

Investec Opera Holland Park

2017

Inspire Review



**"There are so many
orchestras and operas
in London but I now know
that this one is for me."**

Opera for Thought Participant

The output of the educational and outreach departments of opera and theatre companies continues to be at the forefront of discussion in the arts world.

Questions of value, quality and the difference it makes are vital to *Inspire*. Because of the unique nature of the development of Investec Opera Holland Park, namely our history as the only opera company in the UK to have been owned by a local authority, the work we do has always focused on direct social impact, rather than a 'tick box' of wider organisational goals. The outreach work started because everyone in the company wanted to do it. This remains the case.

We continue to work on a diverse and varied programme of events within the community. Where we always stand out from the crowd is in our willingness to take on large and complex projects alongside small, bespoke projects that affect only a handful of people. This is a major strength of ours. If we believe a project will make a substantial difference to someone's life, we will consider doing it.

Inspire and everything it stands for is central to what Opera Holland Park believes in.

This review covers just a selection of the range of *Inspire* projects we have undertaken in 2017, exploring their aims, reach and transformative results.

As always, we would like to thank the incredible generosity of the individual and corporate supporters, trusts and foundations who enable this project to exist, most notably Investec Wealth & Investment, Ofenheim Charitable Trust, Barchester Charitable Foundation, A4 Altruistic and Marsh Christian Trust.

Thank you.

James Clutton
Director of Opera



2016-17 in numbers



15
Individual
projects

11
London
boroughs

39 Organisations

 **2892** Free & discounted tickets

 **30** Free tickets to every show

 **67** Subsidised tickets to every show

2016-17 *Inspire* Aims

To bring opera to the widest possible audience

To improve access to opera

To enable people from all backgrounds to experience, discover and participate in opera

To use opera to benefit the wellbeing of those living with dementia

Taking opera out into the community

2016 and 2017 saw Opera Holland Park singers take opera to community hubs, churches, sheltered housing and social centres to engage, entertain and bring people together through music.

We arrange for OHP singers and répétiteurs to visit these local venues to perform up-close and exciting opera concerts. With maximum audience participation, the concerts often include tea and refreshments afterwards and are a great way to help overcome social isolation and exclusion for participants.

Bringing opera free of charge to those who may otherwise have been isolated from social activities encourages a greater sense of wellbeing. *Inspire's* free public concerts have taken place throughout the year in partnership with AgeUK Kensington & Chelsea, Salvation Army and St Cuthbert's Day Centre.

Above: Creativity and Wellbeing concert with AgeUK

Top right: Night at the Proms performance with Salvation Army

Bottom right: Viva l'Italia! concert at sheltered housing, Evelyn Fox Court



About Inspire

Created in 2010, *Inspire* is dedicated to working with the community to embrace, engage and enrich the lives of all. We are fortunate to work with people from all backgrounds, welcoming everyone into the Opera Holland Park family as equals.



"Opera Holland Park's singing was superb, as ever. But the best thing for me was meeting so many friends and acquaintances – all so happy and having a wonderful time."

