

# Jonathan Dove

# Opera & Stage Works



EDITION PETERS

 Wise Music Group

“For me, Jonathan’s work, whether or not for the theatre, always has a strong theatricality demonstrating his total commitment to the accessibility of text and meaning. Thus his work can be enjoyed by so many people of different ages and experiences. He is a true composer for the theatre.”

**Richard Mantle** | Former General Director, Opera North



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“Not since Benjamin Britten has a British composer succeeded in writing operas which communicate with such clarity and coherence to their audience as those by Jonathan Dove.”

**The Gramophone**



# INTRODUCTION

by Richard Morrison

Few present-day composers are as accessible, dramatically astute and musically resourceful as Jonathan Dove. Born in 1959, he is an immensely practical composer who first won acclaim with his brilliant condensing of Wagner's *Ring* for a small touring pit-band, and for superbly inclusive "community operas" that utilised every musical resource a town could muster – from children's choirs and brass bands to folk ensembles and rock musicians.

Since then his work with his regular librettists Alasdair Middleton and April De Angelis has diversified into many different operatic genres. *Life is a Dream* is a pulsating, large-scale adaptation of a Spanish Renaissance drama that mixes thrilling choruses with haunting soliloquies to unfold a dark and disturbing allegorical tale. By contrast, his gloriously pantomime-like *The Adventures of Pinocchio* and the concise *Swanhunter* – relating a Finnish folk-tale with just six singers and six instrumentalists – both manage to grip children and intrigue adults with equal panache. His commitment to community opera continues with *The Monster in the Maze* and *Uprising*.

And his subject-matter is just as diverse. It ranges from personal dramas played out in an airport lounge (*Flight*, with over 44 productions worldwide to date), to Jane Austen's wry comedy of young people in love (*Mansfield Park*) and Biblical tales given a powerful contemporary twist (*Tobias and the Angel*), and an explosive, element-hunting thriller (*Itch*).

What unites all this is Dove's gift for writing supremely theatrical, quick-witted music – its roots as much in the musical-theatre masterpieces of Sondheim and Bernstein as the operas of Britten and Stravinsky. His music, unapologetically tonal, can pulse with minimalist rhythms or blossom into memorable lyricism – and it's unfailingly well-written for voices. He can conjure a remarkable array of sonorities from a small number of players.

Most of all, he wants to entertain, enthrall and engage audiences – especially those who rarely or ever attend opera. In that aim he has been dazzlingly successful.

**Richard Morrison** | Chief Music Critic, The Times

## BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan Dove's music has filled opera houses with delighted audiences of all ages on five continents. He is one of the most performed living opera composers and few, if any, contemporary composers have so successfully or consistently explored the potential of opera to communicate, to create wonder and to enrich people's lives.

Born in London in 1959 to architect parents, Dove's early musical experience came from playing the piano, organ and viola. Later he studied composition with Robin Holloway at Cambridge and, after graduation, worked as a freelance accompanist, répétiteur, animateur and arranger. His early professional experience gave him a deep understanding of singers and the complex mechanics of the opera house. Opera and the voice have been the central priorities in Dove's output throughout his subsequent career. He first gained prominence with his chamber versions of operas, including *The Magic Flute*, *The Ring of the Nibelung*, and *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Birmingham Opera's touring productions, then became music advisor at the Almeida Theatre in North London, writing a plethora of theatre scores for them, the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Starting with his breakthrough opera *Flight* with librettist April De Angelis, commissioned by

Glyndebourne in 1998, Dove has gone on to write over 30 operatic works. *Flight*, a rare example of a successful modern comic opera, has been produced and broadcast many times, in Europe, the USA and Australia. And Dove's recent chamber version for 19 – 30 players has enabled more productions. Other popular titles include *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, with librettist Alasdair Middleton, commissioned by Opera North with Sadler's Wells Theatre, *Mansfield Park*, again with librettist Alasdair Middleton, commissioned by Heritage Opera, and *Marx in London* with librettist Charles Hart, commissioned by Theater Bonn. Dove has written many operas for a family audience including *The Enchanted Pig*, commissioned by The Young Vic and *Swanhunter* commissioned by Opera North, both with librettist Alasdair Middleton. His recent family operas are *Itch* with librettist Alasdair Middleton, based on the *Itch* novels by Simon Mayo and commissioned by James Clutton for Opera Holland Park with support from the Canadian Opera Company, and *In 80 Tagen um die Welt* (*Around the World in 80 Days*), his first opera in German with librettist Peter Lund, commissioned by Opernhaus Zurich.

Dove's innate understanding of the individual voice is exemplified in his large and varied choral and song output. His carol *The Three Kings* was commissioned for the famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols service at King's College, Cambridge. Dove's confident

optimism has made him the natural choice as the composer for big occasions. In 2010 *A Song of Joys* for chorus and orchestra opened the festivities at the BBC's Last Night of the Proms, as did a newly expanded version of *Our revels now are ended* at the same occasion in 2016. Works such as his *Missa Brevis*, *Seek Him that Maketh the Seven Stars* and *The Passing of the Year* are in repertoires of choirs across the world. In 2018 *They will Rise* commissioned by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey was premiered to commemorate the centenary of the Royal Air Force.

Throughout his career Dove has made a serious commitment to community development through innovative opera projects. *Tobias and the Angel* with librettist David Lan, a 75-minute opera written in 1999, brings together children, community choirs, and professional singers and musicians in a vivid and moving retelling of the Book of Tobit. His 2012 opera *Life is a Dream* with a libretto by Alasdair Middleton, written for Birmingham Opera Company, was performed by professionals and community choruses in a disused Birmingham warehouse, and a church opera involving community singers *The Walk from the Garden* with a libretto also by Alasdair Middleton was premiered at the Salisbury Cathedral as part of the 2012 Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival. 2015 brought the first performance of *The Monster in the Maze*, a community opera commissioned by the



London Symphony Orchestra, Berliner Philharmoniker and Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, premiered under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle in three different languages and productions. *The Monster in the Maze* has since been performed around the world in many translations and was the recipient of a BASCA British Composer Award in 2016's 'Amateur and Young Performers' category. His latest community opera *Uprising* with librettist April De Angelis, which looks at the climate emergency through the eyes of the young, commissioned by Glyndebourne and Saffron Hall Trust premiered at Glyndebourne in 2025. The opera has since won an Ivors Classical Award in 2025 and the RPS Award for Opera and Music Theatre in 2026.

Jonathan Dove won the 2008 Ivor Novello Award for Classical Music and was made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in the late Queen's 2019 Birthday Honours for services to music.

