

L'AKMÉ

LÉO DELIBES

SUNG IN
ENGLISH

**Director
& Set Design:**
Brendan Wheatley

Musical Director:
John Beswick

Costume Design:
Gabiella Ingram

SWANSEA CITY
OPERA
DINAS ABERTAW



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2017 Tour

Swansea City Opera presents

Lakmé

By Léo Delibes

MARKETING PACK

Swansea City Opera presents Lakmé

Marketing Pack

In this marketing pack, you'll find information about the company and specific items to help market the opera to your audiences

- About Swansea City Opera
- Cast and Creative information
- Key objectives of the Lakmé tour
- Sample copy
- Background and Synopsis – Long and short. The long version is useful for people new to opera
- Content for Direct mail / E-Newsletter copy
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- Press quotes about previous productions
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About Swansea City Opera

Swansea City Opera was formed in 2004 with the financial support of the City and County of Swansea. It also receives funding from Arts Council Wales and Arts Council England.

Swansea City Opera is committed to maintaining high standards of production and musical excellence, presenting socially accessible opera and procuring some of the finest singers and orchestral players in the country.

The company provides a nationwide touring schedule, assisting with the cultural development of Wales and Swansea, whilst, working in partnership with its training school The Opera School Wales, it offers chorus/understudy opportunities to gifted young singers helping further their careers within the opera discipline.

For this tour Swansea City Opera are delighted to be working with local community choirs at each theatre. We are proud of our association with David Syrus – Head of Music at The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, who comes annually to work with the school.

Cast:

Lakme	Madalina Barbu
Lakme	Hannah Sawle
Mallika	Katarzyna Balejko
Gerald	Luke Sinclair
Gerald	Daniel Joy
Nilakantha	Hakan Vramsmo
Frederic	Mark Saberton
Ellen	Georgina Stalbow
Rose	Jessica Robinson
Mistress Bentson	Rhonda Browne
Hadji	Bo Wang
Tenor chorus & small parts	Richard Hansen
Tenor chorus & small parts	David Fortey
Bass chorus & small parts	Simon Grange

Creative Team:

Director	Brendan Wheatley
Musical Director	John Beswick
Costume designer	Gabriella Ingram

This visit by the company from Swansea seems to be now a regular event, and a definite highlight of Pitlochry's 'close' seasons.' - Opera Scotland

'There were some moments that were truly breathtaking. The full might of 15+ actors on stage singing in unison was stunning, particularly soprano Angharad Morgan - whose vocals were so strong I could hardly believe they were live.'
- South Wales Argus

'they (SCO) are seeing all generations in their audiences and the fact is, they have a talent for demystifying Opera and presenting it back to all the people regardless of class, age or creed...' - Love Shrewsbury

'What remained undeniable was the value of these nationwide excursions. Pound for pound, government support will always have a greater impact on small companies like SCO than on besieged choruses in big cities. We need them both.'
- Opera Magazine

'...a high quality production that gets to the heart of a good opera — a solid live orchestra, a strong leading cast, and a touch of inventiveness when it comes to the staging.'
- South Wales Evening Post

Background

Lakmé by Léo Delibes

English translation by Theodore T. Barker, adapted by Swansea City Opera

Characters:

Lakmé, a priestess, daughter of Nilakantha	coloratura soprano
Gérald, a British army officer	tenor
Nilakantha, a Brahmin priest	bass
Frédéric, officer friend of Gérald	baritone
Mallika, slave of Lakmé	mezzo-soprano
Hadji, slave of Nilakantha	tenor
Miss Ellen, fiancée of Gérald	soprano
Miss Rose, companion of Ellen	soprano
Mistress Bentson, a governess	mezzo-soprano
Fortune teller (Un Domben)	tenor
A Chinese merchant	tenor
Le Kouravar	baritone

Shorter Synopsis

Nilakantha; a high priest is forbidden to practice his religion by the British forces occupying his city. His daughter, Lakmé with her servant leave behind their jewellery to bathe in the river. A group of Britons; two male officers and three women spot the jewellery while on a stroll, trespassing near the temple's grounds. The women request copies of the jewellery's design so Gerald, one of the officers stays behind to make the sketches. Gerald hides when Lakmé returns but are soon drawn to one another. Lakmé tells Gerald to forget her. Nilakantha swears vengeance on the unknown British trespasser and forces Lakmé to draw the culprit in through her singing. Gerald comes and is stabbed by Nilakantha. Nilakantha's servant then helps the couple escape to a hut in the forest where Lakmé nurses Gerald's wounds. In the hut Lakmé informs Gerald about a magical spring and the water of which that grants eternal love to the lovers who seek it. Lakmé, now deeply in love with Gerald leaves to get some of the water. The other British officer seen previously finds Gerald and reminds him of his duties. Lakmé returns with the water realising Gerald's change in demeanour. Rather than to live with dishonour, she poisons herself. After telling Gerald this they drink the water together. Nilakantha finds their hut and enters as Lakmé is dying, learns what has happened, then she passes.

