

PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 27 April

OperaUpClose and Manchester Camerata present

The Flying Dutchman

From the SS Great Britain in Bristol to a former turbine factory in Liverpool, a radically re-imagined Wagner masterpiece tours to waterside venues

Words by Glyn Maxwell | Orchestration by Laura Bowler in association with Robin Wallington
| Directed by Lucy Bradley

Touring, Wednesday 28 June - Sunday 23 July

PRESS NIGHT Turner Sims Southampton, 30 June 7.30pm

LONDON PRESS NIGHT Grand Junction, 13 July 7.30pm

"Compelling... Striking music theatre of considerable integrity and force", ★★★★★ *Guardian* on OperaUpClose's *La Traviata*)

"Britain's most adventurous orchestra" *The Times* on Manchester Camerata

@OperaUpClose | #OUCDutchman | www.operaupclose.com

Bringing the maritime opera to audiences in unconventional performance venues at waterside locations, award-winning OperaUpClose in partnership with recent RPS Award winning Manchester Camerata reinvigorate Wagner's classic with an English libretto by poet and novelist Glyn Maxwell and an 8-piece chamber orchestration by Laura Bowler. *The Flying Dutchman* is a haunting political tale exploring the displacement of people and the psychology and realities of living on an island with hardening borders, bringing an urgent and contemporary relevance to the fable of the ships captain cursed to roam the sea forever. Opening at Turner Sims in Southampton, *The Flying Dutchman* will then tour across the UK to extraordinary performance spaces in waterside locations finishing at live music venue Invisible Wind Factory, Liverpool.

The production steers from traditional 'end-on' performance, breaking the fourth wall and immersing the audience directly in the world of the story. It dismantles the traditional barriers between pit, stage and orchestra with all performers, instrumentalists and singers, having equal agency as storytellers. It includes pre-recorded voices from a national network of community choirs, a virtuosic chamber orchestra and a principal cast of internationally- renowned opera singers.

Artistic Director Flora McIntosh said, "This Dutchman is a meeting of classic material with strong, contemporary voices creating a powerful dialogue between the old and the new. Reconceived as a tale of paranoia, propaganda and people smuggling, performed in places and spaces that connect directly to the material, this production takes a highly theatrical and innovative approach to musical storytelling."

Thematically linked and running adjacent to *The Flying Dutchman* is *We two were lovers – The Sea and I*. This powerful musical and poetic journey will address similar themes around the movement of people, island mentality and humanity's complex love affair with the sea. This captivating psychological drama is centred around Toria Banks's new, contemporary version of *Arianna a Naxos*, Haydn's dramatic cantata which tells the story of one of the most tragic figures of Greek mythology Princess Ariadne. The impactful combination of music and spoken word about a troubled young woman's psyche as she struggles with the boundaries between love and delusion will be performed in English by a singer and a harpist with additional music by Wagner, Dvorak and Rebecca Clarke, poetry by Emily Dickinson and Carol Ann Duffy and curated and directed by OperaUpClose

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MOBIUS.

The Lower Vestry
St George's Bloomsbury
6-7 Little Russell St
London WC1A 2HR

Artistic Director Flora McIntosh, *We two were lovers – The Sea and I* opens at Quay Arts, Isle of Wight on 4 June and will then tour the country also taking in waterside venues culminating at Grand Junction in London.

OperaUpClose is a national touring opera company, rooted in theatre with partnership and innovation at its heart. Newly based in the South West, and working from the dynamic cultural hub MAST, Southampton, OperaUpClose are making opera of the highest quality with and for everyone, improving the availability, relevance and reach of opera by taking high-quality, affordable productions to places and people across the UK not otherwise well-served by the arts.

OperaUpClose distills the essence of classic operas into new, contemporary works with their own artistic integrity and excellence, creating legacy and impact by populating the repertoire with new commissions alongside bold interpretations of established material. The intimate scale is an active artistic choice, strengthening a commitment to give all performers equal agency as storytellers and breaking down barriers between pit, stage and audience. OperaUpClose actively support new voices within the art-form with paid training programmes for emerging producers, directors, conductors, writers and performers through our Young Associate Artist Scheme and create work made with and for very young children, engaging a new generation in the power of musical storytelling. OperaUpClose are committed to creating opera as an essential part of a diverse theatrical landscape nationwide.