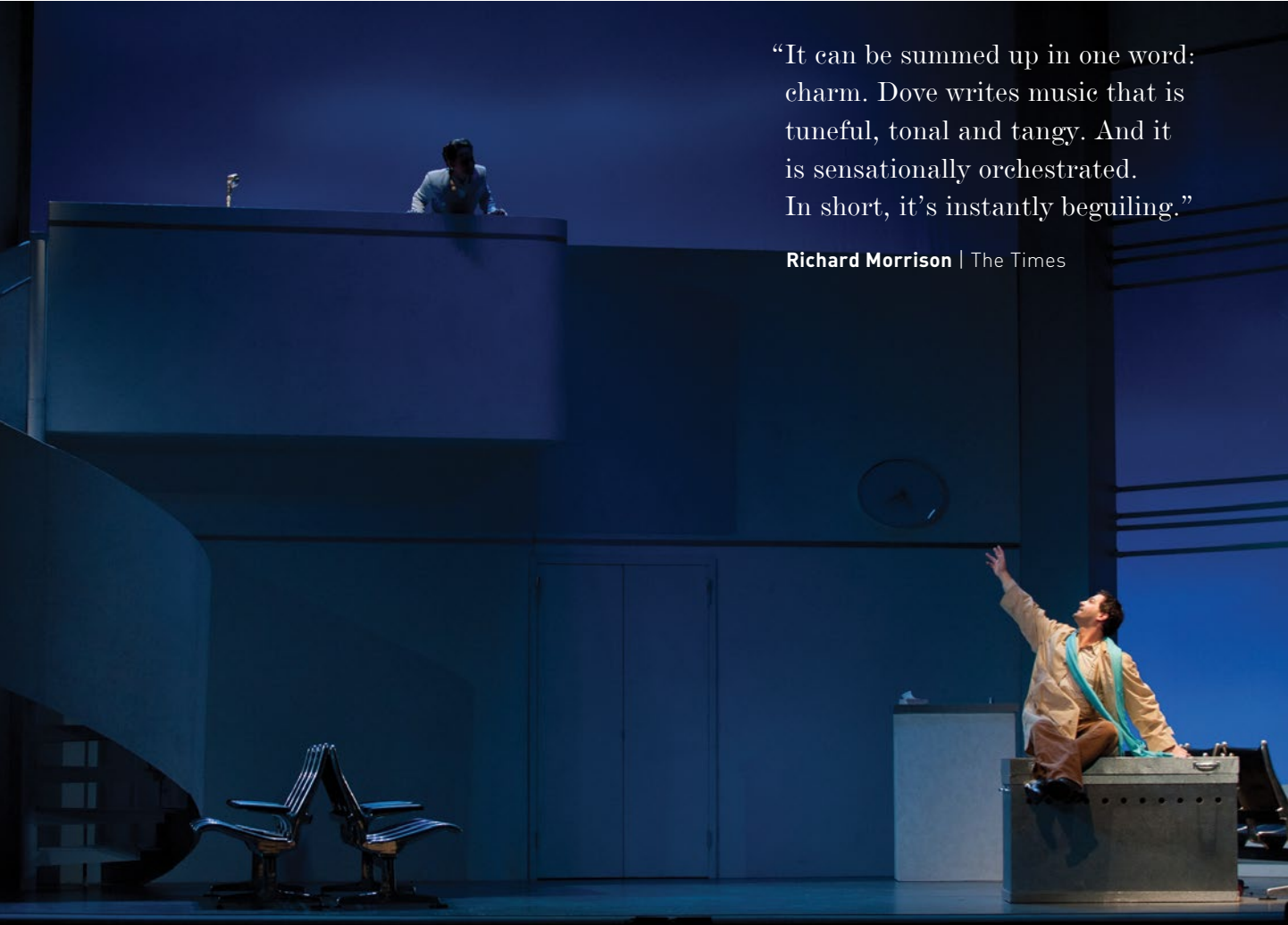
“Jonathan is a truly natural composer. He writes music that communicates immediately with the audience and at the same time begs to be heard again, and reveals new layers on repeated performing and listening: He has a natural gift for melody, a rare thing, and an astounding instinct for dramatic timing.”

**David Parry** | Conductor

“One reason Jonathan Dove's *Flight* was such a triumph at Glyndebourne is that he understands the marriage of theatre and music. He knows how to rouse passions and raise smiles. Tunes flow in abundance, and for him, creating a mood, capturing a feeling for an instant, are second nature.”

**Fiona Maddocks** | The Observer

# FLIGHT



“It can be summed up in one word: charm. Dove writes music that is tuneful, tonal and tangy. And it is sensationally orchestrated. In short, it’s instantly beguiling.”

**Richard Morrison** | The Times

## An Opera in Three Acts

### Libretto by April De Angelis

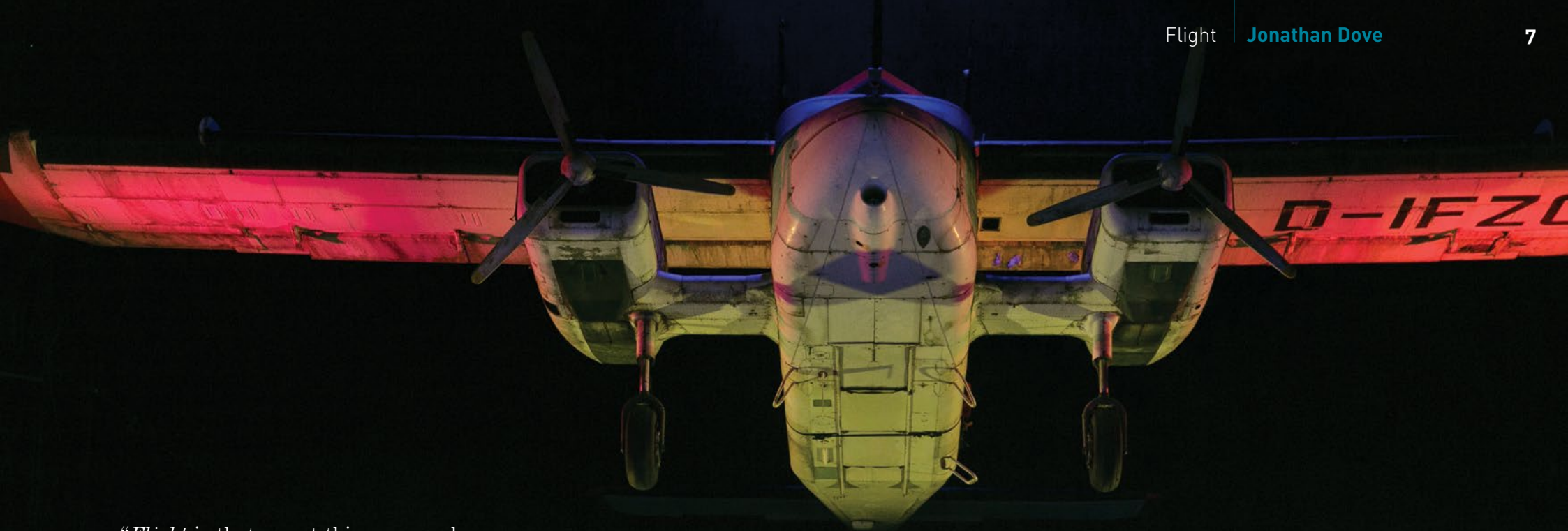
Commissioned by Glyndebourne

World Premiere: Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Glyndebourne, 24 September 1998

Jonathan Dove’s breakthrough work, *Flight*, was commissioned by Glyndebourne and premiered there in 1998 with further performances in 1999 and 2005. The question from the then General Director, Anthony Whitworth-Jones, was whether Jonathan Dove could create ‘*A Marriage of Figaro* for the 1990s’. And the answer was a superb original modern-day operatic comedy which has found universal popularity, with many different productions and some 200 performances to date across the world.

With a libretto by leading British playwright April De Angelis, the opera has both laugh-out-loud and more serious moments as the story of the refugee who lives in the airport – inspired by the true-life story of an Iranian refugee who lived at Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, for 18 years – unfolds around the different characters who find themselves delayed in the terminal.

Written for an ensemble cast of 10 singers, this opera, with its dynamic airport setting and scintillating orchestral writing – including the thrilling aeroplane take-off – continues to have a compelling immediacy.



*"Flight is that rarest thing, a popular new comic opera... Dove's music flies, the opera is fun, and people are going to love it."*

**Tom Sutcliffe** | The Evening Standard



## Synopsis

**Act One** – Dawn: and the Controller sits in her tower. People start to arrive at the airport – for the Refugee to 'befriend': a married couple, Bill and Tina, are going on holiday to rediscover romance; the Older Woman is meeting a young man whom she met in Mallorca – she would like to remain inconspicuous; the Steward and Stewardess go about their business – some of the time. Another couple arrive, almost late for their flight to Minsk, to emigrate; the Minskwoman is pregnant. At the last moment she refuses to board the plane and her husband leaves without her. The Refugee offers her a magic stone to comfort her. The travellers are preparing to depart when the Controller announces that, because of storms, flights are indefinitely delayed.

**Act Two** – Night: the storm rages. The Controller leaves her tower and wanders about outside. Everyone tries to sleep, but, in pairs or alone, they secretly approach the Refugee, fascinated by his magic stone. He gives them all what each thinks is the unique stone and they make wishes. Bill is restless and seeks out the Stewardess, but finds the Steward instead: they go off to explore the control tower. The women and the Refugee decide to get drunk, and, as they become more garrulous, the women discover that each of them has 'the' stone. They vent their anger, with dire consequences for the Refugee. The consequences of Bill and the Steward's explorations are no less cataclysmic.