Longer Synopsis

ACT 1. Nilakantha, a high priest of the Brahmin temple, is outraged that he is forbidden to practice his religion by the British forces occupying his city. Secretly, a group of Hindus make their way to the temple to worship, and Nilakantha meets

with them to lead them in prayer. Meanwhile, his daughter, Lakmé, stays behind with her servant, Mallika. Lakmé and Mallika walk to the river to gather flowers and to bathe. They remove their jewels (as they sing the famous Flower Duet) and place them upon a nearby bench before getting into the water. Two British officers, Frederic and Gerald, are on a picnic with two British women and their governess. The small group stops by the flower garden near the temple's grounds and the girls spot the lovely jewellery on the bench. They are so impressed by the jewels' beauty, they request copies of the jewellery's design be made, and Gerald agrees to make the sketches for them. The small group continues to stroll along the garden path, while Gerald stays behind to finish his drawing. As Gerald diligently finishes his pictures, Lakmé and Mallika return. Startled, Gerald hides in a nearby bush. Mallika departs and Lakmé is left alone to her thoughts. Lakmé catches movement out of the corner of her eye and sees Gerald. Instinctively, Lakmé cries out for help. However, when Gerald meets with her face to face, they are immediately attracted to one another. When help arrives, Lakmé sends them away. She hopes to find out more about this British stranger. Alone with him once more, she realizes her folly and tells him to leave and to forget that he ever saw her. Gerald is too captivated by her beauty to heed her warning, and so he disregards her commands and continues to stay. When Nilakantha finds out that a British soldier has trespassed and defiled the Temple of Brahmin, he swears vengeance.

ACT 2. As a ploy to draw out the unknown trespasser, Nilakantha forces Lakmé to sing the "Bell Song" in the middle of the bustling bazaar. Lakmé hopes that Gerald took her advice. As she sings the captivating aria, Gerald is entranced by her voice and draws close to her. Lakmé faints at his appearance and Gerald is stabbed by Nilakantha. However, Gerald is only slightly wounded. In the craziness of the scrambling villagers, Nilakantha's servant, Hadji helps Gerald and Lakmé escape to a secret hiding place deep within the heart of the forest. Lakmé nurses Gerald's wound and helps him fully recover.

ACT 3. In the hut within the forest, Lakmé and Gerald hear singing in the distance. Gerald is frightened, but Lakmé smiles and assures him of their safety. She tells him that the singers are a group of lovers that seek out the water of a magical spring. When drunk, the water grants eternal love to the couple. Lakmé has fallen deeply in love with Gerald and she tells him that she will return with a glass of that water. Gerald hesitates, torn between his duty to his country or his love of her. Lakmé, love struck, rushes off to the magical spring. Frederic has found Gerald's hiding place and enters the hut. Frederic reminds him of his duties and leaves. Lakmé returns with the water, but when Gerald refuses to drink it, she realizes that his demeanour has changed. Rather than to live with dishonour, she tears a leaf from a poisonous datura tree and bites into it. She tells Gerald what she has just done and they drink the water together. Nilakantha finds their hut and enters as Lakmé is dying. She tells her father that she and Gerald drank from the magical spring. In that instant, she dies.

Content for direct mail / E-Newsletters

Lakmé by Léo Delibes Swansea City Opera

This jewel of an opera is best known for the famous 'Flower Duet', which has become one of the most familiar numbers any composer, in any genre in addition to the stratospheric and challenging 'Bell Song'.

Swansea City Opera are setting their production of Lakmé in India during the Raj of the 1880's, sung in English and accompanied by chamber orchestra. Like Delibes' music for his famous ballet Coppelia, the orchestral scoring for Lakmé is delicious and as the opera remains a relative rarity, don't miss this golden opportunity to hear and see this ravishing piece. Whether a seasoned opera-goer or completely new to the genre, Lakmé has much to offer – especially in the current climate of cultural boundaries and religious tension.

