12 August 2019

Gerald Barry’s *The Intelligence Park* opens the 2019/20 Season in the Linbury Theatre

A co-production between The Royal Opera and Music Theatre Wales in association with the London Sinfonietta

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Gerald Barry creates operas like no other – brilliant, surreal and often laugh-out-loud funny. Not seen in London since 1990, Barry’s first opera *The Intelligence Park* (with a libretto by Vincent Deane) comes to the Linbury Theatre ahead of Alice’s Adventures Under Ground on the main stage later in the Season.

*The Intelligence Park* was commissioned by the ICA and was first performed in 1990 at the Almeida Festival, introducing a completely new operatic voice to the world. Almost 30 years on, The Royal Opera and Music Theatre Wales are co-producing a new production together with the London Sinfonietta, the UK’s leading contemporary music ensemble, which will open in the Linbury Theatre at the Royal Opera House and then tour to Cardiff, Manchester and Birmingham. Director/designer Nigel Lowery directs and designs a new ‘messed-up’ Baroque production that aims to rediscover the opera’s ‘zoo’ of emotions, characters and absurdities in a blurring of imagination and reality that explores notions of creativity, sexuality and obligation.

The setting is Dublin in 1753, where a composer’s work on an opera is disrupted and intensified when he falls in love with the lead castrato, who at the same time elopes with the composer’s fiancée, thus causing fantasy and reality to become mixed. The music, scored for chamber orchestra and conducted here by Jessica Cottis, is startling in every aspect of its range, making extravagant virtuoso demands of the six performers.

The cast includes former Jette Parker Young Artist and Brazilian baritone Michel de Souza as Paradies, Australian tenor Adrian Dwyer (who made his Royal Opera debut in 2015 as Emir in Cities of Salt), as D’Esperaudieu, Welsh soprano Rhian Lois (Papagena in The Royal Opera’s Die Zauberflöte in 2015) as Jerusha Cramer, American countertenor and Jette Parker Young Artist Patrick Terry as Serafino, Canadian mezzo-soprano Stephanie Marshall (who has previously sung in Barry’s The Importance of Being Earnest for The Royal Opera) as Faranesi and Stephen Richardson as Sir Joshua Cramer, the role he created in 1990.
Australian-British conductor Jessica Cottis made her Royal Opera debut conducting *Mamzer Bastard* at Hackney Empire in 2018. She also conducted the world premiere of Gavin Higgins’s opera *The Monstrous Child* earlier in 2019.

Director and designer Nigel Lowery’s previous work for The Royal Opera has included *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (designer, 1990s production for Richard Jones) and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (designer and director, Shaftesbury Theatre, 1997).

*The Intelligence Park* opens on **25 September 2019**, with subsequent performances on **27 and 28 September**, and **1, 2 and 4 October 2019**.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

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2. For images or press ticket requests for the Linbury Theatre, please contact Hannah Last

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**THE INTELLIGENCE PARK**

Linbury Theatre, Royal Opera House

**25, 27 and 28 September 2019** at **7.45pm**

**1 October, 2 and 4 October 2019** at **7.45pm**

8 October, Sherman Theatre, Cardiff

12 October, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester

4 November, Birmingham Repertory Theatre  (Tim Anderson conducts)

Co-production with Music Theatre Wales in association with the London Sinfonietta

Sung in English
Credits
Music Gerald Barry
Libretto Vincent Deane
Director and designer Nigel Lowery

Performers
Conductor Jessica Cottis
Robert Paradies Michel de Souza
D'Esperaudieu Adrian Dwyer
Sir Joshua Cramer Stephen Richardson
Jerusha Cramer Rhian Lois
Serafino Patrick Terry
Faranesi Stephanie Marshall

London Sinfonietta

About The Royal Opera
The Royal Opera, under the artistic direction of Antonio Pappano, Music Director, and Oliver Mears, Director of Opera, is one of the world’s leading opera companies. Based in the iconic Covent Garden theatre, it is renowned both for its outstanding performances of traditional opera and for commissioning new works by today’s leading opera composers, such as Harrison Birtwistle, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Thomas Adès.

About the Royal Opera House
The Royal Opera House’s aim is for many more people to enjoy and engage in exceptional ballet and opera. As The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, we bring together the world’s most extraordinary ballet and opera artists in more than 500 performances every year: live events that thrill, move and excite, and that transport people to other worlds though music, dance and theatre.
About Music Theatre Wales
Based in Cardiff, Music Theatre Wales is the UK’s leading contemporary opera company. By commissioning outstanding composers and writers, developing the careers of opera creators of the future and presenting works by the world’s most important contemporary composers – including Pascal Dusapin, Philip Glass, Salvatore Sciarrino, Peter Eötvös, Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Maxwell Davies and Stuart MacRae – the company brings vibrant new opera to audiences across Wales, the UK and internationally.

About the London Sinfonietta
London Sinfonietta is one of the world’s finest contemporary music ensembles with a reputation built on cutting-edge programming and virtuoso performances. Founded in 1968, the London Sinfonietta has commissioned nearly 400 new works, and given premieres of many hundreds more.