Concerts in the Community participant



1145

People engaged
in total



10

Public
Concerts

950

People

6

Sheltered
Housing
Concerts
=

137

People





Improving access to opera

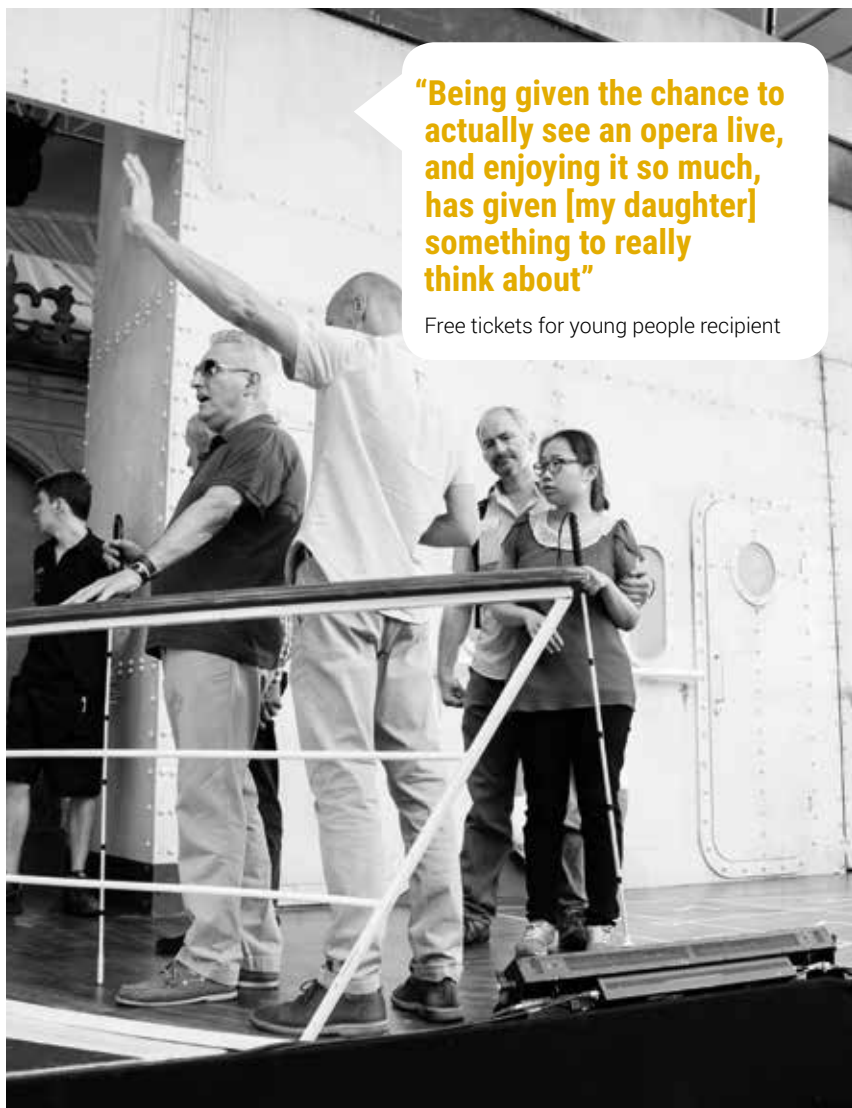
Opera Holland Park aims to make opera and our theatre in Holland Park accessible to all. In 2017, our four hugely successful ticket schemes have enabled almost 3000 people to watch a main-stage opera for free, for £18 or through our 2-4-1 package for Emergency Services staff.

Young people aged 7-18 years old and their accompanying adult, as well as those over the age of 60, were able to apply for free tickets for the operas online, by post or by phone. Once all tickets were allocated, £18 INSPIRE tickets became available to book online, selling out in just a few hours. People working in the Emergency Services were also invited to take part in a new 2-4-1 ticket scheme, where tickets were available to purchase on the night of the performance.

Opera Holland Park's two accessible performances allowed almost 100 people to experience a relaxed and accessible environment in which to enjoy the opera. This included a relaxed performance of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* accommodating children with special needs and, crucially, their families, to a theatre performance where those needs were accounted for, and an audio-described performance of *Don Giovanni* for those with visual impairments. Following the success of these two schemes, we are working towards becoming London's first dementia-friendly opera company in 2018, meaning that our theatre is accessible and adapted for those living with memory loss.

Above: Alice's adventures in Kensington Memorial Park with Rugby Portobello Trust

Right: Touch tour of set at audio-described performance of *Don Giovanni* © Kate Davis



"Being given the chance to actually see an opera live, and enjoying it so much, has given [my daughter] something to really think about"

Free tickets for young people recipient

 **939**

Free tickets to
main-stage operas

 **1953**

Reduced-price tickets
to main-stage operas

2

Accessible
performances
=

 **96** 
People

2988 
People engaged
in total



Bridging the gap

Opera Holland Park firmly believes that people from all backgrounds should be able to experience, discover and participate in opera.

In 2016-17 we worked with:

- Younger audiences and school groups (ages 7-14) through *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* educational workshops
- Newly arrived unaccompanied minors through our *Refuge in Harmony* project with the Red Cross
- SEN (special educational needs) children through *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* multi-sensory workshops
- People from the general public at our annual Open Day

Opening our doors to people who might otherwise feel excluded from opera has allowed us to welcome and engage new demographics and make Opera Holland Park an accessible and open community hub for everyone to access, no matter what their background.

Above: Alice SEN project performance at Jack Tizard School

Right: Busting moves in *Playlist for Life* at the Open Day

Far right: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* school's workshop with St Mary Abbots Primary School

6 week project working with a
SEN school



Educational
workshops

343
Children
engaged

**"This workshop had a huge
impact on our children,
allowing their imaginations
to really take off!"**

Teacher at *Alice's Adventures in
Wonderland* educational workshop

41%

Of participants
from socially
or economically
disadvantaged
backgrounds

1

Workshop with
children in care

50
people

1

Workshop with blind
and partially sighted
children from RNIB



5

Workshops with
refugees

107
People

1

Free Open Day

1000+
People

1384 

People engaged in total



Opera & Dementia

Working with Playlist for Life, Resonate Arts and AgeUK, Opera Holland Park uses music to help ease the symptoms of dementia and bring a better quality of life to those living with the disease.

