



Opera Holland Park introduces the 2021 Season, including casting and a reimagined auditorium

Press Release

A breath of fresh air

Working with the set designer takis, Opera Holland Park has reimagined the stage and auditorium of its theatre. The new dynamic and exciting performance space provides maximum safety for audiences and artists under the company's iconic canopy roof.

Capacity will be reduced from 1000 to 400 seats this season, using individual chairs that can be moved according to the numbers in each household 'bubble', to enable social distancing and increase step free access.

Sustainable materials in takis's designs reflect the natural beauty of the theatre's setting in Holland Park and a programme of five operas in which nature plays a central role. The Royal Philharmonic Society Award-winning City of London Sinfonia returns as resident orchestra.

Five full productions mark the return of live opera to Holland Park in 2021

To celebrate Opera Holland Park's silver jubilee and the tenth anniversary of the company's Young Artists scheme, the season opens on 1 June with ***The Marriage of Figaro*** (sung in Italian). Former OHP Young Artists Elizabeth Karani (Susanna), Nardus Williams (Countess) and Julien Van Mellaerts (Count) lead the cast, joined by Ross Ramgobin as Figaro. The production will be conducted by George Jackson and directed by Oliver Platt.

Rodula Gaitanou's acclaimed 2018 production of ***La traviata*** returns in revival, reuniting conductor Matthew Kofi Waldren with Lauren Fagan (Violetta), Matteo Desole (Alfredo), and Stephen Gadd (Germont).

The second new production of the 2021 Season is ***The Cunning Little Vixen*** (sung in English). Stephen Barlow, who has previously directed *Tosca* and *Flight* for OHP, returns to Holland Park, with Jennifer France (Vixen) and Julia Sporsén (Fox), last seen together at OHP in the 2018 production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Jessica Cottis conducts.

Julia Burbach directs a new production of Mascagni's romantic comedy, ***L'amico Fritz***, alongside the Italian conductor, Beatrice Venezi. Matteo Lippi (Fritz Kobus) and Katie Bird (Suzel) lead the cast.

A co-production of ***The Pirates of Penzance*** with Charles Court Opera, directed by John Savournin, and starring Savournin, Yvonne Howard and Richard Burkhard, originally scheduled for 2020, closes the main season.



Nurturing young talent

The number of Young Artists Performances this season has been increased to four performances of *The Marriage of Figaro*, conducted by Lada Valešová and directed by Rebecca Meltzer. The 2020 Young Artists whose debuts were cancelled last summer, Charlotte Badham (Cherubino), Hannah Bennett (Marcellina) and Guy Withers (Basilio/Don Curzio), make their belated debuts with the 2021 cohort of Young Artists.

Opera Holland Park is also delighted to host British Youth Opera in August 2021, while The Royal Ballet School's return to the theatre is eagerly expected in 2022. British Youth Opera's guest season at Opera Holland Park includes new productions of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* and Rossini's *L'occasione fa il ladro*.

Working closely with the community

Despite a 60% reduction in capacity, Opera Holland Park has kept its annual percentage of free and accessible tickets. This year also sees the introduction of a programme of four Discovery Matinees. These performances specifically welcome people who want to try opera out for the first time in a relaxed environment, and those who love opera but find the normal theatre-going experience inaccessible. This year there will also be two Schools Matinee performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* on 16 and 22 June.

Opera Holland Park's International Opera Award-winning outreach and education *Inspire* team is already planning activities to complement *The Cunning Little Vixen*, starting with the Clever Little Fox OperaUNITY session for families with children under the age of five or those with special educational needs, which takes place on Friday 11 June at 10am.

Opera for Thought, an *Inspire* project designed for those living with dementia, will focus on *The Marriage of Figaro*, and workshops will be available to those schools joining us for the Schools Matinees.

Full details below:

***The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart**

New production by Opera Holland Park, with City of London Sinfonia and the Opera Holland Park Chorus

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

1, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26 and 28 June at 7.15pm

Young Artist Performances on 14 June at 7.15pm and 26 June at 2pm

Discovery Matinee and Relaxed Performance on 20 June at 2pm

Schools Matinee Performances on 16 and 22 June at 12pm

Conductor George Jackson

Director Oliver Platt

Set Design by takis, applied on Cordelia Chisholm's set for *La traviata*.



