



ROUNDHOUSE

PRESS RELEASE

WEDNESDAY 26TH MARCH 2014

THE ROYAL OPERA AND THE ROUNDHOUSE ANNOUNCE NEW COLLABORATION

Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* at The Roundhouse, Camden, in
January 2015

The Royal Opera and the Roundhouse today announce an exciting collaboration: a new production of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, which will receive eight performances at the Roundhouse in January 2015.

Directed by **Michael Boyd** and conducted by early music specialist **Christian Curnyn**, in a newly commissioned English translation by **Don Paterson**, this collaboration marks the first-ever staging of *L'Orfeo* by The Royal Opera, as well as the first time this unique north London venue will host an opera.

Kasper Holten, Director of Opera for The Royal Opera said: "I am thrilled that we have the opportunity to expand The Royal Opera's exploration of early music repertory in collaboration with such an exciting partner, particularly as this will be the first opera specifically conceived for the Roundhouse.

I am delighted that after *L'Ormino* with Shakespeare's Globe this year, Christian Curnyn will once again be working with us on this collaboration with the Roundhouse."

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Supported using public funding by
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Marcus Davey, the Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the Roundhouse said: “We are really delighted to be fusing the expertise of the Roundhouse and the Royal Opera House to create an important new version of this great opera. Developing *L’Orfeo* together is an opportunity to think of our building in a new way and introduce our audiences – many of whom are under 25 to opera. The Roundhouse is however more than just a legendary venue it’s a creative centre used by over 3,000 11-25 year olds each year. *L’Orfeo* will also give these young people a chance to contribute to a new and exciting production as film makers, technicians and performers.”

This new collaboration will see Michael Boyd, former Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, make his opera directing debut. He is known for his many productions of Shakespeare plays, including his staging of the Olivier Award-winning ‘Histories Cycle’, which transferred to the Roundhouse in spring 2008 to enormous critical acclaim.

He will be joined by his regular collaborator, stage designer **Tom Piper**, and lighting designer **Jean Kalman**.

The conductor for the production, early music specialist Christian Curnyn, has emerged as one of the UK’s leading conductors specializing in the Baroque and Classical repertory. The founder of the Early Opera Company, he has most recently received critical acclaim for his conducting of Handel’s *Rodelinda* at English National Opera.

Monteverdi’s 1607 opera tells the story of the legendary musician Orpheus, and his descent to the Underworld to recover his beloved Euridice. *L’Orfeo* demonstrates the power of music to move, as Orpheus, through his singing, persuades the gods of the underworld to relinquish his dead wife Euridice and allow her to return with him to the regions of the living – on condition he does not look at her on his return journey. Michael Boyd will be working with a young and dynamic cast led by Hungarian-Romanian baritone **Gyula Orendt** and British sopranos **Mary Bevan** and **Susanna Hurrell**.

L'Orfeo marks the Royal Opera House's first collaboration with the Roundhouse, and reflects the commitment of both venues to offer opportunities to young people. Young singers will form an ensemble chorus as part of the production, and musicians from various youth ensembles will work with a composer to create and perform a series of introductory fanfares to be played before each performance. The digital and new media teams from the Roundhouse and the Royal Opera House will work together to provide skill development opportunities around film and digital projects.

PRODUCTION

Conductor
Christian Curnyn
Director
Michael Boyd
Set designs
Tom Piper
Lighting design
Jean Kalman
Sound design
Paul Arditti

Orchestra of the Early Opera Company

CAST

Orfeo
Gyula Orendt
Euridice/Echo
Susanna Hurrell
Music/Nymph
Mary Bevan
Persephone
Rachel Kelly§
Pluto
Callum Thorpe
Charon
James Platt
Messenger
Susan Bickley
Shepherd 1
Anthony Gregory
Shepherd 2/Apollo
Amar Muchhala
Shepherd 3/Hope
Christopher Lowrey

§Jette Parker Young Artist

Notes to editors:

The Roundhouse is loved by audiences everywhere as a truly extraordinary place to experience live performance. Fewer people know that the Roundhouse is a charity which every year works with 3,000 11-25 year-olds from all backgrounds, supporting them to reach their creative potential by offering opportunities in music, media and performing arts.

The Royal Opera, under the artistic direction of Antonio Pappano, Music Director, Kasper Holten, Director of Opera and John Fulljames, Associate Director of Opera,

is one of the world's leading opera companies. The Royal Opera presents a wide-ranging programme, which includes the regular commissioning of new opera, both in the iconic Covent Garden theatre in London and also streamed and relayed live around the world. The Royal Opera House also plays a leading role in education, community engagement, skills development, professional training and cultural regeneration in the UK.

PRESS OFFICE CONTACTS

Ann Richards, Head of Opera Press, Royal Opera House

Tel: 020 7212 9132 / ann.richards@roh.org.uk

Ruth Greenwood, Opera Press and Communications Officer, Royal Opera House

Tel: 020 7212 9731 / ruth.greenwood@roh.org.uk

David Brownlie-Marshall, Opera Press and Communications Officer, Royal Opera House

Tel: 020 7212 9504 / david.brownlie-marshall@roh.org.uk

Celia Moran, Opera Press Assistant, Royal Opera House

Tel: 020 7212 9149 / celia.moran@roh.org.uk

Ellie Sleeman, Director of Communications, Roundhouse

Tel: 020 7424 6777 / ellie.sleeman@roundhouse.org.uk