Running time: 135 minutes including interval

What the papers said about our last tour

'To place La bohème in 1940s war-torn Paris wonderfully refreshed one of the best known operas of all time with new life and immediacy.' - North Devon Journal

'Words cannot really do justice to the quality of the singing throughout; the principals sang beautifully and their performances were utterly convincing with the effect on the audience profound.' - Keswick Reminder

'There were some moments that were truly breathtaking. The full might of 15+ actors on stage singing in unison was stunning, particularly soprano Angharad Morgan - whose vocals were so strong I could hardly believe they were live.'
- South Wales Argus

'they (SCO) are seeing all generations in their audiences and the fact is, they have a talent for demystifying Opera and presenting it back to all the people regardless of class, age or creed...' - Love Shrewsbury

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- Opera Magazine

www.swanseaopera.com

Booking information xxxxxxxxxx

Sample media release

Date of issue xxxx

Swansea City Opera – Lakmé

DIRECTOR & SET DESIGN

MUSICAL DIRECTOR

COSTUME DESIGNER

BRENDAN WHEATLEY

JOHN BESWICK

GABRIELLA INGRAM

Sung in English

Swansea City Opera visit xxxx on xxxx with Lakmé following their highly acclaimed 2016 tour of *La bohème*.

This jewel of an opera is best known for the famous 'Flower Duet', which has become one of the most familiar numbers any composer, in any genre, has ever written, even used by our national airline on TV ads as the peaceful accompaniment to a jetliner floating through wispy clouds!

As so often with operas that become famous for a particular tune however, Lakmé contains many other hidden musical gems including the stratospheric and challenging 'Bell Song'.

Like other French operas of the period, it captures the ambience of the Orient seen through Western eyes and, topically for today, tells of religious tensions and conflict leading to personal sacrifice, heartbreak and death.

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Lakme

Madalina Barbu

Lakme

Hannah Sawle

Mallika

Katarzyna Balejko

Gerald

Luke Sinclair

Gerald

Daniel Joy

Nilakantha

Hakan Vramsmo

Frederic

Mark Saberton

Ellen

Georgina Stalbow

Rose

Jessica Robinson

Mistress Bentson

Rhonda Browne

Hadji

Bo Wang

www.swanseaopera.com

Sample media release (continued)

Lakmé Tour Dates

23/02/2017 PALACE THEATRE - Paignton
28/02/2017 THEATRE BY THE LAKE - Keswick
01/03/2017 QUEEN ETHELBURGA'S COLLEGE - York
03/03/2017 THEATRE SEVERN - Shrewsbury
07/03/2017 SHERMAN CYMRU - Cardiff
11/03/2017 THEATRE ROYAL - Bury St Edmunds
15/03/2017 THEATRE ROYAL - Winchester
17/03/2017 BOROUGH THEATRE - Abergavenny
01/04/2017 THE TOWN HALL - Maesteg
07/04/2017 THE TALIESIN - Swansea
20/04/2016 THE OCTAGON THEATRE - Yeovil
23/04/2017 THE PALACE THEATRE - Mansfield
05/05/2017 HARROGATE THEATRE - Harrogate
06/05/2017 MIDDLESBROUGH THEATRE – Middlesbrough
07/05/2017 NEW WOLSEY THEATRE - Ipswich
12/05/2017 NEUADD DWYFOR - Pwllheli
13/05/2017 UCHELDRE THEATRE - Holyhead
27/05/2017 TORCH THEATRE - Milford Haven

For further information, press tickets and images please contact:

Tel: XXXX

E-mail: XXXXX

Social Media Connections

At Swansea City Opera, we're growing audience interactivity with our work through social media.

We would encourage you to use social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook to generate interest in Lakmé at your venue.

Please feel free to follow us on Twitter – we are already following you. You can find us here @SwanseaOpera and we're using the hash tag #Lakme.

Where possible please include a link in your publicity linked media releases, e-newsletters, brochures, direct mail letters to our website www.swanseaopera.com and our twitter page @SwanseaOpera.

Opera audiences (new and existing) like to explore websites to get more in-depth background information on the company.

Community Choirs

As part of this years tour Swansea City Opera are proud to be working in partnership with a local choir at each performance. The choir will be singing chorus all three acts. They will be on stage in costume and acting quite a lot, particularly in the second act featured in a busy market scene. By working with these choirs Swansea City Opera will be able to bring some of Lakmé's most ambitious scenes to life.

The involvement of these choirs is a good opportunity to utilise social media to help promote the show and for local papers it makes a strong local interest story. For more information on the specifics of these choirs please contact Sarah Curle by email: sarah@richard-newton.co.uk or phone 02920 397 341.