Manchester Camerata prides itself on an original combination of craft and courage. With 5 star reviews from *The Independent*, as well as the accolade of being hailed 'Britain's most adventurous orchestra' (*The Times*), Camerata is as comfortable opening Glastonbury Festival as it is recording Mozart at the highest level. They are passionate about the traditional craft of an orchestra and how it is evolving. By excelling artistically and having the courage to prioritise bold, compelling and diverse projects, Camerata makes a positive difference not only to their audiences but to the health and wellbeing of their communities as well. To achieve this artistic excellence and forward-thinking ethos, collaboration is at the heart of everything Camerata does. Led by its visionary Music Director, Gábor Takács-Nagy (who considers music to be 'spiritual medicine'), the orchestra collaborates with diverse international artists, from Martha Argerich to New Order and Aziz Ibrahim to Lewis Capaldi. Their long-standing artistic partnerships with Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Jess Gillam and AMC Gospel Choir sit alongside performances and tours with eminent artists such as Pinchas Zuckerman, Arvo Pärt, Yefim Bronfman, Javier Perianes, Istvan Vardai and Leticia Moreno amongst others.

Samantha McShane, Creative Director of Manchester Camerata said, "As an orchestra that prides itself on being relentlessly pioneering, we have found the perfect partner in OperaUpClose, who share many of the same values. This new, bold re-interpretation of *The Flying Dutchman* is a fantastic way for us to develop artistically as well as finding new ways to connect audiences"

Glyn Maxwell is a prolific and celebrated writer of poetry, plays, novels and libretti. He has won several awards for his poetry, including the Somerset Maugham Prize, the E. M. Forster Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. His work has been shortlisted for the Costa, Forward and T. S. Eliot Prizes. Many of his plays have been staged in the UK and USA, including *The Lifeblood*, which won British Theatre Guide's Best Play Award at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2004, and *Liberty*, which premiered at Shakespeare's Globe in 2008. Glyn's critical guidebook *On Poetry* was described by Hugo Williams in *The Spectator* as "a modern classic". In his "brilliantly unclassifiable" (*The Guardian*) sequel, *Drinks With Dead Poets: The Autumn Term*, several deceased poets appear as characters, their speech taken verbatim from their writings. The rights to his epic poem based on the Flying Dutchman legend, *Time's Fool*, have been bought by Fox Searchlight for development into a feature film. Glyn's opera libretti include *The Lion's Face* (for Elena Langer), *Seven Angels* (for Luke Bedford), *The Firework Maker's Daughter* and *Nothing* (for David Bruce) and, for OperaUpClose in 2017, *The Magic Flute*.

Laura Bowler, described as "a triple threat composer-performer provocatrice" (*The Arts Desk*) is a composer, vocalist and Artistic Director specialising in theatre, multidisciplinary work and opera. She has been

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commissioned across the globe by ensembles and orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, ROH2, Opera Holland Park, The Opera Group, Manchester Camerata, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini (Canada), Ensemble Phace (Austria), Ensemble Linea (France) and Omega Ensemble (Australia).

Laura said "Working with Manchester Camerata we've found new ways to incorporate the instrumentalists into the theatre of the work that will connect with audiences new to opera. At its heart this project taps into my desire to dismantle establishments and our presumptions of what something should be. We are in a new place in society that we have to acknowledge in art."

