** conducts *Paul Bunyan*.

## **LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT – OPERA AND MUSIC**

Forthcoming projects include Royal Opera House Thurrock Community Chorus performances of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* in both Thurrock and France as part of a European Opera Project, together with the Brighton Festival Chorus and Orchestre de Picardie. The Verdi *Messa da Requiem* principals will be current and former Jette Parker Young Artists.

There will be a main stage performance in July 2014 of a newly commissioned work involving participants from a range of existing Royal Opera House projects including Chance to Dance, Youth Opera Company and Monday Moves.

The Youth Opera Company, formed in September 2010 with members drawn from across London and the South East, offers young people from a wide

variety of backgrounds who possess untapped potential the opportunity to discover and develop their talent. This Season the Youth Opera Company will provide the children's chorus for The Royal Opera's production of *Carmen*.

The Learning and Engagement programme is becoming more intrinsically linked with the artistic programming of the Royal Opera House. This Season participants from a community project involving Streetwise Opera and a group of unemployed young people will be part of the crowd scenes in the new production of Poulenc's *Les Dialogues des Carmélites*.

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