**Act Three** – Dawn: the storm abates, flights resume. The Minskman returns, unable to face his separation. Bill and the Steward have a surprise for their partners. Tina has a nasty surprise for Bill. The Refugee has a surprise for the women. The Minskwoman has a surprise for everyone. When the Refugee tells his story, even the Immigration Officer has a surprising reaction. Flights are called and under the Controller's watchful eye, the airport returns to normal...

## Flight (1998)

Opera in Three Acts | 135 minutes

Libretto by April de Angelis

German singing translation by Ralf Nürnberger

2S,3Mz,Ct,T,2Bar,B

2(2pic).2(II:ca).2(II:bcl).2(II:cbn)/2.2.2.1/timp.3perc/  
pf(cel).hp/str (min 8.6.4.4.3)

Version for Chamber Orchestra:

1(pic).1(ca,obda).1(bcl).1(cbn)/2.2.0+btbn.0/timp.2perc/  
pf(cel).hp/str (1.1.1.1.1)

Commissioned by Glyndebourne

First performed 24 September 1998, Glyndebourne  
Opera House, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, directed  
by Richard Jones and conducted by David Parry

Best Opera – 2006 Helpmann Awards, Australia

Recording: Jonathan Dove, Flight, Glyndebourne  
Festival Opera, London Philharmonic Orchestra/  
David Parry, Chandos CHAN 10197(2)

Vocal score available



## Roles

Refugee	Countertenor
Controller	Coloratura soprano
Bill	Tenor
Tina	Soprano
Older Woman	Mezzo-soprano
Stewardess	Mezzo-soprano
Steward	Baritone
Minskman	Baritone
Minskwoman	Mezzo-soprano
Immigration Officer	Bass

## Production History

**Glyndebourne Touring Opera**, UK, September to December 1998

**Glyndebourne Festival Opera**, UK, August 1999

**Nationale Reisopera**, The Netherlands, November to December 2001

**Vlaamse Oper**, Belgium, February to March 2002

**Opera Theatre of St Louis**, USA, June 2000

**Oper Leipzig**, Germany, sung in German translation by Ralf Nürnberger, April 2004

**Boston Lyric Opera**, USA, April to May 2005

**Glyndebourne Festival Opera**, UK (Revival), August 2005

**Moore's Opera Center**, USA, January 2006

**State Opera of South Australia**, Adelaide Festival, Australia, March 2006

**Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama**, Glasgow, UK, June 2006

**Pittsburgh Opera**, USA, January to February 2008

**British Youth Opera**, UK, September 2008

**UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music**, Los Angeles, USA, April to May 2010

**Austin Lyric Opera**, USA, April 2011

**Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama**, Cardiff, UK, June 2013

**Opera Fayetteville**, USA, January 2014

**Opera Holland Park**, UK, June 2015

**Mannes School of Music**, New York, USA, May 2015

**Julliard Opera**, New York, USA, November 2016

**Opera Parallèle**, San Francisco, USA, February 2017

“Jonathan Dove’s  
airport opera soars  
above the ordinary”

Rowena Smith | The Guardian



**Theaterakademie August Everding**, Munich, Germany, February 2017

**Opera Omaha**, USA, April 2017

**OPERation**, Switzerland, May to June 2017

**Scottish Opera**, Glasgow, UK, February to March 2018

**Royal Academy of Music**, London, UK, March 2018

**Des Moines Metro Opera**, Indianola, USA, June to July 2018

**San Diego State University**, USA, November 2018

**Minnesota Opera**, USA, January to February 2020

**Pacific Opera Victoria**, Canada, February to March 2020

**Utah Opera**, USA, January 2021

**Seattle Opera**, USA, April 2021

**Dallas Opera**, USA, March 2022

**Royal Conservatoire of Scotland**, Glasgow, UK, March 2022 (Chamber Orchestra)

**Royal College of Music**, London, UK, June to July 2022 (Chamber Orchestra)

**Aachen Theatre and the Hochschule for Music and Dance Köln**, Germany, June 2023

**Opera Collective Ireland**, September 2023 (Chamber Orchestra)

**Staatstheater Oldenburg**, Germany, September to November 2023

**Oper Bonn**, Germany, January to March 2024

**Vancouver Opera**, Canada, February 2025

**University of Miami**, Frost Opera Theater, USA, February to March 2025

**State Opera of Australia**, Adelaide, Australia, May 2025

**New England Conservatory**, Boston, USA, November 2025

**ASU School of Dance and Theatre**, Arizona, USA (Chamber version), February 2026

**Boston University Opera Institute**, Boston, USA, April 2026

# IN 80 TAGEN UM DIE WELT (AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS)



A Family Opera in Two Acts

Libretto (German) by Peter Lund

Commissioned by Opernhaus Zürich

World Premiere: Opernhaus Zürich,  
17 November 2024

This full-length family opera is based on the novel by Jules Verne, charting the adventures of Phileas Fogg. It is scored for eight singers and chamber orchestra.

French author Jules Verne achieved international fame with his novel, which was published in 1873, and which is based on the true story of the American George Francis Train, who really did circumnavigate the world in eighty days. The book, which has been adapted for the screen many times, is still a popular classic today. With his adventure story, Verne touched something culturally significant, as the achievements of modern technology – fast steamships, railroads, and the newly built Suez Canal – were making the world ever smaller.

In this contemporary re-telling of the story, there's an ingenious framing device which offers a helpful distance from the celebration of Empire inherent in the original plot: we accompany Max, a modern teenager who would rather read *Around the World in 80 Days* than join his girlfriend at a demo to save the planet. He finds himself swept into the story, as Passepartout, and his girlfriend appears to him from time to time, challenging Phileas Fogg's Imperial attitudes.

## In 80 Tagen um die Welt (Around the World in 80 Days) (2023)

Opera in Two Acts | 95 minutes

Libretto by Peter Lund

English singing translation by Jeremy Sams

S,2Mz,2T,Bar,B; SATB chorus

1(pic).1(ca).1(bcl).1(cbn)/2.2.1.1/timp.2perc/pf(cel).hp/str (1.1.1.1.1 minimum)

Commissioned by Opernhaus Zürich

First performed 22 July 2023,  
Opera Holland Park, London



## Roles

Josi	Soprano
Aouda	Mezzo-soprano
Max	Lyric Tenor
Phileas Fogg	Baritone
Fix	Bass

## Ensemble roles (Three singers)

Konsul	Soprano (Ensemble 1)
Heizer	
Schaffner/Führer	Mezzo-soprano (Ensemble 2)
Stewart	
Schaffner	
Matrose	Tenor (Ensemble 3)
Indianerhauptling	
Club members	
Mönche	
Reisende	Ensemble 1, 2, 3
Brahmanen	
Indianer	

“The members of the audience, whether children or adults, must have felt they were leaving together through a spellbinding picture book.”

Nicolas Blanmont | Opera with Opera News



## Synopsis

“Right, the wager’s on!” says the eccentric gentleman Phileas Fogg, and stakes half his fortune on a daring bet. While he’s better known for being a homebody, Fogg wants to circumnavigate the globe in 80 days and make it back to his London friends’ posh Reform Club on time, regardless of possible vehicular damage, train derailments or collisions. Together with his servant Passepartout, he sets off on the journey. They are followed by the English detective Fix, who believes Fogg to be a wanted bank robber. Their itinerary takes them to the pyramids in Egypt, through India to Hong Kong, and from there to America. Traveling by train, ship or on elephants, they experience great adventures, which they overcome with cunning, courage – and a little luck. Along the way, they also meet the Indian beauty Aouda, who accompanies them on their journey around the world.

