



PRESS RELEASE

12 December 2016

THE SUNDAY SERIES: OPERA IN CONCERT CONTINUES WITH DEBUSSY'S *L'ENFANT PRODIGUE*

The Sunday Series: Opera in Concert, curated by Scottish Opera's Music Director, **Stuart Stratford**, continues on 5 February at 3pm in Theatre Royal Glasgow with *L'enfant prodigue*, by French composer, Claude Debussy.

Showcasing Debussy's early mastery of melody, harmony and orchestration, this concert also features his *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and Sibelius's *Pelléas and Mélisande* suite, in a programme designed to complement the company's new production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*.

Stuart Stratford conducts soloists **Luis Gomes**, **Ashley Holland** and **Claire Rutter**, who are joined by The Orchestra of Scottish Opera.

Stuart Stratford said: 'The early works of great composers reveal much about the mature master. Debussy was just 22 years old in 1884 when he submitted *L'enfant prodigue* for a competition, and yet all of the embryonic elements which we associate with him are present in

this piece. His dynamic use of instrumental colour, extended use of exotic scales, and complex and layered textures are all recognisable as belonging to the master musical alchemist.

‘Preceding the performance of *L’enfant prodigue*, the first half of the concert will feature Debussy's first mature masterpiece, *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, juxtaposed with Sibelius’s *Pelléas and Mélisande* suite, a combination I hope will whet the appetite for audiences to come and see our staged production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande* in February and March.’

Two further concerts are planned for the Series, which puts the spotlight on early and lesser-known works by some of opera’s biggest names: Rossini’s *La scala di seta* in April (which is also being performed in Perth Concert Hall) and Puccini’s *Le Villi*, in May, which will be a Scottish premiere.

-ENDS-

www.scottishopera.org.uk

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Cast and Creative Team

Conductor	Stuart Stratford
Tenor (son)	Luis Gomes
Baritone (father)	Ashley Holland
Soprano (mother)	Claire Rutter

Performance Diary for The Sunday Series: Opera in Concert

Debussy	<i>L’enfant prodigue</i>
Debussy	<i>Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune</i>
Sibelius	<i>Pelléas and Mélisande</i> suite

5 Feb 2017, 3pm

Rossini's *La scala di seta*

2 Apr 2017, 3pm

La scala di seta is also performed at Perth Concert Hall on 7 Apr 2017, 7.30pm

Puccini's *Le Villi*

21 May 2017, 3pm

Notes to Editors

Stuart Stratford's biography:

Stuart Stratford was appointed Music Director of Scottish Opera from 1 June 2015.

Stuart read music at Trinity College, University of Cambridge, studying conducting with David Parry. He also spent three years studying with the legendary conducting teacher, Ilya Aleksandrovich Musin, at the Saint Petersburg State Conservatoire, Symphonic and Operatic Conducting Faculty. He was the Junior Fellow in Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, in 1999 and 2000.

Opera is at the core of his activities. In the UK Stuart has conducted for English National Opera, Opera North, Welsh National Opera, Birmingham Opera Company and Buxton Festival, as well as Scottish Opera, with repertoire including *Giovanna d'Arco*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Khovanshchina*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Don Giovanni*, *Satyagraha*, *Pagliacci*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Faust*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Falstaff*, *La Boheme*, *Candide*, *Swanhunter* (Dove), *Tobias and the Angel* (Dove), *Ion* (Param Vir), *Kantan* (Goehr), *L'altra Euridice* (Dove), *Ariadne* (Langer), and *The Embalmer* (Batistelli). He gave the world staged premiere of *The Maiden in the Tower* (Sibelius) and the UK staged premiere of *Kashchei the Immortal* (Rimsky-Korsakov).

He has been a regular conductor at Opera Holland Park and has conducted performances of *Eugene Onegin*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Jenůfa*, *Iolanta*, *Káťa Kabanová*, *La Forza del Destino*, *L'amico Fritz*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La Fanciulla del West* and *Il Trittico*.

Outside the UK, Stuart has worked at the Finnish National Opera (*Doctor Atomic*), Hong Kong (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), at Theater St. Gallen, Switzerland (*Un Ballo in Maschera*), and at the Birgitta Festival with the Estonian National Opera (*Faust*).

He has conducted concerts with many of the UK orchestras including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia, London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, Manchester Camerata and Viva Sinfonia.

Abroad Stuart works with the Porto Symphony Orchestra, Remix Ensemble, Orchestra of the Algarve, Perm Opera and Ballet Theater, Ural Symphony Orchestra in Yekaterinburg where he gave the Russian premiere of *Momentum* (Turnage) and *Airport Scenes* (Dove). With the Australian Chamber Orchestra in Sydney he has recorded a joint Channel 4 and Australian Broadcasting Corporation film opera, *The Eternity Man*, which was broadcast in both the UK and Australia.

Scottish Opera biography:

Scottish Opera is Scotland's national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. It was founded by Alexander Gibson in 1962 and was inaugurated with a production of *Madama Butterfly* at the King's Theatre in Glasgow.

Notable achievements include the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Inés de Castro* at the 1996 Edinburgh International Festival and complete Ring cycles at the 2003 Edinburgh International Festival, which won the 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera Production. Recent commissions include *Five:15 Operas Made in Scotland* (2008-10); *The Lady from the Sea*, *Clemency*, the double bill of *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* (winner of a South Bank Sky Arts Award) which premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival and 2016's *The Devil Inside* by Stuart MacRae and Louise Welsh.

Scottish Opera is committed to bringing the widest possible range of opera, performed to the highest possible standards, to the maximum audience throughout Scotland and the UK. Each

year it performs in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness, as well as smaller theatres, village halls and community centres throughout the country.

Scottish Opera's Education and Outreach Department was the first of its kind of any opera company in Europe. It operates an extensive programme which involves over 8,000 primary school children every year, as well as many other activities including adult learning and free *Unwrapped* taster sessions.

Scottish Opera is supported by the Scottish Government.



For additional press details please contact:

Emily Henderson, Press Manager, 0141 242 0511, emily.henderson@scottishopera.org.uk

Eilidh Clark, Press Officer, 0141 242 0552, eilidh.clark@scottishopera.org.uk