These choirs open up a potential new audience for theatres as they themselves and their friends and family are an audience unlikely to go and see Opera, and Swansea City Opera is committed to bringing Opera to all. In celebration of this we would love to open a dialogue about the possibility of concession tickets for members of the choir to give to friends and family.

Pre-Performance Talks

Swansea City Opera is dedicated to removing the elitism that surrounds attending an opera and to encourage those people to continue support of opera and by extension their local theatres. One of the ways in which we attempt to do this is by offering pre performance talks in which we try to increase peoples understanding of opera as an art form and its relevance in today's communities. We also aim to equip our audience with the tools and knowledge necessary to ensure that they maximize their experience. They will start at 6:15pm and last until 7:00pm.

These talks are held by artistic director Brendan Wheatley. They provide a good entry point for newcomers and are very well received. This year we are keen to do even more to boost attendance at these talks. Theatres can help by promoting these talks via social media such as Facebook and twitter as well as publicizing them on theatres own websites. Swansea City Opera are keen to explore the idea of promoting these talks by placing something on digital tickets, an idea we would love to discuss with theatres.

We believe these talks are also hugely beneficial for theatres; they allow audiences to feel connected to the show and the theatre and hopefully inspire them to support their local theatres and opera. As well as this audiences will then be in the theatre earlier than they would be and are more likely to purchase drinks from the theatre bar.

Biographies

Madalina Barbu

Born in Bucharest, Romania, Madalina has first started singing at the age of 4. She attended the "George Enescu" music school studying piano until the age of 14. She then studied at the National University of Music from Bucharest and gained 2nd place under the guidance of the late Eleonora Enachescu.

After her BA Mus qualification where she was given 1st place she studied for the MMus degree. During this period she made her debut on the National Romania Opera stage with the role of Zerlina.

She also undertook Masterclasses with Mariana Nicolesco and Marina Krilovici. Her operatic roles include Queen of the Night, La Fee, Zerlina, Gilda, L'Amour, Najade and Suor Genovieffa. She has performed in concerts with conductors, including Tiberiu Soare, Gabriel Bebeselea, Ralf Sochaczewsky, Traian Ichim, Maximilano Cobra

Her recent recordings include, Queen of the Night and Zerlina. Recent opera engagements include L'Amour(National Opera from Iasi) and Lucia (National Opera from Bucharest)".

Hannah Sawle

Hannah studied at Chethams School of Music, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and on English National Opera's Opera Works Course. She is currently studying with Janice Chapman. Whilst at the GSMD she won awards for her English and Contemporary Song and she has been guest soloist on BBC World Service, Radio 3 and Radio 4. Solo recordings include Giles Swayne's Four Passiontide Motets with the NYCGB and Respighi's La Pentola Magica with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

Roles include the Queen of the Night (Magic Flute) for Iford Arts/Charles Court Opera, Diana (Orpheus in the Underworld) for Opera Danube, Papagena (Magic Flute) for English Touring Opera, Gianetta (L'elisir d'amore) and Lady Dunmow (A Dinner Engagement) for Wexford Festival Opera, Frasquita and Micaela (Carmen) for Opera Up Close and English Pocket Opera, Zerlina (Don Giovanni) for Westminster Opera, Fiordiligi (Cosi fan tutte) for Jackdaws and Nedda (Pagliacci) and Mademoiselle Silberklang (The Impresario) for Garden Opera.

She recently sang Strauss' Brentano lieder and Mahler's 4th symphony with Bristol Metropolitan Orchestra at St George's Bristol and is looking forward to singing Lakme with Swansea City Opera in 2017.

Katarzyna Balejko

Young Polish mezzo soprano, Katarzyna Balejko has recently graduated from the Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Her future and current engagements include Malika in Delibes's Lakmé, Lucretia in Britten's The Rape of

Lucretia, Opera Makers performance at the Clore Studio, Royal Opera House, Colombina Le donne curiose E. Wolf-Ferrari under Mark Shanahan
This summer she also joined Alvarez Young Artist Programme at Garsington Opera, where she understudied the role of Olga in Eugene Onegin.
Other operatic and concert performances include Opera Scenes at the Studio Theatre in Milton Court and at The Buick Grand Theatre in Shanghai (China), the alto solo part in Verdi's Requiem at St. Bartholomew's Church in Brighton and a recital of arias and duets in La Pedrera Casa Mila in Barcelona.

Luke Sinclair

Luke was born in London and studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland with Scott Johnson. He was a major prize winner at the 2015 Kammeroper schloss Rheinsberg International singing competition and sang the tenor lead 'Julian' in the World Premiere of Marc Aurel-Floros' Adriana at the renowned Opera Festival in Rheinsberg, Germany to excellent reviews.