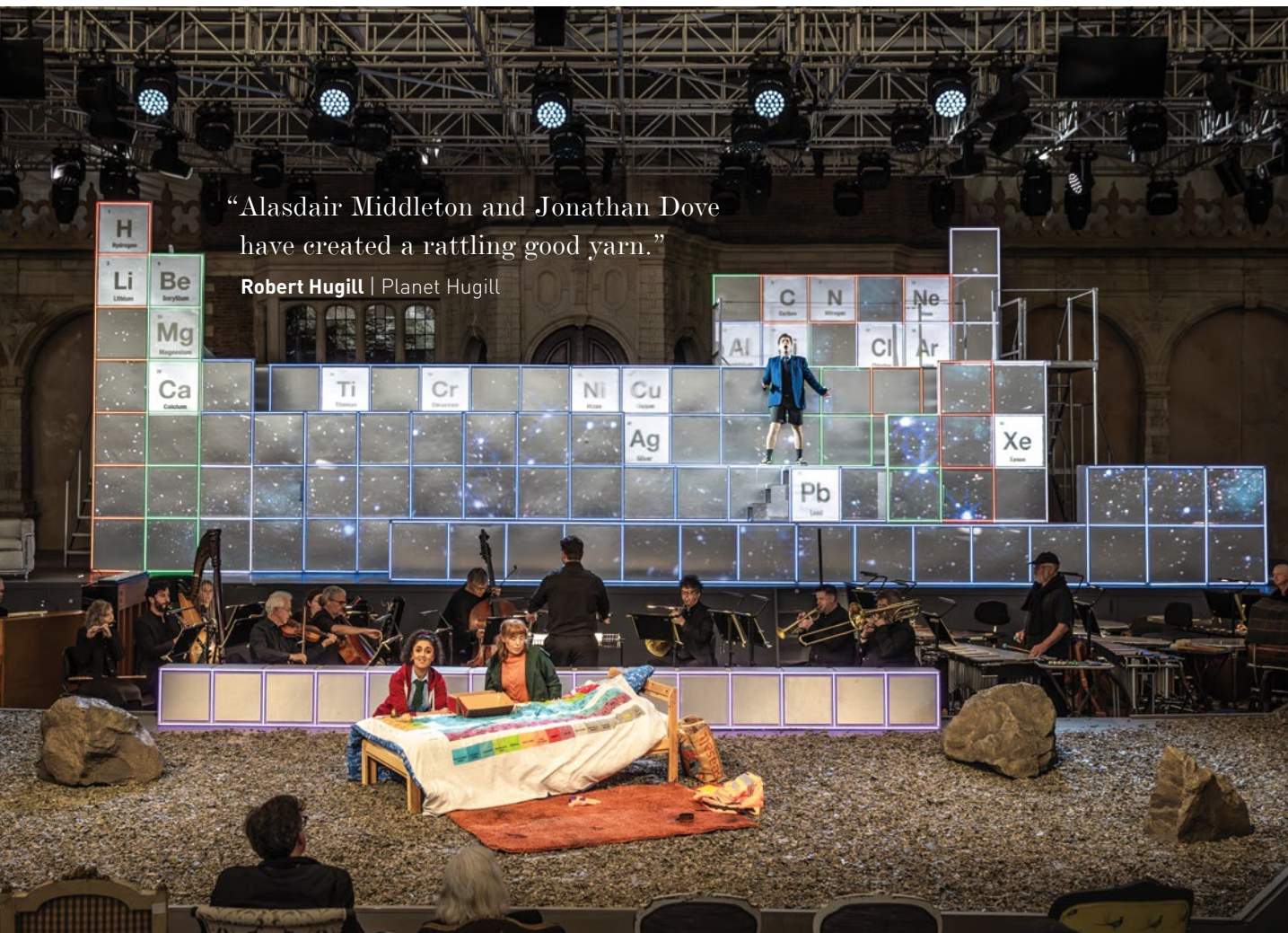
## Production History

Opernhaus Zürich, Switzerland,  
November 2024 to January 2025

Theater Erfurt, Germany, May to June 2026

Deutsche Oper Berlin, Germany  
November 2026 to April 2027

# ITCH



A Chamber Opera for all  
the Family in Two Acts

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton, based  
on the *Itch* novels by Simon Mayo

Commissioned by James Clutton for Opera  
Holland Park with support from the Canadian  
Opera Company

World Premiere: Opera Holland Park, London,  
22 July 2023

*Itch* is an opera for all the family: a science-fuelled thriller spiced with brilliant operatic set pieces and big emotions.

With a libretto by Alasdair Middleton, and adapted from Simon Mayo's best-selling novels, *Itch* and *Itch Rocks*, the story follows 14-year-old element-hunter protagonist Itchingham Loftie as he discovers a new element from the depths of the earth which has the power to change the world. *Itch* and his family are catapulted into a breathless quest with terrifyingly high stakes.



## Itch (2023)

Opera in Two Acts | 100 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

ColS, LyricS, Mz, Ct, LyricT, T, Bar, Bbar

1(pic).0.1(bcl).1(cbn)/1.1.1.0/timp.perc/pf{cel,kbd}.hp/str (1.0.0.1.1)

Commissioned by Opera Holland Park in a co-production with the Canadian Opera Company

First performed 22 July 2023, Opera Holland Park, London

“A zippy, clever new opera for all.”

**Nicholas Kenyon** | The Telegraph

## Roles

Itchingham Lofte	Young Lyric tenor
Jack Lofte	Young Lyric soprano
Jude Lofte	Soprano
Nicholas Lofte	Baritone
Bob Evert	Tenor
Cake	Countertenor
Watkins	Mezzo-soprano
Nathaniel Flowerdew	Bass-baritone
Roshanna Wing	Coloratura soprano
Berghahn	Countertenor
Kinch	Tenor
Cake doubles Berghahn	
Jude Lofte doubles Roshanna Wing	
Bob Evert doubles Kinch	

## Synopsis

Itchingham Lofte (Itch), a science-obsessed teenager, discovers a new element given to him by a hippy surfer called Cake.

Itch takes the rocks to school, an academy sponsored by multinational energy company, Greencorp, to show his science teacher Miss Watkins. Flowerdew, a fellow science teacher and former Greencorp employee, takes the rocks away for testing, and his Geiger counter goes off the scale. Realising the rocks may be an important new source of energy, he informs Greencorps of the discovery. When Flowerdew is unwilling to return the rocks to Itch, Itch is forced to steal them back helped by his sister Jack.

Cake tells them that they must return the rocks to the earth. In the meantime, Greencorps and Flowerdew are on the hunt for them and a game of cat and mouse ensues.

Whilst in possession of the rocks, they find themselves becoming increasingly sick through radiation poisoning. Itch eventually realises that Cake was right, and that he must return the rocks to the depths of the earth.

## Production History

**Opera Holland Park**, UK July 2023

**Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe**, Germany  
May to July 2025

**Opera Holland Park**, UK [Revival] June 2025

**Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe**, Germany  
May to July 2026

# LIFE IS A DREAM



## An Opera in Three Acts

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton  
after the play by  
Pedro Calderón de la Barca

Commissioned by Birmingham Opera Company  
World Premiere: Birmingham Opera Company,  
Birmingham, 21 March 2012

*Life Is a Dream* was commissioned by Graham Vick's extraordinary Birmingham Opera Company for professionals and the people of Birmingham to perform together in a disused chemical works in the city in 2012.

Jonathan Dove's full-length operatic version of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's 'philosophical play' *La vida es sueño*, with a libretto by Alasdair Middleton, has echoes of 19th-century grand opera. The polarised struggles between father and son, freewill and predestination, dream and reality are passionately carried along with powerful choruses and strongly etched characters including a *tour de force* for bass-baritone in the role of the Prince.

The original orchestration, designed for the Birmingham production, is for 28 players, but in opera-house productions the opera may be performed with a conventional string section.

## Synopsis

A father fleeing destiny, a woman bent on vengeance, a man discovering himself.

Prince Segismund has been imprisoned in a remote tower since his birth, and the only human face he has ever seen is that of his jailor. Then, one day, he wakes up in a palace, and finds himself king. Is this really happening?

By the end of this eventful day, he has ordered the execution of his jailor, thrown a courtier out of the window, and attempted to rape the beautiful Rosaura.

