

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN OPERA

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Charity No. 1092649

UPSTAIRS AT THE GATEHOUSE, HIGHGATE, LONDON N6 4BD



Best Opera

***DON GIOVANNI* By W.A.Mozart**

Production

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

Dramaturgy and Concept developed by Genevieve Raghu

Translation by Benjamin Hamilton

November 6th to 15th, 2015

Winner 2013

Finalist 2014/2015

Stage Director: Genevieve Raghu • Music Director Jonathon Heyward

Principal Music Director: Oliver-John Ruthven • With Musica Poetica London

November 6th to 15th, at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in Highgate, award-winning Hampstead Garden Opera will present a new production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in an exciting new concept set in modern day Oxford University, developed by Genevieve Raghu, with a new English translation by Benjamin Hamilton. The Music Director will be Jonathon Heyward, who has just won the highly prestigious Besançon International Competition for Young Conductors.

"Don Giovanni still has astonishing relevance today. We live in a time where our needs and wants can be met instantly; we need only to swipe left or right on our phones to organise the next intimate encounter. In our modernised production, dating websites and social media put thousands of women at serial womaniser Don Giovanni's fingertips."

"Don Giovanni is highly respected, highly charismatic and incredibly charming. In our production, he's a 'Don' at Oxford University, and cloaks himself in all the respectability that it affords him: an effective disguise for the seedier side of his life." The themes of honour and reputation that weigh heavily in the opera may carry less punch in our progressive modern times, but within the private clubs of Oxford University their influence is still to be found, powerfully concentrated. It's an ancient institution within a modern world, where name and prestige still carry huge social weight, and that's why we thought it a perfect setting for our production" says Director Genevieve Raghu.

"In addition to this, Oxford boasts an association with the crime drama inspired by Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse franchise. Fans of the genre will already be familiar with the atmosphere of upper-class intrigue and champagne-soaked criminality that Dexter created, and our Don Giovanni fits perfectly into his world. We will reinvent Don Giovanni for a new generation, in recognisable surroundings but with complete fidelity to the core values of the legend."

Genevieve Raghu, a graduate from the University of Warwick, is a director passionate about creating new associations around opera. She looks for ways to make the art form, which many see as old fashioned, more attractive and enticing to younger audiences. Genevieve recently founded the company Into Opera and is developing their first project, a children's opera, with composer Patrick Hawes and the Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts.

Jonathon Heyward has been the Assistant Music Director for HGO since our Autumn 2014 production of *Albert Herring*, and conducted one of the performances of our highly acclaimed *Xerxes* earlier this year. Jonathon enjoys a versatile career as an operatic and orchestral conductor and is looking forward to being the Musical Director for a full HGO production for the first time. After competing in the 2013 Blue Danube Opera Conducting Competition, Jonathon became the youngest semi-finalist in the competition's history; cited as a "fresh new talent, with exceptional musicianship", and he has just won the highly prestigious Besançon International Competition for Young Conductors in September this year. Jonathon is currently enrolled at the Royal Academy of Music and studies with Sian Edwards.

Oliver-John Ruthven, Principal Music Director of Hampstead Garden Opera, is a conductor, harpsichordist and singer who has worked with companies such as The Royal Ballet, The Monteverdi Choir, Hallé Youth Choir and Riverside Opera, and is a member of the English Baroque Soloists. He has led the company since 2008 in an exciting and diverse range of repertoire spanning over 400 years, from Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (1609) to Jonathan Dove's *Mansfield Park* (2011).

Hampstead Garden Opera, set up in 1990, is a semi-professional opera company based in North London, highly acclaimed for the excellent standard of its productions, its demanding musical standards, and the quality of professional and amateur singers, conductors and production staff that it attracts.

Hampstead Garden Opera won the Off West End (Offies) Opera Production Award 2013 for its 2012 staging of *Così fan tutte*, and were finalists for the same award in the 2014 and 2015 Offies.

"What do you go to the opera for? The question has a thousand answers, but if you're going to Mozart's Marriage of Figaro, the chances are that you're expecting some frothy romantic comedy, some elegant music and a bunch of tunes that will stay in your head when the show is over. But on a good day, it can be so much more than that, and Bruno Ravella's production for Hampstead Garden Opera pulls out all the stops.." David Karlin's review of 'The Marriage of Figaro for **Bachtrack**.

Performances of *Don Giovanni*:

Evenings at 7.30 pm – November 6, 7 and 10-14

Matinées at 4.00pm: Sundays November 8 & 15

Matinée at 2.30pm: Saturday November 7

Upstairs At The Gatehouse, Highgate, London N6 4BD

Tickets: (unreserved) £23 (Concessions £21 - Nov 6, 7, 8) Box Office: 020 8340 3488

Online: www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com

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30th September 2015