Other recent engagements include Rodolfo La Bohème (In both Dresden and Edinburgh), Tebaldo i Capuleti e i Montecchi (Buxton Festival Opera – Cover), Dancairo Carmen (Scottish Opera - Cover), Chevalier de la Force Dialogues des Carmélites (Scottish Ballet), Fenton Sir John in Love and Le Mari Les Mamelles de Tirésias (RCS) and Don José Carmen (Fife Opera)

Upcoming engagements include his Cadogan Hall debut as Sali (Romeo) in Delius' A Village Romeo and Juliet with New Sussex Opera and a return to Buxton to sing Malcolm (and cover Macduff) in Verdi's Macbeth. In concert, he will appear as the tenor soloist in Puccini's Messa di Gloria and Rossini's Stabat Mater and give a recital of Mahler and Strauss song at Merchant House, Glasgow.

Daniel Joy

Daniel studied music at Durham University where he gained a first class music degree and was awarded the Eve Myra Kisch Price Prize for outstanding academic achievement. He has just graduated with distinction from the opera course at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, studying with Adrian Thompson and currently studies with David Pollard.

Daniel made his professional stage debut as Kozak in Statkowski's Maria for Wexford Festival Opera, also broadcast on BBC, Schweizer Radio DRS and RTE Radio Ireland. He has returned to Wexford to perform The Poor Horn Player (Delius' A Village Romeo and Juliet) and Gherardo in Gianni Schicchi, he sang the title role in Albert Herring at GSMD, cover various roles in Monteverdi's L'incoronazione di Poppea for Glyndebourne Festival, Adolfo/Gobin/covers Prunier in Puccini's La Rondine for Opera di Peroni / Go Opera, The Duke (Rigoletto) and Goro (Madama Butterfly) both for Opera Brava, touring the France and the UK as The Duke (Rigoletto) for Opera Loki, Peter Quint (The Turn of The Screw) for Artwork Opera, Fabrizio (cover) in Martinu's Mirandolina for Garsington, the title role in Britten's The

Prodigal Son and Hermann in the UK premiere of Mendelssohn's Heimkehr aus der Fremde for the Ryedale and Grimeborn Festivals, cover of Cassio (Otello) for Opera North, Renard in Stravinsky's Renard with the Helios Collective, cover of Tchalitsky (Queen of Spades), Prince (Rusalka) and Melot (Tristan und Isolde) all for Grange Park, the lead role of Jimmy in John Estacio's Lillian Ailing at The Banff Centre, Canada, in a joint production with Vancouver Opera.

Håkan Vramsmo

Håkan Vramsmo has appeared at major venues and festivals including the BBC Proms' opening night, Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Stuttgart Liederhalle, Sibeliusacademin, Aldeburgh, Bath, and Cheltenham with such pianists as Iain Burnside, Julius Drake, Bengt Forsberg, Graham Johnson, Roger Vignoles, Llyr Williams and Andrew West. He has also appeared with the Hebridies Ensemble, Carducci Quartett, Gabrieli Consort, Sharoun Ensembles, BBC Symphony, Jerusalem, City of Birmingham, Bournemouth, English Chamber, Wroclaw, Zagreb, Barcelona, Gothenburg, and Malmö Symphony Orchestras conducted by Martyn Brabbins, Paul McCreech, Leonard Slatkin, Sir David Willcocks and Leon Botstein. He has frequently recorded for BBC, Private Joe by Panufnik for Polish radio, B-minor Mass on Signum Records and Elisabeth Maconchy's opera The Departure for Chandos Records. He has sang 25 operatic roles and he created Axel in Meredith's Tarantula in Petrol Blue, Carl in Coleridge-Taylor's Thelma and Pascoe in Huw Watkins' In the Locked Room. Håkan teaches singing at Citylit Institute in London and is invited to Masterclasses at the Koninklijk Conservatoire Brussel.

Mark Saberton

Mark studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and comes from Suffolk. He has sung with many opera companies including Royal Opera, English National Opera, Opera North, Raymond Gubbay, Scottish Opera, Garsington Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, Opera Holland Park, Mid Wales Opera and Savoy Opera. Roles include Mephistopheles (Faust) and Schaunard (La boheme) for Swansea City Opera; Bottom (Midsummer Night's Dream) for Longborough Festival Opera; Antonio (Marriage of Figaro) for Garsington Opera at the Barbican conducted by Jane Glover; Narumov (Queen of Spades) for Opera Holland Park; Krusina (Bartered Bride) for Mid Wales Opera, and the Hotel Waiter/Boatman (Death in Venice) for the Aldeburgh and Bregenz Festivals under Paul Daniel. He has recorded the role of Ben Budge (Beggars Opera) with the City of London Sinfonia and Royal Opera conducted by Christian Curnyn. He has recently been working with English National Opera on the role of Zurga in The Pearlfishers by Bizet.