He wakes again to find himself locked up back in his tower. Was everything that happened just a dream? Is life itself a dream? But his story is not yet over...



Images: © Birmingham Opera Company (Donald Cooper)

### Life Is A Dream (2012)

Opera in Three Acts | 120 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton after the play by Pedro Calderón de la Barca

S,Mz,2T,Bbar,B; SATB chorus

2(2pic).1.1.1(cbn)/2.2.1+btbn.1/3perc/pf.hp/str (3.3.2.2.1 minimum)

Commissioned by Birmingham Opera Company

First performed 21 March 2012, Argyle Works, Birmingham

### Roles

Rosaura	Mezzo-soprano
Segismund	Bass-baritone
Clotaldo	Bass
Astolfo	Tenor
Estella	Soprano
King Basil	Tenor
Guards, Supporters of Estella and Astolfo, People of Poland, Courtiers	Chorus

### Production History

Birmingham Opera Company, UK March 2012

# MANSFIELD PARK



A Chamber Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton  
adapted from the novel by Jane Austen

Commissioned by Heritage Opera

World premiere: Heritage Opera, Boughton House,  
Northamptonshire, 30 July 2011

How do you set a classic novel to music? Indeed, how do you set the most popular of English novelists, Jane Austen, to music? When first reading *Mansfield Park*, Jonathan Dove felt immediately that it was an opera. When Heritage Opera, which tours opera in English state homes, approached Jonathan for a commission, he thought this would be the perfect way of staging *Mansfield Park* – in a large drawing room, using 10 signers accompanied simply and strikingly with piano played in duet. With his talented librettist Alasdair Middleton, he set about adapting the novel. And from the first sung words by the whole company, 'Mansfield Park, Chapter One,' there is strong narrative drive, impeccable vocal writing and wonderful ensembles that sparkle with style and wit.

In 2017 Grange Opera commissioned an ensemble version for 13 instruments. Both versions have gone on to have many productions in small to medium proscenium arch settings along with the site-specific productions. It has also become a firm favourite for young artist schemes and music colleges given the range of young voices required and its universal charm.

## Synopsis

*Mansfield Park* is the story of Fanny Price, a Cinderella-like heroine, who quietly negotiates her way through the moral perils of early nineteenth century high society, from landscape gardening and amateur theatricals to balls and arranged marriages, and wins the hand of the man she has loved all her life.



### Mansfield Park (2011)

Chamber Opera in two Acts | 105 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton, based on the novel by Jane Austen

Original version: Piano (4 hands)

CotS,2S,C,2Mz,2T,2Bar

Version for 13 instrumentalists:  
1(pic).1(ca).1.1/2.0.0.0/perc/pf/str (1.1.1.1.1)

Commissioned by Heritage Opera

First performed 30 July 2011, Boughton House, Northamptonshire, Heritage Opera, Chris Gill

## Production History

**Heritage Opera**, UK, July to August 2011

**Royal Academy of Music**, UK, May 2012

**Hampstead Garden Opera**, UK, April 2013

**Peabody Conservatory Chamber Opera**, Baltimore, USA, February 2015

**Durham University**, UK, June 2015

**Staatstheater Braunschweig**, Germany, December 2015

**Indianapolis Opera**, USA, March 2016

**Operantics**, Sydney, Australia, April 2016

**Grange Opera**, UK, September 2017  
(ensemble version)

**Waterperry Opera**, UK, August 2018

**Opera South**, UK, February 2019

**Birmingham Conservatoire**, UK, June 2019  
(ensemble version)

**Waterperry Opera**, UK, July 2019

**Vanderbilt University**, Florida, USA, October 2019

**Paul Butler School of Music**, University of Texas, USA, December 2019

**Opera Modesto**, USA, January 2020  
(ensemble version)

**University of Toronto**, Canada, March 2020

**Waterperry Opera**, UK, August 2022

**TU Dublin Conservatoire of Music**, UK, January 2023  
(ensemble version)

**Royal Northern College of Music**, UK, March 2023  
(ensemble version)

**New Zealand Opera**, Wellington & Auckland, April 2024

**Waterperry Opera**, Kirtlington House, UK, September 2024

**Guildhall School of Music and Drama**, London, UK, February to March 2025  
(ensemble version)

**The Opera Academy**, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 2025

**Indiana University**, Music Arts Centre, USA, February 2026  
(ensemble version)

**Jacobs School of Music**, Indiana University, USA, February 2026  
(ensemble version)

**University of Georgia**, Athens, USA, March to April 2026

## Roles

Fanny Price Mezzo-soprano

Lady Bertram Contralto

Sir Thomas Bertram Baritone

Maria Bertram Soprano

Julia Bertram Mezzo-soprano

Edmund Bertram Baritone

Aunt Norris Soprano

Mary Crawford Coloratura soprano

Henry Crawford Tenor

Mr Rushworth Tenor

# MARX IN LONDON



## A Comedy

Libretto by Charles Hart  
after an original scenario by  
Jürgen Weber

Commissioned by Theater Bonn

World premiere: Theater Bonn, Germany,  
9 December 2018

Set across a single day in summer 1871, *Marx in London* follows the philosopher and economist as Karl Marx is beset by his troubled wife, his denied illegitimate son, his overly curious daughter, and his notorious lack of capital. Knowing that he will never finish writing *Das Kapital*, Marx escapes to the British Library, where he has a vision that will eventually become a nightmare.

Written to mark the bicentenary of Karl Marx's birth.

## Marx in London (2018)

A Comedy in 2 Acts | 115 minutes

Libretto by Charles Hart after an original scenario by Jürgen Weber

DrmtcS, LyricS, Mz, LyricT, 2T, DrmtcT, 5Bar, Bbar;  
SATB chorus

3(2pic).3(III:ca).3(III:bcl).2+cbn/4.3.3.1/timp.3perc/  
pf{cel,kbd,hmn}.hp/str

Commissioned by Theater Bonn

World premiere: Theater Bonn, Germany,  
December 2018



## Roles

Karl Marx	Baritone
Jenny Marx	Dramatic soprano
Eleanor "Tussi" Marx	Lyric soprano
Freddy Demuth	Lyric tenor
Helene Demuth	Mezzo-soprano (Contralto)
Friedrich Engels	Heldentenor

## Secondary Roles

Spy (A Prussian agent)	Tenor
Pawnbroker	Bass-baritone
Melanzane	Tenor
Franz	Baritone
Chief Inspector Littlejohn	Baritone
Sergeant	Baritone
Foreman	Baritone
Workmen	Chorus
Workers of the Future in Marx's dream	
Crowd at The Red Lion	
People on Hampstead Heath	



Images: © Scottish Opera (Thilo Beul) pp.18-19, Theater Bonn (Jonathan Dove) p.19

“Jonathan Dove has never been afraid to think outside the box, and his new piece, premiered at the Theater Bonn, does so again.” **Martin Kettle** | The Guardian

## Production History

**Theater Bonn**, Germany, December 2018 to  
February 2019

**Scottish Opera**, UK, February 2024

# SWANHUNTER



“Dove applies instrumental colour in a particularly effective and folkloric way, with Nordic horn calls, hunter’s drumming and sinister double bass signifying death, with harp and accordion adding their exotic tone.”

**Lynne Walker** | The Independent >

An Opera in One Act

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

Commissioned by Opera North

World Premiere: Opera North, Assembly Room,  
Grand Theatre, Leeds, 13 November 2009

Commissioned by Opera North, following the success of *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, this chamber opera is written for a teenage audience but appeals to all ages. Inspired by the ancient Finnish folk-epic, the *Kalevala*, the tale is one of adventure and tasks of mythological magnitude not to speak of the rather grisly dismemberment of the hero.

Accompanied by a folk-inspired band, 6 singers play 10 characters and the chorus. The opera celebrates the power of song, in the magic spells sung by the hero, Lemminkäinen; in the stratospheric writing for the Swan; and, most of all, in the finale, as the Mother sings her son back to life.



