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##### Press Release

**SCOTTISH opera announces live indoor events for autumn 2021**

* **A new production of Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Gondoliers* and a Company premiere of *Utopia, Limited* in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London**
* ***Opera Highlights* tours to 9 venues throughout Scotland in September**
* **A concert of *Great Operatic Arias*** **at Live and Unlocked Perth Summer Festival from Scottish Opera’s Emerging Artists**
* **Scottish Opera returns to Lammermuir Festival and Perth Concert Hall for live performances of *Così fan tutte***
* **Scottish Opera’s Outreach and Education department continues its 50th anniversary celebrations with a festive production for 3 to 6 year olds – *Mr McNeep Has Lost His Sheep.***
* **A Gala concert in Dundee, celebrating the work of Puccini**

Scottish Opera is set to return to live indoor performance following the success of its outdoor productions this Summer.

After 18 months with no indoor performances to a live audience the Company announces its Autumn 2021 activity with a new production of Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Gondoliers* and the Scottish Opera premiere of *Utopia, Limited*, a return for *Opera Highlights* to 9 venues throughout Scotland, and live performances of the Company’s *Così fan tutte*, originally created for Scottish Opera: On Screen, at Lammermuir Festival and Perth Concert Hall. This is alongside a gala performance in Dundee and more from Scottish Opera Outreach & Education.

Scottish Opera, General Director, **Alex Reedijk** said: ‘We are delighted that after 18 months we are going to be able to open theatre doors and welcome audiences back inside. *The Gondoliers* is a truly uplifting production to mark such a positive milestone in our return to live indoor performance. Over the last year we have been resilient in our attempts to adapt to the circumstances by offering our On Screen productions, as well as *Pop-up Opera* and our 5-star outdoor productions of *Falstaff* and *La bohème*. There is little that compares to the experience of live performance and this is the next step in returning to our audiences – we can’t wait to be with you again inside a theatre! We are especially delighted to have the opportunity to travel to local venues again for indoor performances of Opera Highlights and Lammermuir Festival, alongside our performances in Perth and Dundee. It is at the heart of everything we aim for as a Company, travelling the highways and byways of Scotland to make opera accessible to all.’

Postponed since May 2020, Scottish Opera brings a new co-production with D’Oyly Carte Opera and State Opera South Australia of Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Gondoliers* to Theatre Royal Glasgow, Festival Theatre Edinburgh and Eden Court Inverness this Autumn, before touring to London’s Hackney Empire in March 2022. Directed by **Stuart Maunder**, Artistic Director at State Opera South Australia, and with set and costume design by **Dick Bird** *(Mikado,* 2015, *Nixon in China*, 2020) this is production is packed full of fun and whimsy, brought to life with fabulously inventive props – which are never quite what they seem – and exquisitely detailed costumes that will transport audiences to Venice’s Grand Canal. Audiences will also have the opportunity to see the rarely-performed *Utopia, Limited* in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London. These concert performances will be a premiere for Scottish Opera and with only a handful of professional performances since the original staging, this is a rare opportunity to indulge in some of Gilbert & Sullivan’s lesser-known work.

Conductor and Scottish Opera’s Head of Music, **Derek Clark**, said: ‘*The Gondoliers* is like a breath of Italian summer air. Gilbert’s witty book and lyrics show him at the top of his game and Sullivan, inspired by the Venetian setting, produced his sunniest score, with one lilting melody after another – all guaranteed to make you leave the theatre with a smile on your face. It’s pure joy from start to finish, exactly what is needed after a difficult year.’

Scottish Opera’s ever-popular *Opera Highlights* returns, touring Scotland with 11 performances over 9 venues. The tour kicks off on 14 September 2021 in Greenock before travelling across Scotland to Musselburgh, St Andrews, Ballachullish, Strathpeffer, Stornoway, Peebles, Ayr and Dunoon. Performed by a cast including new Scottish Opera 2021/22 Emerging Artists, director **Jeanne Pansard-Besson**’s production offers an uplifting performance including a playlist of operatic favourites.

On 31 July 2021 Perth Plaza hosts *Great Operatic Arias* from Scottish Opera, starring Emerging Artists **Margo Arsane**, **Shengzhi Ren** and **Arthur Bruce**, led by Scottish Opera’s Head of Music **Derek Clark** on keyboard. In an hour-long performance, audiences will be treated to much-loved arias and ensembles from Bizet’s *Carmen*, Rossini’s *Barber of Seville*, Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* and many others.