Costume Design takis
Lighting Designer Rory Beaton
Movement Director Caitlin Fretwell-Walsh

Count Almaviva Julien Van Mellaerts
Countess Almaviva Nardus Williams
Susanna Elizabeth Karani
Figaro Ross Ramgobin
Cherubino Samantha Price
Marcellina Victoria Simmonds
Bartolo James Cleverton
Basilio/Don Curzio Daniel Norman
Barbarina Claire Lees
Antonio Henry Grant Kerswell

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***The Marriage of Figaro* Young Artists Performances, including Schools Matinees**

Associate Conductor Rebecca Meltzer
Associate Director Lada Valešová
Répétiteur Thomas Ang

Count Almaviva Jacob Phillips
Countess Almaviva Sian Dicker
Susanna Charlotte Bowden
Figaro Jolyon Loy
Cherubino Charlotte Badham
Marcellina Hannah Bennett
Bartolo Alex Jones
Basilio/Don Curzio Guy Withers
Barbarina Isabelle Peters

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***La traviata* by Verdi**

Revival of Opera Holland Park's 2018 production, with City of London Sinfonia and the Opera Holland Park Chorus

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 23, 25 and 29 June at 7.30pm
Matinee performance on 27 June, 5pm
Discovery Matinee and Relaxed Performance on 19 June at 2pm

Conductor Matthew Kofi Waldren
Director Rodula Gaitanou
Designer Cordelia Chisholm
Lighting Designer Simon Corder
Choreographer Steve Elias



Violetta Lauren Fagan (Alison Langer on 7, 15, 19 and 23 June)
Alfredo Matteo Desole (Stephen Aviss on 7, 15, 19 and 23 June)
Giorgio Germont Stephen Gadd
Flora Laura Woods
Annina Ellie Edmonds
Gastone Michael Bradley
Barone Douphol Nicholas Garrett
Marchese d'Obigny David Stephenson
Dottore Grenvil Henry Grant Kerswell
Giuseppe Robert Jenkins
Flora's Servant Ian Massa-Harris
Commissioner Alistair Sutherland

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The Cunning Little Vixen by Janáček

New production by Opera Holland Park, with City of London Sinfonia and the Opera Holland Park Chorus

Sung in English with English surtitles

13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 28 and 30 July at 7.30pm
Discovery Matinee and Relaxed Performance on 25 July at 2pm

Conductor Jessica Cottis
Director Stephen Barlow
Designer Andrew D Edwards
Lighting Designer Rory Beaton
Choreographer/Movement Director Sarita Piotrowski

The Vixen Jennifer France (Harriet Eyley on 25 July)
The Fox Julia Sporsén
Forester Grant Doyle
Forester's Wife & Owl Ann Taylor
Schoolmaster & Mosquito Charne Rochford
Priest & Badger John Savournin
Poacher Chuma Sijeqa/Ashley Riches
Chocholka Harriet Eyley
Lapák, the dog Natasha Agarwal
Jay & Rooster Grace Nyandoro
Woodpecker Chloë Pardoe
Innkeeper John Wood
Innkeeper's wife Yolanda Grant-Thompson

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***L'amico Fritz* by Mascagni**

New production by Opera Holland Park, with City of London Sinfonia and the Opera Holland Park Chorus

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

16, 20, 22, 24, 27, 29 and 31 July at 8pm

Discovery Matinee and Relaxed Performance on 18 July at 2pm

Conductor Beatrice Venezi

Director Julia Burbach

Designer Alyson Cummins

Lighting Designer Rory Beaton

Fritz Kobus Matteo Lippi

Suzel Katie Bird

David Paul Carey Jones

Beppe Kezia Bienek

Hanezò Themba Mvula

Federico Mike Bradley

Caterina Rose Stachniewska

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***The Pirates of Penzance* by Gilbert and Sullivan**

Co-production by Opera Holland Park and Charles Court Opera (www.charlescourtopera.com)