### Swanhunter (2009)

Opera in One Act | 65 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

S,2Mz,2T,B

hn/perc/hp/acn/vn.db

Commissioned by Opera North

First performed 13 November 2009,  
Howard Assembly Room, Leeds, Opera North

### Roles

Swan/Chorus	Soprano
Mother	Mezzo-soprano
Louhi/Chorus	Mezzo-soprano
Dog/Soppy-hat/ Death's son/Chorus	Tenor
Lemminkainen	Tenor
Dog/Death/Smith/Chorus	Bass

### Synopsis

Lemminkäinen leaves his Mother to go north in search of a wife. He meets the witch Louhi, who tells him she has a girl who can make the sun sigh and the moon ache. To win this girl, Lemminkäinen must hunt down the Devil's Elk, ride the Devil's Horse, and shoot the Swan on Death's River. Before he can accomplish this final task, our hero is himself slain, dismembered and flung into the river. The Mother comes looking for her son, and magically sings him back to life.

"Yvonne Howard's life-affirming lament may be the most ravishing piece of sustained lyric writing Dove has produced."

Alfred Hickling | The Guardian

### Production History

**Opera North**, UK November to December 2009

**Theater Chemnitz**, Germany December 2011  
to January 2012, February to April 2013  
(sung in German)

**Opera North with The Wrong Chord**, Linbury  
Theatre, ROH April 2015 and touring

# THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO



An Opera for all the Family

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton  
after the novel by Carlo Collodi

Commissioned by Opera North with  
Sadler's Wells Theatre

A co-production with Theater Chemnitz, Germany

World premiere: Opera North, Leeds,  
21 December 2007

This adaptation, based on Carlo Collodi's original well-loved *Pinocchio* story, is a unique and magical full-scale work for a family audience, a spectacular introduction to the world of opera that combines fairytale dreaminess and humour with some surprisingly dark undertones, and ultimately asks the question, what does it really mean to be human?

The whole range of operatic voices is engaged in the retelling – nine principals, including coloratura soprano, basso profundo and countertenor, play 16 roles, and there are also small solo parts for members of the chorus.

“Beautiful stuff and enchanting  
from start to finish.”

Tim Ashley | The Guardian





### Synopsis

From the moment Geppetto makes Pinocchio out of a log, the puppet gets into scrapes. He is nearly thrown on the fire by a Puppetmaster, who gives him five gold coins. A wily Cat and Fox try to get the coins, first by hanging Pinocchio outside the Blue Fairy's house, and later by tricking him. Pinocchio goes in search of justice but is imprisoned, and when he eventually returns to the Blue Fairy, all he finds is her tomb.

Later, he escapes being eaten by the Big Green Fisherman, only to be turned into a donkey in Funland, and thrown into the sea, where he is swallowed by a Big Fish. In the fish's belly he finds his father, and rescues him. Back on dry land, Pinocchio works hard to restore his father's health, and is rewarded by becoming a real boy.



### Production History

**Opera North**, UK, December 2007 to March 2008 (including performances at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London)

**Theater Chemnitz**, Germany (co-production with Opera North), June to December 2008, October to December 2009

**Minnesota Opera**, USA, February to March 2009

**Muse Opera**, South Korea, June 2010

**Oper Stuttgart**, Germany, November 2010 to March 2011, November to December 2011

**Opera North**, UK, September to December 2010

**Teatr Sats**, Russia, January, March to June, October 2012

**Theater Bonn**, Germany, December 2013 to March 2014

**Guildhall School of Music and Drama**, UK, March 2014

**Oldenburgisches Staatstheater**, Germany, April 2015

**Royal Northern College of Music**, UK, June 2022

**Theater Regensburg**, Germany, November 2022 to February 2023

**Theater Osnabrück**, Germany, April to June 2023

**Opera North**, UK, October to November 2024

**Teatr Wielki Łódź**, Poland, June 2025

**Vive el Arte**, Sinaloa, Mexico, February 2026

## The Adventures of Pinocchio (2007)

Opera in Two Acts | 140 minutes

Version with approved cuts | 125 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

German singing translation by Ralf Nürnberger

Polish Singing Translation by Jacek Mikotajczyk

ColS,S,C,Mz,Ct,2T,Bar,B; SATB chorus

2(2pic).2(II:ca).2(I: E<sup>b</sup>cl.II:ssx).2(II:cbn)/4.3.3.1/  
timp.3perc/pf(ce).hp/man.2acn/str (10.8.5.4.3)

Commissioned by Opera North and Sadler's Wells

British Composer Award, 2008

DVD: Jonathan Dove, The Adventures of Pinocchio,  
Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North/David Parry,  
Opus Arte 1005D



## Roles

Pinocchio	Mezzo-soprano
Geppetto	Baritone
Cricket/ Parrot	Coloratura soprano
Fire-Eater/Ape-Judge/ Big Green Fisherman/ Ringmaster/Farmer	Bass
Cat	Tenor
Fox/Coachman	Countertenor
Blue Fairy	Soprano
Pigeon/Snail	Contralto
Lampwick	Tenor

## Secondary roles to be taken by members of the Chorus

Barker	Baritone
Arlecchino, a puppet	Tenor
Rosaura, a puppet	Soprano
Pantalone, a puppet	Baritone
Owl Doctor	Baritone
Crow Doctor	Tenor
Beetle Doctor	Mezzo-soprano
Coal-merchant	Baritone
Bricklayer	Tenor
Drum-maker	Bass
Echo	Three Mezzo-sopranos

Members of the puppet show audience	Soprano, Contralto, Tenor, Bass
A slightly sinister member of the crowd	Tenor
Villagers	Soprano, Contralto, Bass

## Chorus roles

Audience at puppet show	Semi-chorus
Crowd at Court, in Prison and on Beach, Heavenly Voices, Audience at Circus	Full Chorus
Fantasy Rich People	Small group (SATB)
Teachers	Sopranos, mezzos, baritones (small group)
Pupils	Tenors
Boys in Coach and in Funland	Tenors
Vendors in Funland	Sopranos, mezzos, baritones

## Non-singing roles

Puppet-policemen, Rabbits, Jailor

# THE DAY AFTER



## An Opera in One Act

Libretto by April De Angelis

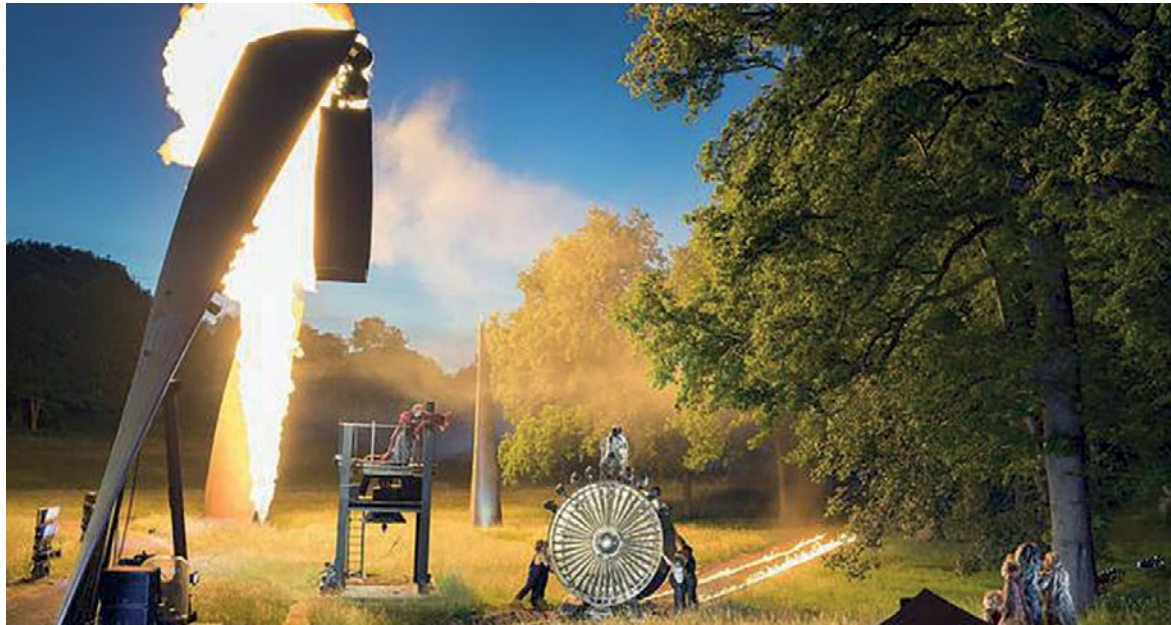
Commissioned by Holland Opera with assistance from the Eduard van Beinum Foundation

World premiere: Holland Opera, Fort Rhijnauwen near Utrecht, 29 June 2015

World premiere of version with SATB Chorus: English National Opera, London, 26 May 2017

A tale within a tale, *The Day After* follows a group of survivors in a post-Apocalyptic world as they retell the story of their preceding catastrophe. The characters' dramatisation sets the myth of Phaeton who, in searching for his sun god father Phoebus, loses himself in the role of impetuous youth and fancies himself as a god. Riding his father's sun chariot across the sky, Phaeton ultimately stretches his capabilities, bringing the scorching Sun crashing down to Earth.

