



28 September 2020

## #OurHouseToYourHouse

**The Royal Opera House unveils programme of new work alongside much-loved classics for live audiences this Autumn**

**The Royal Opera and The Royal Ballet present:**

- *4/4* and *New Dark Age* – two brand-new opera productions
- *Current, Rising* – world's first new opera in hyper-reality
  - Meet the Young Artists Week
    - The Royal Ballet: Live
  - Concert performances of *Ariodante* and *Falstaff*
    - *The Royal Ballet: Back on Stage*
- *The Nutcracker* and The Royal Opera in concert this Christmas

The Royal Opera House is thrilled to announce an exciting, wide-ranging new line-up for its autumn programme. For the first time, extraordinary performances will be accessible online for a global audience through livestreams and for socially distanced live audiences at our home in Covent Garden. In a global first, we present a new opera in hyper-reality, alongside repertory favourites from both artistic companies.

Two newly programmed, progressive opera productions will welcome audiences on **Saturday 17 and 24 October**. Curated by **Oliver Mears**, the stagings will feature celebrated directors from the world of opera and theatre, paired with composers, conductors, singers and the **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House** in inspiring works that would never normally be seen on the main stage of the Royal Opera House.

The first of these, *4/4*, will be performed live on **Saturday 17 October**. Directed by Olivier Award nominee **Adele Thomas**, renowned baroque specialist **Christian Curnyn** will conduct **Alexandra Lowe** and **Jonathan McGovern** in **Handel's *Apollo and Daphne***. **Gruber's** wild and irreverent ***Frankenstein!!*** will see one of the most exciting and sought-after singers of his generation, **Allan Clayton**, take to the stage, directed by multi-Olivier Award-winning director **Richard Jones**, conducted by former Jette Parker Young Artist (JPYA) **Ed Whitehead**. Current JPYA soprano **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha** will sing **Barber's *Knoxville Summer 1915***, directed by **Antony McDonald** and conducted by **Patrick Milne**. And finally, leading British mezzo-soprano **Christine Rice** will perform **Britten's** final masterpiece ***Phaedra*** – conducted by **Richard Hetherington**, directed by theatre and opera specialist **Deborah Warner**.

***New Dark Age*** will follow on **Saturday 24 October**. The evening will open with ***The Knife of Dawn***, a one-person chamber opera by one of Britain's most exciting young composers, **Hannah Kendall**. The new production will be directed by critically acclaimed director **Ola Ince**, conducted by **Jonathon Heyward** and will feature baritone **Peter Brathwaite**. **Katie Mitchell** will present a brand-new music drama piece showcasing works by female composers: **Missy Mazzoli**, **Anna Meredith** and **Anna Thorvaldsdottir**, performed by **Nadine Benjamin**, **Anna Dennis** and **Susan Bickley**, conducted by **Natalie Murray Beale**. The Royal Opera House's commitment to promoting the newest talent continues, as emerging stage directors who have taken part in the ROH opera training programme, led by Katie Mitchell, assist on both programmes.

**Director of Opera, Oliver Mears said:**

“The Royal Opera returns, determined to embrace the constraints of our new world while seeing this as a moment of artistic opportunity, offering a breadth of work from the beginning of our story – concerts of *Ariodante*, one of the great Handel operas first staged at Covent Garden – through to Verdi, conducted by Antonio Pappano, and finally to bold new stagings of contemporary work and pieces that have never been staged at Covent Garden. Working alongside a world-class assembly of singers, directors and conductors, we can't wait to be back, presenting these exhilarating projects to both live and digital global audiences.”

In a unique collaboration with **Figment Productions** and **Royal Holloway University**, we are also proud to announce the world's first original opera in hyper reality: ***Current, Rising***, an artistic experiment bringing together historic stagecraft and cutting-edge technology, developed by a female-led creative team.

The opera, directed by **Netia Jones**, designed by **Joanna Scotcher**, and composed by **Samantha Fernando**, is inspired by the liberation of Ariel at the end of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. It places audiences at the centre of an immersive, dream-like virtual world, taking them on a journey through imaginary landscapes of the night, from twilight to dawn. *Current, Rising* is a multi-sensory, fully immersive 360 experience exploring ideas of isolation, connection, and how we can collectively reimagine our futures.

