



ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE

THE ROYAL OPERA

El gato con botas (Puss-in-Boots)

Xavier Montsalvatge

16 October at 7pm, 18 October at 1pm and 7pm



Designs for *El gato con botas* © Simon Bejer

UK PREMIERE OF RARELY HEARD SPANISH OPERA TO BE PERFORMED BY JETTE PARKER YOUNG ARTISTS

- Generously supported by Oak Foundation
- Part of Meet the Young Artists Week, 14–19 October 2013

In October, The Royal Opera will stage a new production of *El gato con botas (Puss-in-Boots)*, which will mark this opera's UK premiere. This will be the first production staged by Portuguese director **Pedro Ribeiro** since he left the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in July 2013. He will be assisted by new Jette Parker Young Artist stage director **Greg Eldridge**. The cast includes a guest performance from Jette Parker Principal Korean bass **Jihoon Kim**,

who will sing the role of the Ogre. The role of the Princess is sung by Armenian soprano **Anush Hovhannisyan**, Irish mezzo-soprano **Rachel Kelly** sings the role of the Cat, the Miller is sung by Portuguese tenor **Luis Gomes**, Brazilian baritone **Michel de Souza** performs the role of the King and British conductor **Paul Wingfield** conducts **Southbank Sinfonia** for all performances.

Montsalvatge's delightful zarzuela-inspired chamber opera is based on **Charles Perrault's** beloved fairytale, which tells the story of a cat with a weakness for handsome boots, who determines to help his master become rich and famous. The designs for the production are by British designer **Simon Bejer**, who drew inspiration from traditional Iberian toys and puppets. He has also worked at other renowned venues including La Fenice, Venice; Teatro Petruzzelli, Bari and La Scala, Milan and he is a founding member of the Third Hand, the UK's only dedicated puppet opera company. Nine marionettes, made and manipulated by Portuguese puppet-makers **Rui Rodrigues** and **Sara Henriques** of **Red Cloud Puppet Theatre**, will be a key feature of this production.

Director **Pedro Ribeiro** is delighted by the prospect of staging a new production of this opera: 'It's great to immerse oneself in the trunk of old memories, finding fables and toys that filled our childhood. *El gato con botas* has a terrific score and poetic libretto that will bring back playfulness and fantasy to the stage.'

El gato con botas will be performed as part of a double bill alongside a concert performance of Berio's *Folk Songs*. Serbian soprano **Dušica Bijelić** will sing in English, Italian, Armenian, French and Italian dialects, Azerbaijani and Russian with Italian conductor **Michele Gamba** conducting **Southbank Sinfonia**.

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