Written specifically to be performed outside, Holland Opera's premiere of *The Day After* delivered a spectacle of fire, circus theatre, dancers and a 14-piece brass ensemble. English National Opera premiered a new version with additional SATB choir in 2017.



### The Day After (2015)

Opera in One Act | 75 minutes

Libretto by April De Angelis

2S,C,T,Bbar

1(pic).1.1.1.ssx(asx)/2.2.1+btbn.0/perc/hp/db

Alternative version with SATB chorus available

Commissioned by Holland Opera with assistance from the Eduard van Beinum Foundation

First performance: 29th June 2015, Holland Opera, Fort Rhijnauwen near Utrecht

Version for SATB chorus first performed by English National Opera on 26 May 2017

### Roles

Young Woman                      Soprano

Woman/Mother                      Soprano

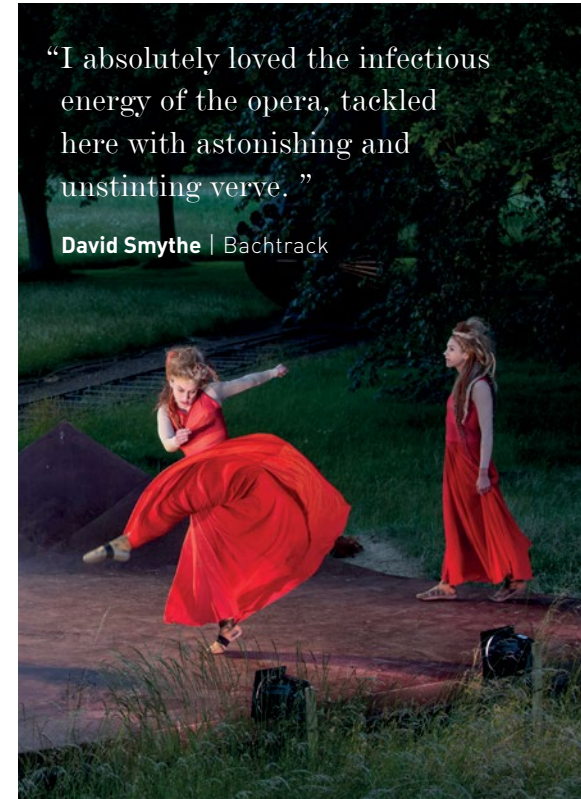
Old Woman                      Contralto

Young Man/Phaeton                      Tenor

Old Man/Phoebus                      Bass-baritone

“I absolutely loved the infectious energy of the opera, tackled here with astonishing and unstinting verve.”

David Smythe | Bachtrack



Images: © Holland Opera [Ben van Duin]


### Production History

**Holland Opera**, Netherlands, June 2015

**English National Opera**, UK, May 2017  
[Version with chorus]

**Royal Conservatoire of Scotland**, UK,  
March 2018 (Version with chorus)

# THE ENCHANTED PIG



“This is a show that proves opera, at its best, is a source of magic and enchantment.”

**Michael Billington** | The Guardian

## A Musical Tale

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton  
based on a Romanian folktale

Commissioned by The Young Vic

World premiere: The Opera Group,  
The Young Vic, London, 1 December 2006

“Love makes you happy. Love makes you cruel.”  
It’s the old story – King goes off to war, tells his daughters not to go into a locked room containing the Book of Fate, daughters don’t listen and one of them ends up marrying a pig.

Drawing on Romanian and Norwegian folk tales, this magical family show, which has its trotters in the worlds of opera and musical theatre, has delighted audiences in more than 150 performances across Europe and the USA.

This dynamic work, with its humour and clarity of lyrical presentation is through-composed for a cast of opera singers and singing actors, and its mixture of fairy tale and the universal appeal of the mythological, with all its range and depth of meaning, is captivating for audiences of all ages.



## The Enchanted Pig (2006)

A Musical Tale | 120 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

German translation by Peter Lund

2S,Mz,C,2T,Bar,Bbar

tbn/perc/pf.hp/acn/vc.db

Commissioned by The Young Vic

First performed 1 December 2006,  
The Young Vic, London

## Roles

Mab/Adelaide/Chorus 1	Soprano
Dot/Day/Chorus 2	Soprano
Flora/Chorus 3	Mezzo-soprano
The Book of Fate/Old Woman /Mrs Northwind/ Chorus 4	Contralto
The King of the East/ Moon/Chorus 5	Tenor
The King of the West/ Sun/Chorus 6	Tenor
King Hildebrand/ North Wind/Chorus 7	Baritone
Pig/Chorus 8	Bass-baritone

## Synopsis

When you're a princess you expect a fairy tale wedding. You don't expect your husband to be hairy, smelly and a genuine pig. The pig, of course, is an enchanted prince but Flora loses him almost as soon as she finds him. Taking her fate into her own hands, she ventures to the ends of the earth and even into the sky until at last she frees him from the evil spell that binds him.

## Production History

**The Young Vic**, London, UK, December 2006 to March 2007

**The Opera Group**, UK and USA, December 2009 to April 2010

**Halastó Kulturális Egyesület**, Hungary, June to July 2011

**St Mary's College**, Indiana, USA, February 2014

**Opernhaus Zürich**, Switzerland, November 2015 to April 2016 (German translation)

**University of Birmingham**, UK, June 2017

**Hampstead Garden Opera**, UK, November 2017

**Gertrude Opera**, Melbourne, Australia, October 2019

**Manchester University**, UK, February 2020

**The University of Alberta**, Canada, March 2020

**Buxton International Festival**, UK, July 2021

**Royal College of Music**, London, UK, February 2022

**Leeds Youth Opera**, UK, March 2022

**Royal Danish Opera**, Denmark, February 2023

**Opera North**, UK, May 2023

**Royal Birmingham Conservatoire**, June 2023

**Playbox Theatre**, Warwick, UK, June 2023

**Royal College of Music**, London, UK, May 2024

**Volksoper Wien**, Vienna, Austria, May 2025

**International Opera Academy**, Ghent, May 2025

**Voltahalle**, Basel, Switzerland, September 2025

# THE MONSTER IN THE MAZE



## A Community Opera

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

Commissioned by Berliner Philharmoniker, London Symphony Orchestra and Festival d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence within a series of commissions of children's operas led by Sir Simon Rattle and Simon Halsey

World premiere: Berliner Philharmoniker and Young Musicians, Berlin, 20 June 2015

Scored for three professional soloists and a professional actor, adult community chorus, youth chorus, children's chorus, and an orchestra of professional musicians playing alongside young or pre-professional players drawn from the local area, *The Monster in the Maze* is an opera designed to celebrate an arts organisation's relationship with its community.

Dove and librettist Alasdair Middleton sought a universal topic for the work which could be told by a large group of children, deciding on the ancient Greek story which tells of the heroic rescue from the Labyrinth, by Theseus, of young Athenians sent to Crete as a sacrifice to the Minotaur.