Georgina Stalbow

Originally from Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire, Georgina studied at Birmingham Conservatoire and Wales International Academy of Voice under the tutelage of Dennis O'Neill. Opera credits include Sacerdotessa, Aida (Teatru Astra, Gozo); Asteria (cover), Tamerlano and various roles in Louise (Buxton Festival); Barbarina, The marriage of Figaro (Swansea City Opera); Peep-Bo, The Mikado (Co-Opera Co); Amore, Orfeo ed Euridice, Echo, Ariadne auf Naxos and Emmie, Albert Herring (Fondazione Cantiere di Montepulciano). Future engagements include Miss Wordsworth (cover), Albert Herring and Celia (cover), Lucio Silla, (Buxton Festival). Chorus credits include Lucia di Lammermoor and Giovanna d'arco (Buxton Festival) where Georgina was directed by Elijah Moshinsky. Georgina sang incidental music for the Royal Shakespeare Company's Richard II in the Barbican Theatre, London with David Tennant. She also sang the role of Woman 2 in the World Premiere of David Blake and Keith Warner's Scoring a Century. Other world Premiere's include Norberto Oldrini's Swimming Paradise with Quartetto Ascanio (Fondazione Cantiere di Montepulciano.) Recordings include soprano soloist in Fauré Requiem (Convivium Records) and soprano soloist in Eric Jones' Great is the Story: The Nativity and The Fulfilment (Alto Publications). Georgina also teaches singing on the music performance course at Coventry University and is head of singing at the School of Theatre Excellence and SOTE College in Birmingham.

Rhonda Browne

Rhonda's passion for singing began with the internationally acclaimed NZ Youth Choir. After catching the bug in Opera New Zealand's chorus, she made the move to London to pursue a solo career. Rhonda won the London Wagner Society's Bayreuth Bursary and was a finalist in the ROH Jette Parker Audition rounds 2014. She studied at the National Opera Studio on their Singers of Tomorrow Scheme and currently studies with Jacqueline Bremar and coaches with David Gowland (ROH), Kathryn Harries (NOS) and Ludmilla Andrew.

Rhonda's roles include Erda DAS RHEINGOLD/SIEGFRIED and Schwertleite DIE WALKÜRE - Longborough Festival Opera, Baba the Turk RAKE'S PROGRESS - Bury Court Opera, Auntie PETER GRIMES - Nottingham Philharmonic, The Duchess GONDOLIERS and Ludmila BARTERED BRIDE - Surrey Opera, The Witch HÄNSEL UND GRETEL - Open Door Opera and Opera in Space, Zia Principessa SUOR ANGELICA - Talent Unlimited and Giornata Opera, Zita GIANNI SCHICCHI - Fulham Opera. She covered First Norn and Flosshilde - Longborough Festival Opera and sang Rosswisse DIE WALKÜRE - Mastersingers. She also created the role of Gudrun in the world Premiere of Coleridge Taylor's THERMA - Surrey Opera. Recent engagements include Baba the Turk RAKE'S PROGRESS - Bury Court Opera, cover Ulrica UN BALLO IN MASCHERA - Iford Arts Festival and cover Erda RHEINGOLD/SIEGFRIED, Grimgerde/Schwertleite DIE WALKÜRE and 1st Norn GÖTTERDAMMERUNG - Opera North and concerts in New Zealand including Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder - Manukau Symphony Orchestra.

Bo Wang

Bo has worked for English National Opera, Garsington Opera, Opera Holland Park, Opera Rara and BBC Proms. Bo graduated in 2011 gaining a distinction in his second Masters in solo performance and awarded The John Cameron Prize for Lieder at the Royal Northern College of Music. He was supported with a full scholarship from the ABRSM. Bo gained his first Master's degree in Musicology from Beijing Normal University in 2008 and gold medal in the Fifth Singapore International Music and Dance Competition. Bo has also been given the Gil Rodriguez Scholarship Award 2016. Bo's opera experience includes Piquillo (La Perichole, Opera de Bauge), Tito (La clemenza di Tito, Midsummer Opera), Goro (Madama Butterfly, Opera de Bauge), Trin (La fanciulla del West, Midsummer Opera), Alfred (Die Fledermaus, Epsom Light Opera Company), Normanno (Lucia di Lamermoor, Opera Seria), Hermann (The Queen of Spades, Park Opera), Phoehus/Autumn/Chinese Man (The Fairy Queen, Benslow Opera), Jenik (The Bartered Bride, Manchester City Opera), Lynceus (Les Danaïdes, University of Leeds), Don Basilio (Le Nozze di Figaro, British Youth Opera), Thyrsis (Euridice, British Youth Opera), Nencio (L'infedelta delusa, RNCM), Achilles (La Belle Hélène, RNCM).