Music connects to memories deemed lost to dementia. Through our projects, *Playlist for Life* and *Opera for Thought*, Opera Holland Park singers and musicians worked with participants to create musical playlists of memories and explore opera with workshops and musical performances.

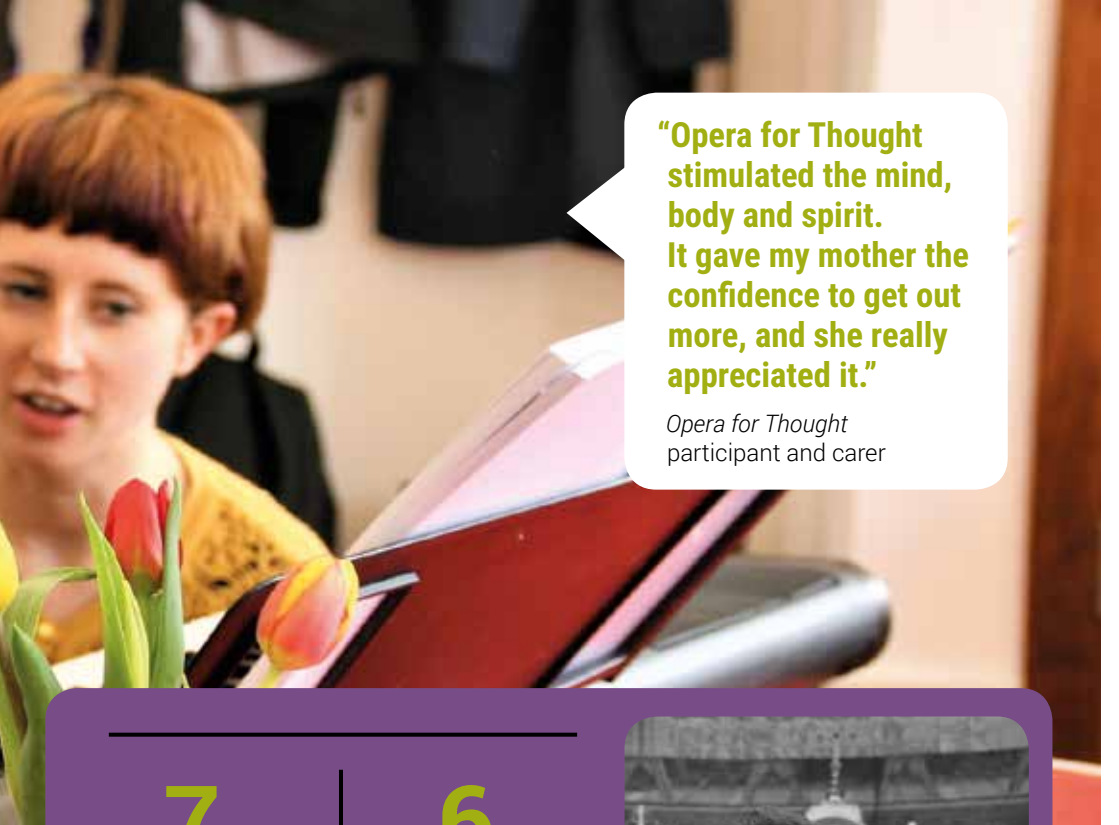
These projects have been increasingly successful, bringing loved ones together through shared memories and helping people living with dementia to enjoy life.

Following the success of these projects, Opera Holland Park's work with people living with dementia will increase in 2018, with the aim of bringing musical aid to all those living with dementia in Kensington and Chelsea by 2022.

Above: Exploring music from *Don Giovanni* in Opera for Thought

Right: Playlist Live at AgeUK Memory Café

Back cover: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* workshop with young refugees and Fairbeats



**"Opera for Thought
stimulated the mind,
body and spirit.
It gave my mother the
confidence to get out
more, and she really
appreciated it."**

*Opera for Thought
participant and carer*

7

**Opera for
Thought
events**

20

People

6

**Playlist for Life
sessions
& concerts**

176

People

196

**People engaged
in total**





Looking forward... 2017-18

500

People engaged
in opera & dementia
projects

50

Refugees
to create a
performance
piece as part of
*Refuge in
Harmony*

800 

Children and young
people to attend the
inaugural Schools'
Matinee of
La traviata

30

Concerts in
the Community

 **1000**

Free tickets to
main-stage operas

AD

Audio-described
performance of
La traviata