



HGO APRIL 2026 PRODUCTION – INVITATION TO AUDITION

1. ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

THE OPERA

Benjamin Britten's *'The Rape of Lucretia'*

The opera will be fully staged with original orchestration.

THE COMPANY

HGO's core objective is 'advancing young singers'. We do this by staging top-level professional productions at affordable ticket prices enabling tomorrow's opera singers to perform leading operatic roles in public, and thereby also giving them experience in ensemble work with fellow singers and musicians. HGO, which was founded in 1990, is a registered charity. You can see more about us and our recent productions at our website www.hgo.org.uk and our Facebook page www.facebook.com/hgopera.

THE VENUE

Jackson's Lane Theatre, Archway Road, London N6 5AA

PERFORMANCES

Six performances between **Friday 17 and Sunday 26 April 2026**. The production will be single-cast, with a full cover cast.

THE DIRECTORS.

Our Joint Production Directors are **Eleanor Burke and Alex Gotch**.

Eleanor Burke was previously a staff director at Theater Krefeld und Mönchengladbach. Eleanor became the youngest director ever accepted onto the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme (2022-24) at the Royal Opera House, London. Her 2023 production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* for HGO won the 2023 Offie Award for opera production, as did her production for us of *Eugene Onegin* in 2024. Other recent work includes William Gardner/Matthew Green *The Prisoner* (Royal Academy of Music); 555: *Verlaine en Prison* (La Monnaie, Brussels and ROH Crush Room); *La Voix Humaine* (King's Head Theatre); *Bluebeard's Castle* (Green Opera) and *TIDE* (Britten Pears Arts, Aldeburgh Festival).

Alex Gotch is an award-winning Director, Movement Director and Choreographer. He was a semi-finalist in the European Opera-Directing Prize 2025. His credits as Associate Director include *La Cenerentola* (ETO) and *Pelleas et Melisande* (Longborough). As Movement Director/Choreographer - *Werther* (Opera Comique), *The Rake's Progress* (ETO), *Eugene Onegin* (HGO), *Jane Eyre* (Arcola), *Figaro* (Waterperry), *Dido and Aeneas* (Theatre Royal Bath), and *Don Giovanni Tenorio* (RCM). As Assistant Director - *La Bella Dormiente nel Bosco* and *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* (RCM), *The Pilgrim's Progress* (BYO) and *Poppea* (ETO).

Our Music Director **Oliver Cope** was the winner of the 2024 International Athens Conducting Competition. He graduated with First Class Honours from the University of Cambridge and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (Hugh S Robertson Prize for Conducting), and has studied with prominent conductors including Martyn Brabbins, Sian Edwards, and Johannes Schlaefli. In the UK, he has worked with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Opera, and the National Symphony Orchestra Dublin, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and many others in Europe as well. In Opera, Oliver is a regular member of the Music Staff at Grange Park Opera, and *Lucretia* marks his return to HGO after a successful debut in 2024 with *Eugene Onegin*.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

HGO will provide movement and intimacy coaching for cast.

VENUES AND DATES

REHEARSALS

Caledonian Road Methodist Church (Cally), 426 Caledonian Rd, London N7 8TE

The church is on the corner of Caledonian Road (A5203) and Market Road.

train: The church is 150 yards south of Caledonian Road Underground station (Piccadilly Line). About 200 yards further down is Caledonian Road and Barnsbury Station (Overground) connecting to Dalston and Liverpool Street to the east and south and Kew, Richmond and Watford to the West.

bus: Routes 17, 91, 259 and 274 pass by the church.

Music and stage rehearsals will commence around mid-March 2026. A detailed rehearsal schedule will be sent to successful audiends. **We will ask you to confirm your availability mid-March through April 2026 and clarification of any known NAs, as a condition of offering a role.**

PERFORMANCES

Jacksons Lane Theatre, 269a Archway Road, N6 5AA

train: The theatre is opposite Highgate Underground station (Northern Line, Barnet Branch)

bus: Routes 34, 134 and 263 pass the door.

car: on-street parking with some residential restrictions.

Performance dates will be selected from:

April 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25 at 19.30

April 19, 26 2025 at 16.00

PAYMENT

We propose allowances to singers as follows:

Male Chorus, Female Chorus, Tarquinius, Lucretia	£900
Lucia, Bianca, Junius, Collatinus	£600
Cover cast	£300

2. AUDITIONS

APPLICATIONS

We invite applicants to notify their interest to our Auditions Secretary Kathy Dallas (123kathy.dallas@gmail.com) as soon as convenient, and **no later than 18 October**. **Please include in your application the following:**

- Your professional CV
- Contact details including telephone, e-mail and postal address
- The role/s for which you wish to apply (if you have particular role(s) in mind, but this is not critical)
- A sound or video recording in the form of video link or video/sound file
- Photo (small and low-resolution please)
- Any dates and times in our proposed audition schedule when you will not be available

AVAILABILITY

Please also consider the rehearsal period (March and April 2026) before applying to ensure that you will be available during this period. We anticipate a minimal number of non-available days, but please let us know at this stage if there are dates you know you cannot do. In creating a rehearsal schedule, we will attempt to be flexible with NA requests that are made well in advance or for important last-minute auditions. In the weeks of March 30 and April 6 and for final rehearsals at the theatre, singers' substantial availability is crucial.

- INVITATION TO AUDITION** We will notify all applicants no later than **25 October** whether they will be invited to audition.
- Audition pieces required are specified below.
- AUDITION VENUE** The audition venue will be in Central London at a location to be advised.
- AUDITION DATES** **Saturday 1 November 15.00 – 19.00**
Sunday 2 November 11:00 – 17:00
 Please indicate in your application which audition times would be convenient for you.
- AUDITION PANEL** The audition panel will include Eleanor Burke, Oliver Cope, Alex Gotch and Philip Sheffield (HGO). Piano accompaniment will be provided; let us know if you would wish to bring your own accompanist.
- AUDITION PIECES** Singers should prepare audition pieces as follows:
- Male Chorus:** aria of choice, plus extract from *Lucretia* - "Rome is now ruled by the Etruscan upstart" (Act 1 Scene I) **or** "The Ride" (Interlude before scene II)
- Female Chorus:** aria of choice, plus extract from *Lucretia*: "It is an axiom amongst kings" (Act I scene 1) **or** "The prosperity of the Etruscans was due" (start of Act II)
- Lucretia:** aria of choice, plus extract from *Lucretia*: "Give him this orchid" (Act II scene II)
- Tarquinius:** aria of choice, plus extract from *Lucretia*: "Within this Frail Crucible of Light" (Act II scene I)
- Other roles:** 2 contrasting arias of which at least one should be in English, ideally by Benjamin Britten.

A pdf copy of the vocal score of *Lucretia* can be found at the scribd.com website.

ROLES

Male Chorus	Tenor
Female Chorus	Soprano
Collatinus	Bass
Junius	Baritone
Tarquinius	Baritone
Lucretia	Contralto
Bianca	Mezzo-soprano
Lucia	Soprano

3. ENQUIRIES

Please address any further enquiries for information or clarification relating to this audition call by email to our Auditions Secretary Kathy Dallas (123kathy.dallas@gmail.com) including a telephone contact number.