



She broke her heart
to save his family

18-27 May 2018 **La
Traviata**



PRESS RELEASE

HGO PRESENTS

LA TRAVIATA by Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Jacksons Lane Theatre, Highgate, London N6 5AA: 18 - 27 May 2018

Stage Director: Sophie Gilpin • Music Director: Sam Evans • With the HGO Orchestra

Sophie Gilpin's sparkling new production of Verdi's masterpiece takes us into a world of extravagant parties and political sex scandals. Drawing inspiration from the era of the 'swinging sixties', Violetta is a socialite and 'it-girl' and Giorgio Germont a politician concerned that his son Alfredo's affair will jeopardise his leadership campaign.

The opera is sung by tomorrow's stars, outstanding young soloists on the threshold of successful careers. The intimate surroundings of Jacksons Lane Theatre help the team to reach the very essence of this poignant drama, animating Verdi's musical evocation of the characters and the emotions which drive them.

Gilpin's vibrant production, performed in Italian with English surtitles and a small orchestra, is designed by Anna Bonomelli who collaborated with her in her five star *Don Giovanni* at the Pleasance Theatre Islington in November last year. Gilpin says "***Traviata* is Verdi at his best. His extraordinary music perfectly captures the complexities of human emotions; he contrasts romance and joy with emotional brutality and despair. This opera is searingly honest, lacking any sickly sentimentality, and is all the more powerful and beautiful for it.**" Music Director Sam Evans is delighted to be conducting this wonderful score for HGO this May, and to work once again with Gilpin.

For further information, please contact

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Performances of *La Traviata*:

Evenings at 7.30 pm – May 18, 19, & 22-26

Matinées at 4.00pm: Sundays May 20 & 27

Matinée at 2.30pm: Saturday May 26

**Tickets: (unreserved) £27 (Premium Seats) £22 (General Admission)
(Concessions £20 – May 18, 19)**

Student Tickets half price May 18th – 24th only

Box Office: 0800 411 8881

Online: www.hgo.org.uk/tickets

Sophie Gilpin is Artistic Director of HeadFirst Productions and Co-Founder of SWAP'ra: Supporting Women and Parents in Opera. Most recently she was the Assistant Director to Tim Albery on his production of *Madama Butterfly* at Opera North. Upcoming work includes the SWAP'ra Gala at Opera Holland Park (Co-Producer/Co-Director) and *The Prometheus Revolution* for Fulham Opera at the Arcola Theatre's Grimeborne Festival. Recent work includes *A Festival of Sex, Love and Death* (Producer, Pleasance Theatre Islington/HeadFirst Productions); *Don Giovanni* (Director, Pleasance Theatre/HeadFirst Productions); *Die Fledermaus* (Celebrate Voice); *La Bohème* (LOST Theatre & Trinity Theatre/HeadFirst Productions); Gounod's *Romeo & Juliet* (Rose Theatre Kingston/Riverside Opera); and *Tosca* (tour including Hall for Cornwall). Sophie has also directed numerous pieces of new writing at venues including the Park Theatre, Theatre 503 and The Firestation Arts Centre in Windsor. Highlights include Katherine Armitage's *Duet* for Re:Sound Music Theatre (commissioned by The Oxford Lieder Festival); *Solitude*, the winner of the Kenneth Branagh Drama Award; *And Then He Came Back* and *Him, Her & Us* both at the Park Theatre (Park200). Promenade productions include *A Dickensian Christmas* and *Narnia on the Pantiles*.

Sam Evans enjoys a career as a professional baritone, conductor and singing teacher. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music, and then at the Royal College of Music International Opera School, graduating with the Tagore Gold Medal. He has performed as a soloist at the BBC Proms, the Opéra Comique in Paris, and Sydney Opera House. He was formerly Music Director of Riverside Opera, conducting productions of Bizet's *Carmen* and Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*. He is Music Director of Battersea Choral Society, Teddington Choral Society and several other choirs in London. He was formerly Choral Director at the University of Reading, and currently directs choirs at Kingston University. He has acted as Chorus Master for the BBC Singers, the Swedish Radio Choir and the Monteverdi Choir. He is a Head of Vocal Studies at Highgate School.

HGO, founded in 1990, is one of Britain's leading training opera companies; committed to the development of young singers, it stages two productions each year. Its consistently high musical, vocal and productions standards make HGO an important part of the artistic life of North London, and it is regularly nominated as a finalist for the Off West End (Offies) Award.