Richard Hansen

New Zealand born Tenor Richard Hansen has completed a Master of Music and Postgraduate Diploma in Solo Performance at the Royal Northern College of Music with Thomas Schulze.

Richard's Operatic roles have included Don Basilio and Don Curzio (Le Nozze di Figaro), Monostatos (Die Zauberflöte), Ruiz (il Trovatore), Gaston (La Traviata) Iro (il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria), Tamino (The Magic Flute) Nemorino (l'Elisir d'Amore) Count Almaviva (The Barber of Seville) Nanki Poo (The Mikado), Frederick (The Pirates of Penzance), Mr Upfold (Albert Herring), Box (Cox and Box), Camille (The Merry Widow) and Remendado (Carmen). He has also appeared with the chorus of Opera Holland Park, Scottish Opera and the National Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company.

Most recently, Richard has appeared with Opera Australia in Sydney, at the BBC Proms with Opera Rara and with the chorus of Wexford Festival Opera.

David Fortey

David is a graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where he gained a Bmus (Hons) Degree and a Postgraduate Diploma. Whilst at the college David was awarded the Manning Prize for Tenors and the Sir Geraint Evans Vocal Scholarship. Operatic roles at RWCMD include 'Albert' in Britten's Albert Herring, 'Tamino' in Mozart's The Magic Flute, 'Tom Rakewell' in The Rakes progress, 'Jupiter' in Offenbach's Orpheus in the Underworld, and 'Tobias' in Sondheim's

Sweeny Todd for Welsh National Youth Opera. David began his professional career with Glyndebourne Festival Opera Chorus and Garsington Festival Opera. Since 2008, David has been a principle member of the classical Brit award-winning male ensemble Only Men Aloud. He has recorded extensively on television and radio and was privileged to be part of the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic games. Sought after as both a chorister and soloist internationally his versatility on the concert platform has given him the opportunity to work with some of the finest musical ensembles in some of the world's most prestigious venues.

Simon Grange

British bass Simon Grange graduated from the Royal College of Music in 2015, where he was a Cuthbert Smith Scholar supported by a Soirée d'Or award and Douglas and Hilda Simmonds and Hans and Mary Romney award. He was previously a student and choral scholar at Oxford University. Recently he has covered Reinmar in Wagner's Tannhauser for Longborough Opera Festival, as well as performing in their production of Janáček's Jenufa. He has also appeared as Zuniga in Bizet's Carmen for the Northern Aldborough Festival, as Pietro and Fiesco in Verdi's Simon Boccanegra for Fulham Opera, and as Pasquino in Bizet's Don Procopio for Opera South. Future plans include Sparafucile in Verdi's Rigoletto for Regent's Opera.

John Beswick

John studied music at Hertford College, Oxford before postgraduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (repetiteur) and the Royal College of Music (conducting). He has conducted opera throughout the UK and the US for companies such as London City Opera, Pimlico Opera and Swansea City Opera. Currently the Principal Conductor of the Redhill Sinfonia, he has conducted many other orchestras including the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, Oxford University Orchestra and Slough Philharmonic.

In the field of Music Theatre John has conducted Les Miserables (West End), Miss Saigon (UK tour) and Damon Albarn's 'pop-opera' Monkey Journey to the West (London's O2 venue); he has also played keyboards on many shows including Legally Blonde, Jersey Boys, Top Hat and Phantom of the Opera. He has worked on many youth projects home and abroad, and was thrice Musical Director for Pimlico Opera's famous Prison Projects.

Brendan Wheatley

Brendan was born in Hinckley, Leicestershire and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where he was awarded a three-year scholarship on the performers course. Another scholarship awarded to him at the end of this course enabled him to attend the Opera Course for a further year but this was cut short when he

auditioned for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and was immediately offered a contract.

