



# Opera Holland Park releases a new online production of William Walton's *The Bear*

## Press Release

Monday 1 November

"If there's going to be equality between the sexes, then let us have it!"

An angry creditor, a reclusive widow, a loyal servant and a pair of pistols are the ingredients for an unlikely romance in William Walton's adaptation of Chekhov's comedy.

Filmed and recorded live on location in Stone House over two days in April 2021, Walton's witty one-act opera reunites the cast and creative team of Opera Holland Park's acclaimed 2019 production of *Il segreto di Susanna*.

Conducted by John Andrews, direct by John Wilkie, designed by takis and filmed by Simon Wall, *The Bear* stars mezzo-soprano Clare Presland, baritone Richard Burkhard and bass-baritone John Savournin. Also on screen are pianist Fran Hills, violinist Ruth Funnell, bassoonist Christopher Rawley, harpist Stephanie Beck and percussionist Glyn Matthews of Opera Holland Park's resident orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia.

Making full use of the Georgian interior of Stone House, *The Bear* draws its audience into an argument that becomes an affair as Yelena Popova (Presland) and Grigory Smirnov (Burkhard) fall furiously in love, to the astonishment of Popova's retainer and protector, Luka (Savournin). Laced with allusions to Massenet, Strauss, Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky, Walton's witty 1967 score sparkles in this chamber reduction by Jonathan Lyness.

*The Bear* will be screened every night at 7.30pm from 9–13 November on the Opera Holland Park website on a 'Pay What you Feel' basis.

For press access ahead of the public screenings, please contact Chloe Bridgen at [chloe.bridgen@operahollandpark.com](mailto:chloe.bridgen@operahollandpark.com).

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## Notes to Editors

### Links and images

To download images from the film, visit:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/w0lxm377qiwluyk/AADhcOLrNLWgOKBysh\\_03l7Oa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/w0lxm377qiwluyk/AADhcOLrNLWgOKBysh_03l7Oa?dl=0)

To view the trailer, visit: <https://youtu.be/3a2x-aOnWyo>

### 2022 Season

Opera Holland Park's 2022 Season will open 29 May 2022, with new productions of *Eugene Onegin* and *Carmen*.

The second half of the 2022 Season will feature the UK premiere of Mark Adamo's 1998 opera, *Little Women*, adapted from Louisa May Alcott's classic coming-of-age novel. Postponed from 2020, Delius's verismo opera *Margot la Rouge* will be performed in a double bill with Puccini's *Le villi*.

The 2022 Season will conclude with a co-production between Opera Holland Park and Charles Court Opera of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The City of London Sinfonia returns as resident orchestra for all five productions.

Opera Holland Park continues to nurture young talent. The 2021 Young Artists production will be of *Eugene Onegin*.

Opera in Song, a recital series exploring the characters and storylines of featured works through songs by different composers, will also return in the 2022 Season.

Casting and further details of the 2022 Season will be announced soon.

Press images of productions, as well as imagery of the auditorium, can be found [here](#).

### Website and social media

[www.operahollandpark.com](http://www.operahollandpark.com)

[www.facebook.com/operahollandpark](https://www.facebook.com/operahollandpark)

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[www.youtube.com/operahollandpark](https://www.youtube.com/operahollandpark)

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