Lucy Bradley is a director whose work ranges from large scale Opera houses and regional theatres to site specific locations and drama schools. She trained in Drama at Middlesex University, graduating with a degree specialising in Directing. As a practitioner, inclusion and empowerment are at the heart of her work and Lucy has often worked with marginalised or hard to reach groups. She has led projects for pupil referral unites and refugee groups and worked with vulnerable young people and those at risk of exclusion. Her credits as a director include; Blank Canvas (OperaUpClose); No Sound Ever Dies (Surrey Arts at Brooklands Museum); Eugene Onegin (Arcola Theatre); Belongings (Glyndebourne); The Finding (Mahogany Opera Group); Recital 1 (British Museum and Gemäldagalerie, Berlin); Found and Lost (Corinthia Hotel); Tycho's Dream and Into the Harbour (Glyndebourne Education); Street Scene (Revival Director for The Opera Group); The Last Pearly (Rich Mix); The Wind in the Willows and Grimm Tales (ALRA); An Ode to My Sisters (Regional Tour); The Onomatopoeia Society (Gilded Balloon, Edinburgh). As Associate Director, credits; Street Scene (Teatro Real Madrid, Köln and Monte Carlo).

The Flying Dutchman

Running Time: 135 minutes (plus interval) | Suitable for ages 12+

Cast and Creatives

Orchestration Laura Bowler in association with Robin Wallington

Director Lucy Bradley

Music Director Timothy Burke

Set & Costume Designer Ana Inés Jabares-Pita

Lighting Designer Neill Brinkworth

Starlight Philippa Boyle

Helm/Mari Carolyn Holt

Players and chorus from Manchester Camerata

Libretto Glyn Maxwell

Associate Music Director Robin Wallington

Associate Designer Anna Kelsey

Sound Matthew Fairclough

Captain Dee Timothy Dawkins

Mariner Pauls Putnins

For OperaUpClose

Artistic Director Flora McIntosh

Executive Producer Ally Rosser

Company Manager Jane Ryan

Listings information

Touring 28 June to 23 July

28 June – 1 July

Turner Sims Southampton

University of Southampton, SO17 1BJ

Weds, Fri, Sat, 7:30pm | £25.00 (£35 Pay It Forward, £15 concs)

www.turnersims.co.uk | 023 8059 5151

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- 4 – 5 July** **SS Great Britain, Bristol**
Brunel One, Great Eastern Hall, Brunel's SS Great Britain, Great Western Dockyard,
Bristol BS1 6YT
7:30pm | £25.00 (£35 Pay It Forward, £15 concs)
www.bristololdvic.org.uk | 023 8059 3105
- 7 – 8 July** **Worthing Pavilion, Worthing**
Marne Parade, Worthing BN11 3PX
7:30pm | £26.50 (£16.50 concs)
www.wtm.uk | 01903 206206
- 12 – 14 July** **Grand Junction, London**
Rowington Close, London W2 5TF
7:30pm | £25.00 (£35 Pay It Forward, £15 concs)
www.grandjunction.org.uk | 020 7266 8258
- 18 – 19 July** **Trinity Market, Hull**
Trinity Indoor Market, Hill HU1 2JH
7:30pm | £25.00 (£15 concs)
www.hulltruck.co.uk | 01482 323 638
- 22 – 23 July** **Invisible Wind Factory, Liverpool**
3 Regent Road, Liverpool L3 7DS
7:30pm | £25.00 (£15 concs)
www.invisiblewindfactory.com | 0151 236 8944

We two were Lovers – The Sea and I

Running Time: 45 minutes (no interval) | Suitable for ages 11+

Cast and Creatives

Curation and direction Flora McIntosh **Woman** Catherine Hooper (singer)

Girl Nicolette Chin (harp)

Listings information

Touring 4 June to 14 July

- 4 June** **Quay Arts, Isle of Wight**
Sea Street, Newport, P030 5BD
Time TBC | Price TBC
www.quayarts.org | 01983 822490
- 16 June** **The Key, Peterborough**
Embankment Road, Peterborough, PE1 1EF
6pm | From £12.50
keytheatre-peterborough.com | 01733 852992
- 18 June** **Trinity Buoy Wharf, London**

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64 Orchard Place, London, E14 0JW
2pm | Price TBC
www.trinitybuoywharf.com | 020 7515 7153

14 July

Grand Junction, London
Rowington Close, London, W2 5TF
1.30pm | Free
www.grandjunction.org.uk | 020 7266 8258

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