Brendan sang for three seasons with Glyndebourne, making his debut as The Keeper of the Madhouse in the internationally acclaimed production of Stravinsky's *The Rakes Progress*, designed by David Hockney. After leaving Glyndebourne, Brendan pursued his career as a freelance singer working with many companies both in Britain and abroad, and has now sung many major roles - from Don Giovanni to *The Flying Dutchman* – he also created the role of Figaro in the world premiere of Giles Swayne's *Le Nozze di Cherubino*. His concert and oratorio work has taken him to such prestigious places as The South Bank, Royal Albert Hall, Huddersfield Town Hall and many cathedrals and churches throughout Britain. In 1989 he founded the touring company Opera Box with his partner Bridgett Gill and in 2004 the company received funding from the City and County of Swansea, and became Swansea City Opera. Over the years Brendan has directed and designed many operas for the company.

Press Quotes

Faust

'This is a brave choice, not only due to the massive vocal demands it makes of its principals but also because of the hit-you-between-the-ears demands from voice and orchestra.'

'The problem of how to have the large vocal impact was solved by the sensible use of local singers and choirs to bulk up the cast. The effect was glorious.'

-Wales Online

'With a beautiful Orchestra of twelve players the score was so superbly presented. One was aware that this orchestra was having to hold back its power to allow for the human voices to be heard above; but really they needn't to have worried as the voices were strong and powerful and the music blended with the harmonies as it held it's audience spellbound.'

-Love Shrewsbury

The Marriage of Figaro

'All credit to Swansea City Opera for producing a touring version of Figaro that is pure pleasure, a delight from start to finish.'

-Manchester Theatre Reviews

'There was an energy and commitment that compelled attention from first to last and the performance received warm and justified acclaim.'

-In Suffolk Arts & Events

'We knew what we were in for, right from the very first scampering notes of that famous overture –..... what a pleasure to meet Figaro again in all his vitality, played with such verve! Our thanks go to Swansea City Opera for a lovely evening.'

North Devon Journal

The Barber of Seville

'...If you want to give someone their first taste of opera, but find ticket prices and long journeys off putting...then you couldn't do better than to catch Swansea City Opera.'

-South Devon Journal

L'Elisir d'Amore

'...a triumph in every respect. SCO bring high quality opera to theatres which are too small or remote to receive even slightly larger companies, and give audiences the chance to hear opera as it should be heard, with excellent singers and musicians, and with unpretentious but satisfying direction...'

-Seen and Heard Opera Review

Magic Flute

'...And such singers! All were impeccable, with the well-matched techniques vital for this ensemble piece.'

-Huddersfield Examiner

Daughter of the Regiment

'...I was captivated within minutes.'

-BBC Website

Don Pasquale

'If you like your opera fresh, frothy and funny then this was the place to be An evening of excellent entertainment in the best "bel canto" tradition from a quality quartet that delivered on every note in this beautifully staged production in 1840s costumes.'

-Workshop Guardian

Così fan tutte

'This company always delivers the goods and when the goods is a deliciously uplifting slice of Mozart it can be very good indeed.'

-North Devon Journal

Information for your box office

Running time: 135 minutes including interval

Selling Points

- High quality singing and music
- Sung in English
- Equally suitable for experienced opera goers and people who want to try out opera for the first time
- Good press reviews in both international, local and opera specialist press
- Infrequently performed opera – rare opportunity to experience
- Relevant themes relating to cultural boundaries and religious tensions

Short Synopsis

Nilakantha; a high priest is forbidden to practice his religion by the British forces occupying his city. His daughter, Lakmé with her servant leave behind their jewellery to bathe in the river. A group of Britons; two male officers and three women spot the jewellery while on a stroll, trespassing near the temple's grounds. The women request copies of the jewellery's design so Gerald, one of the officers stays behind to make the sketches. Gerald hides when Lakmé returns but are soon drawn to one another. Lakmé tells Gerald to forget her. Nilakantha swears vengeance on the unknown British trespasser and forces Lakmé to draw the culprit in through her singing. Gerald comes and is stabbed by Nilakantha. Nilakantha's servant then helps the couple escape to a hut in the forest where Lakmé nurses Gerald's wounds. In the hut Lakmé informs Gerald about a magical spring and the water of which that grants eternal love to the lovers who seek it. Lakmé, now deeply in love with Gerald leaves to get some of the water. The other British officer seen previously finds Gerald and reminds him of his duties. Lakmé returns with the water realising Gerald's change in demeanour. Rather than to live with dishonour, she poisons herself. After telling Gerald this they drink the water together. Nilakantha finds their hut and enters as Lakmé is dying, learns what has happened, then she passes.