Following the success of the Scottish Opera: On Screen collection, the Company’s production of *Così fan tutte* will be transported from the screen to the stage at Lammermuir Festival on Thursday 9 September at St Mary’s, Haddington. Conducted by Music Director **Stuart Stratford**, directed by **Roxana Haines** (*La bohème*2020) and performed by the original cast from the film – including Scottish Opera’s 2020/21 Emerging Artists – the production will then travel to Perth Concert Hall on Saturday 11 September.

During December 2021 younger audiences can enjoy *Mr MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep*, a festive musical show for 3 to 6 year olds, including nursery and school groups. Featuring live music, singing and puppets, this fun 45-minute show offers opportunities for young ones to participate as they help Farmer MacNeep find his favourite sheep, Barry and Barbara.

On 12 December 2021 Scottish Opera will also present a Gala Concert at Caird Hall in Dundee in a celebration of the work of Puccini. More information coming soon.

Lammermuir tickets are on sale now, tickets for Opera Highlights on sale 17 August and tickets for all other activity on sale 1 September at <https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/>.

*The Gondoliers* and *Utopia, Limited* are supported Scottish Opera’s ‘Play a Supporting Role’ Appeal and Garfield Weston Foundation (Weston Culture Fund). *Così fan tutte* is supported by Garfield Weston Foundation (Weston Culture Fund). *Opera Highlights* is supported by The Friends of Scottish Opera and JTH Charitable Trust. *Mr MacNeep* *Has Lost His Sheep* is supported by The W.A. Cargill Fund and Scottish Opera’s Education Angels.

**Notes to Editors**

**Key Dates:**

**Great Operatic Arias**

31 July, Perth Plaza

**Così fan tutte**

9 September, St Mary’s, Haddington (Lammermuir Festival)

11 September, Perth Concert Hall

**Opera Highlights**

14 September, Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock

16 September, Brunton Theatre, Musselburgh

18 September, The Byre, St Andrews

21 September, Ballachulish Village Hall

23 September, Strathpeffer Pavillion

25 September, An Lanntair, Stornoway

28 September, Eastgate Theatre, Peebles

29 September, Gaiety Theatre, Ayr

2 October, Queens Hall, Dunoon

**The Gondoliers**

16, 21, 23 October, Theatre Royal Glasgow

22 October, Access Gondoliers\*, Theatre Royal Glasgow

28, 29, 30, 31 October & 4,6 November, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

3 November, Access Gondoliers\*, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

10, 11, 13 November, Eden Court, Inverness

12 November, Access Gondoliers\*, Eden Court Inverness

30, 31 March and 2 April 2022, Hackney Empire, London

\*Access Gondoliers is a shortened version of the opera, introduced by a narrator and with cast and orchestra. These performances are open to all and are particularly suitable for anyone who might enjoy the flexibility and freedom to relax and move about as required.

**Utopia, Limited**

20 October, Theatre Royal Glasgow

5 November, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

1 April 2022, Hackney Empire, London

**Gala Concert**

12 December, Caird Hall, Dundee

**Mr MacNeep Has Lost His Sheep**

3 - 22 December, Scottish Opera Production Studios, Glasgow

All productions are created and performed in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

The Company’s Opera on Screen productions are available to watch at: www.scottishopera.org.uk/what-s-on/opera-on-screen/.

The collection includes Donizetti’s *L’elisir d’amore*, Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, *Opera Highlights*, Janáček’s *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, Menotti’s *The Telephone* and Samuel Bordoli and Jenni Fagan’s *The Narcissistic Fish*.
Scottish Opera is Scotland’s national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland.

The Company's performance repertoire ranges across five centuries, from the earliest operas to newly-commissioned world premieres, working in collaboration with the world's finest singers and creatives, alongside The Orchestra of Scottish Opera and choruses. Recent accolades include a South Bank Sky Arts Award, a Scottish Award for New Music, Sunday Herald Culture Awards and a Herald Angel, as well as a 2020 RPS Award.

The Company tours extensively across Scotland, from the largest-scale theatres to the smallest of rural venues, to ensure we are within reach of as many of our country's very dispersed population as possible. Our specially-adapted 40-foot long trailer brings ‘Pop-up Opera’ performances to thousands of people each year in a range of inspiring and unexpected community locations. This represents the most extensive touring programme of any opera company in Europe and is a much-valued contribution to Scotland’s cultural and artistic life, particularly in remote and island communities.

The Company’s Education and Outreach programme, which celebrates 50 years in 2021, includes an annual Primary Schools Tour, bringing upper primary-aged children the opportunity to perform their own specially-commissioned piece, alongside three professional singers. Around 120 schools and 9,000 pupils take part each year.

Scottish Opera aims to be inclusive and affordable through availability of free and cheap tickets, as well as performances offering audio description, and specially-devised shorter access performances.

Scottish Opera is core funded by The Scottish Government