Sung in English with English surtitles

3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 August at 7.30pm

Matinee performance on 7 August at 2pm

Conductor David Eaton

Director John Savournin

Designer Rachel Szmukler

Lighting Designer Jake Wiltshire

Choreographer Damian Czarnecki

Major-General Stanley Richard Burkhard

The Pirate King John Savournin

Samuel Frederick Long

Frederic Peter Kirk

Sergeant of Police Trevor Eliot Bowes

Mabel Daisy Brown

Edith Alys Roberts

Kate Sophie Dicks

Isabel Lotte Betts-Dean

Ruth Yvonne Howard

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Additional performances in the 2021 Season

Opera Holland Park are pleased to share details of additional events to complement the 2021 Season, featuring freelance artists who are associated with the company:

- Canteloube's *Chants d'Auvergne* with soprano Anna Patalong, conductor Sonia Ben Santamaria, wind quintet and harp (18 July, 7pm). [More info here.](#)
- Resound! with London Oriana Choir, Dominic Ellis Peckham and four of the Opera Holland Park Young Artists (19 July, 7.30pm). [More info here.](#)
- The Opera in Song recital series curated by Julien Van Mellaerts and featuring leading artists including pianists Perez, Ella O'Neill and Simon Lepper, singers Fleur Barron, Nicky Spence, Anush Hovhannisyanyan and Nardus Williams, and three of the 2021 OHP Young Artists, Charlotte Badham, Charlotte Bowden and Isabelle Peters (25, 26 and 27 July, times vary). [More info here.](#)
- Fifth Door Ensemble's performance of *Das Lied von der Erde* with Jennifer Johnston and Charne Rochford (17 August, 7.30pm). [More info here.](#)
- *Peter and the Wolf* with Waterperry Opera Festival (24 July, 11am and 2pm). [More info here.](#)

Discovery Matinees

The Discovery Matinees welcome people who want to try opera out for the first time in a relaxed environment, and those who love opera but find the normal theatre-going experience inaccessible.

What's on offer:

- Free tickets – many of the tickets for the Discovery Matinees will be allocated free as part of our Under 18s and Over 65s ticket schemes. Find out more about the schemes [here](#).
- Subsidised tickets – ticket prices are reduced for the Discovery Matinees, to let you give opera a try without breaking the bank. Prices range from £22–50, with half price access tickets available for disabled people and a companion or carer.
- Relaxed Performance – every Discovery Matinee will be adapted to suit people who find it difficult to follow the usual conventions of theatre behaviour, and those who prefer a more relaxed environment.
- Audio-description – Discovery Matinees will be audio-described for blind and partially-sighted audiences, with additional commentary explaining the action on stage, including singers' body language, expressions and movements.
- Weekend afternoon performances – we hope a 2pm start to each Discovery Matinee will allow families to fall in love with opera together.

Dates and times:

La traviata – 19 June, 2pm

The Marriage of Figaro – 20 June, 2pm

L'amico Fritz – 18 July, 2pm

The Cunning Little Vixen – 25 July, 2pm



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Booking Information

Tickets for the 2021 Season are now on sale. Tickets cost £22-£110.

www.operahollandpark.com

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Notes to Editors

Images and other media

A short trailer introducing the new theatre can be accessed [here](#).

Artist impressions of plans for the new auditorium and space can be downloaded [here](#).

This year's promotional artwork by illustrator Lucy Sharp can be downloaded [here](#).

OHP Inspire

Opera Holland Park's International Opera Award-winning education and outreach project, *Inspire*, is continuing to work throughout the current health crisis with local partners including Age UK, using digital technology to reach isolated communities.

Recent projects include a daily series of virtual Music Lessons for Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils, and a newly announced series of OperaUNITY online family workshops which will run monthly during spring and summer. More information about Inspire can be found [here](#).

Website and social media

www.operahollandpark.com

www.facebook.com/operahollandpark

www.twitter.com/operahollandpk

www.instagram.com/operahollandpark

www.youtube.com/operahollandpark

Contacts for further information

Chloe Bridgen, Head of Marketing chloe.bridgen@operahollandpark.com 07713 326006

Anna Picard, Head of Communications and Insight anna.picard@operahollandpark.com 07710 355918

Philippa Peall, Marketing Officer philippa.peall@operahollandpark.com