*Current, Rising* has been produced as part of the Royal Opera House's innovation programme, Audience Labs, and is ideal for those who are new to opera. It will take place in the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre from **28 November 2020** and will strictly adhere to social distancing guidelines. More details will be announced when booking opens.

The Royal Opera House continues to provide the best opportunities for talented young singers, conductors, répétiteurs and directors from across the globe through the Jette Parker Young Artist programme. To welcome the new recruits, **Meet the Young Artists Week** returns from **26-31 October** with a packed virtual and live schedule. Power is placed in the hands of the digital audience as the week kicks off with *Juke Box*, a streamed event where each artist sings an aria or song in a bid to make it to the final live concert on **Friday 30 October**.

Complementing the main stage short operas, across the week three *Female Monodramas* will be broadcast featuring **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha**, **Stephanie Wake-Edwards** and **Alexandra Lowe**, paired with directors from the Royal Opera House's LockDown/SkillUp training programme under the tutelage of Katie Mitchell. The three short films have been shot on location in the Royal Opera House giving glimpses of much-missed corridors and backstage areas. Rounding off the week, live audiences will be treated to recitals in the Linbury Theatre on **Thursday 29 October** featuring **Blaise Malaba**, **Andrés Presno** and **April Koyejo-Audiger**, and the full collective will join to sing in an *Ensemble* concert on **Wednesday 28 October**.

*Ariodante* was the first opera written by Handel for the first theatre on the current Royal Opera House site in 1735 and has not been performed at Covent Garden since. This Autumn, the production makes a welcome return. Performed in concert on **Friday 20** and **Sunday 22 November** - the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House will play alongside **Paula Murrihy**, **Chen Reiss**, **Gerald Finley**, **Sophie Bevan** and the **Royal Opera Chorus** conducted by **Christian Curnyn**. A concert performance of Verdi's *Falstaff* will

follow on **Friday 27** and **Sunday 29 November**, with celebrated bass-baritone **Bryn Terfel** resuming the titular role alongside **Simon Keenlyside** and the Royal Opera Chorus, conducted by **Antonio Pappano**.

In December, The Royal Opera will perform several Christmas Concerts with the combined forces of the **Royal Opera Chorus**, Jette Parker Young Artists and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

In November, **The Royal Ballet: Live** will offer a unique opportunity to see, in person, **The Royal Ballet** back on its home stage in a snapshot of its rich repertory past and present. Dancers drawn from across the Company will perform a selection of excerpts from traditional and contemporary classics, and each evening will close with a celebrated one-act ballet. Programme A features **Kenneth MacMillan's** showstopping *Elite Syncopations* and Programme B includes **Christopher Wheeldon's** ballet of shimmering beauty, *Within the Golden Hour*.

A reworked, Covid-safe version of *The Nutcracker* will also open in time for a festive treat for the whole family, a classic with a special place in the hearts of ballet fans around the world. **Peter Wright's** production of *The Nutcracker* has been enchanting children and adults alike since its first performance by The Royal Ballet in 1984. Combined with **Tchaikovsky's** sumptuous, iconic score and charming designs by **Julia Trevelyan Oman**, this is a magical production. More details of this exciting adaptation are to be announced.

On **Friday 9 October**, **The Royal Ballet** returns for a special livestreamed performance, ***The Royal Ballet: Back on Stage***. After an absence of seven months the whole Company will be reunited on their home stage with the **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House** in a spectacular collection of highlights from their wide-ranging repertory. A specially invited small audience, including students and health workers, will join us for our first live performance with an audience since the beginning of lockdown.

The ***Insights*** series also continues via the ROH YouTube Channel, allowing global digital audiences the chance to discover more about the work being created by the Companies and creators working on stage and behind the scenes. The first will provide behind-the-scenes footage of Hannah Kendall's *The Knife of Dawn*, offering fascinating rehearsal footage and interviews with the cast and creative team.

Royal Ballet dancers will host a dedicated ***Insight*** to celebrate Black History Month, this event will take a personal approach, discussing dancers' experiences and influences, exploring heritage and culture and how these shared and individual experiences have shaped their lives and their careers in the UK and beyond.

**Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, Alex Beard, said:**

"We are delighted to present this bold, wide-ranging autumn programme highlighting the creativity and innovation that can come from adversity. It is vital for theatres across the UK and for our community of diverse artists, that we begin to bring our art forms safely back to our stages. This programme of new work, shorts, a world first hyperreality opera and live broadcasts are all underpinned by our efforts to reach new and existing audiences online, showcasing the very best of our art forms in new and unexpected ways."

Please note that full casting and on sale information will follow in the coming weeks.

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors**

For further information or interview requests please contact:

**Opera** – Chloe Westwood - [chloe.westwood@roh.org.uk](mailto:chloe.westwood@roh.org.uk)

**Ballet** – Ashley Woodfield – [ashley.woodfield@roh.org.uk](mailto:ashley.woodfield@roh.org.uk)

- Please note that all ROH performances and participating artists are subject to change due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- In order to ensure the safety of artists and creative teams and to prevent the spread of Covid-19, mitigations have included strict socially distancing in the rehearsal studio alongside testing, for those in physical contact during rehearsal, administered privately at no expense to the NHS.
- With the safety of audiences, our community of staff and artists at its heart, significant mitigations have been put in place across the organisation to ensure we can bring audiences the best of our art forms while ensuring we prevent any further spread of Covid-19.
- Full casting and on sale information will follow in the coming weeks, visit [roh.org.uk](http://roh.org.uk).
- All livestreams are available via: [stream.roh.org.uk](http://stream.roh.org.uk), available for 30 days on demand

**The Royal Ballet: Back on Stage, 9 October**

- Please find images [here](#).

**4/4, Saturday 17 October, 7.30pm BST**

**New Dark Age, Saturday 24 October, 7.30pm BST**

- Images can be downloaded [here](#).
- Tickets for the online livestreams of *4/4* and *New Dark Age* are available [online](#).
- Ticketing for live audiences will open soon.

### **Meet the Young Artists Week: 26-31 October**

- Images can be downloaded [here](#).

### **Current, Rising: From 28 November**

- Images can be downloaded [here](#).

### **The Royal Ballet: Live**

- Please find images here: [Elite Syncopations](#) [Within the Golden Hour](#)

### **Falstaff, Friday 27 and Sunday 29 November**

- Images can be downloaded from [here](#).

### **The Nutcracker, December 2020**

- Images can be downloaded [here](#).

Please find general imagery of The Royal Opera House [here](#) and [here](#).

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### **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 Ballet**

Under the directorship of Kevin O’Hare, The Royal Ballet unites tradition and innovation in world-class performances and is a driving force in the development of ballet as an art form. Based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, it brings together today’s most dynamic and versatile dancers with a world-class orchestra and leading choreographers, composers, conductors, directors and creative teams to share awe-inspiring theatrical experiences with diverse audiences worldwide. The Company’s extensive repertory embraces 19th-century classics, the singular legacy of works by Founder Choreographer Frederick Ashton and Principal Choreographer Kenneth MacMillan, the compelling new canon of work by choreographers today including Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor and Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon, and the bold and complementary programming in the Linbury Theatre.

### About the Royal Opera House

Home to The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House our vision is to give everyone access to exceptional ballet and opera.

Since closing our doors due to the global pandemic in March 2020, the Royal Opera House has continued to bring together the world’s most extraordinary artists and curated the #OurHouseToYourHouse programme of 19 streams, 4 socially distanced live concerts and a suite of online content that has been viewed over 315 million times in 183 countries.

The Royal Opera House continues its #OurHouseToYourHouse programme this autumn, bringing audiences the best of the ROH through a new series of live performances, cinema screenings, Friday Premieres and cultural highlights in partnership with the BBC and Sky Arts. We hope to welcome back socially distanced audiences in the near future.

The Royal Opera House is committed to widening participation and deepening learning for all ages. This summer we launched Create and Learn, offering free online home-learning opportunities for children and young people. In addition, The Royal Ballet partnered with Cast and Doncaster Council to support Doncaster residents with online resources and remote direction to create a unique community dance film, *Doncaster Dances*.

### **Royal Opera House Recovery Campaign**

Live performance is a shared experience, and our audiences are at the heart of what we do on our stages, backstage, online, in cinemas and in our communities. This year's global pandemic has affected all arts organisations across the world. We have lost £3 in every £5 of our income, and any Government loan will take us only part of the way. We need your help with our Recovery Fund to bring artists back to our stages. [roh.org.uk/donate](http://roh.org.uk/donate)