Premiered in German, English and French under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle in 2015, the opera has since been translated into Chinese/Taiwanese, Portuguese, Swedish, and Catalan, as this remarkable work continues to enthral audiences and participants across the globe.





## Synopsis

Minos, King of the island of Crete, has a labyrinth in his palace in which he keeps the Minotaur, a monster – half man and half bull – which feeds on human flesh. To press home a military victory over Athens, Minos decrees that the Athenians should provide a regular supply of their young people to be sacrificed to the monster. The Athenian hero Theseus joins one of these shiploads, slays the Minotaur, and sails home with the Athenian youths.



## The Monster in the Maze (2015)

Opera for Actor, Soli, Youth and Children's Chorus and Orchestra | 50 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

Available in English, German, French, Chinese/Taiwanese, Portuguese, Swedish, and Catalan

Actor, Mz, DrmtcT, Bbar; adult, youth and children's chorus

2[2pic].2.2.2+cbn/8.2.4+btbn.2/5perc/hp/str (0.0.0.12.3) on-stage & off-stage brass: 6.0.3+btbn.2

Commissioned by Berliner Philharmoniker, London Symphony Orchestra and Festival d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence

First performed by the Berliner Philharmoniker and Young Musicians, Vokalhelden-Projektchor, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle and Simon Halsey, Philharmonie, Berlin, Germany

British Composer Award 2016

## Roles

Minos	Actor (spoken role)
Theseus	Heldentenor
Mother	Mezzo-soprano
Daedalus	Bass-baritone

## Chorus roles

Chorus of Athenians, Chorus of Cretans	Adult Chorus
Youth of Athens	Youth Chorus
Children of Athens	Children's Chorus

## Production History

**Philharmonie**, Berlin, Germany, June 2015

**Barbican**, London, UK, July 2015

**Grand Theatre de Provence**, Aix-en-Provence, France, July 2015

**Place du Theatre**, Lille, France, June 2016

**National Taichung Theater**, Taichung City, Taiwan, October 2016

**Opéra Berlioz**, Montpellier, France, April 2017

**Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian**, Lisbon, Portugal, September 2017

**Göteborgs Operan**, Sweden, May to June 2018

**Philharmonie de Paris**, France, June 2018

**Festival Grec**, Barcelona, Spain, July 2018

“With suitably mythic directness, Dove and librettist Alasdair Middleton have re-energised the story of Theseus slaying the Minotaur, and the result is spellbinding.”

**Peter Reed** | Classical Source

**Baltimore Choral Arts Society**, USA, May 2019

**Oper Wuppertal**, Germany, July 2019

**Liceu Opera Barcelona**, Spain, March to April 2020

**Liceu Opera Barcelona**, Spain, March 2022

**Theater und Orchester Heidelberg**, Germany, July 2022

**Liceu Opera Barcelona**, Spain, May to June 2023

**Liceu Opera Barcelona**, Spain, 2024

**Music in the Round**, Sheffield, UK, November 2024

**Liceu Opera Barcelona**, Spain, April to May 2025

**New Zealand Opera**, September 2025

“Jonathan Dove’s *Minotaur* community opera brilliantly hits the mark.”

**Michael Church** | Independent

# THE WALK FROM THE GARDEN



*A Church Opera in One Act*

*Libretto by Alasdair Middleton*

Commissioned by the Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival

Premiere: Salisbury Cathedral, 30 May 2012

The story of Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden has a particular resonance in a time of growing awareness of man's impact on the planet.

This moving and poignant 50-minute church opera in 12 scenes is scored for an unusual but approachable line-up: 2 solo singers, chorus, string quartet, timpani and organ. Ideal for companies taking work out of the opera house and introducing opera to the wider community.

## Synopsis

The voice of God pronounces Adam and Eve's banishment. The pair move from numb shock to recollection of their first days in Eden. They contemplate what will be lost, finally making their way into an unknown world, as the chorus sings 'They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow, Through Eden, took their solitary way'.

## The Walk from the Garden [2012]

Church Opera in One Act | 50 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

S,T; SATB chorus

timp/org/2vn.va.vc

Commissioned by the Ageas  
Salisbury International Arts Festival

First performed 30 May 2012,  
Salisbury Cathedral, UK

## Roles

Eve Soprano

Adam Tenor

“*The Walk from the Garden* was premiered in Salisbury Cathedral at the 40th Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival and was the culmination of three years of development, drawing creative and financial partners around the project as it blossomed and grew. The performances were rapturously received by audiences and music critics alike and we feel privileged to have played a part in bringing this remarkable music into the world.”

**Maria Bota** | Festival Director

## Production History

**Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival**,  
UK, May 2010

**Lichfield Festival**, UK, July 2012

**Scottish Opera**, Connect Company, UK,  
April 2015

**Rackham Choir**, Detroit, USA, May 2016

**The Little Opera Company**, Winnipeg, USA,  
March 2024

**Opera Collective Ireland**, November 2024



Images: © Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival (Adrian Harris)

# TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL



“It’s a ‘community opera’ in the very best sense of the word... the sense of communal striving, communal uplift was palpable.”

**Rodney Milnes** | The Times

## A Community Opera

Libretto by David Lan

Commissioned by Almeida Opera and St Matthew’s Church, Perry Beeches, Birmingham

World Premiere: Almeida Opera, Christ Church, London, 7 July 1999

The simple uplifting story of healing that Dove’s score expertly tells is suitable for theatre as well as church stagings. The tale is from the book of Tobit, in the Biblical Apocrypha. David Lan’s witty and direct libretto retains the character of a Jewish folk-legend, developing the journey of the young Tobias into a spiritual education: through learning to hear the song of the trees, of the mountains and of the river, Tobias is able to cure his father’s blindness and cast out Sarah’s demon.

The opera has proved very popular with performers and audiences. Its instrumentation is modest (nine instruments) but there are abundant vocal opportunities: alongside eight principals, children sing the birds who blind Tobit, and the fish that tries to eat Tobias; an adult community chorus plays the people of Nineveh and Ecbatana, while an offstage choir evokes Trees, the River, Mountains and Angels.

## Tobias and the Angel (1999)

Community Opera in One Act | 75 minutes

Libretto by David Lan

S,2Mz,Ct,2T,2Bar; SATB adult chorus and children's chorus

1(pic).0.1.0/perc/org.hp/acn/vn.vc.db

Commissioned by Almeida Opera and St. Matthew's Church, Perry Beeches, Birmingham

First performed 7 July 1999, Christ Church, London, Almeida Opera

Recording: Jonathan Dove, *Tobias and The Angel*, Soloists, Choruses and Instrumental Ensemble of The Young Vic/David Charles Abell, Chandos CHAN 10606

## Roles

Tobit	Baritone
Anna	Mezzo-soprano
Tobias	Tenor
Sara	Mezzo-soprano
Edna	Soprano
Raguel	Tenor
Raphael	Countertenor
Ashmodeus	Baritone
Raguel's men	3 to 6 adult men
Sparrows/The Fish	Children's chorus
People in market/ The Mountain (men only)/ The River (women only)/ Guests	Adult chorus (unison)
People in market (taunting)/The Trees/Angels	Adult chorus (SATB)



“A hauntingly beautiful score.”

Mark Shenton | The Stage

## Production History

**Almeida Opera**, UK July 1999. St Matthew's Church Birmingham, UK May 2000

**English Touring Opera**, UK  
September to December 2004

**The Young Vic Theatre Company**,  
UK October 2006

**New Sussex Opera**, UK March 2007

**Buxton Festival**, UK July 2007

**Oundle International Festival**, UK July 2007

**Opera Vivente**, USA February to March 2008

**Bollington Festival**, UK May 2009

**Highbury Opera Theatre**, UK October 2012

**Carey Baptist Church**, Hemel Hempstead,  
UK September 2013

**Cambridge University Opera Society**,  
UK June 2014

**Princeton University**, USA January 2015

**Csikszzerda Choir and Chamber Orchestra**,  
Hungary November 2016

# UPRISING

“Jonathan Dove’s masterful new community opera, a homage to Greta Thunberg and young eco-warriors everywhere, is so beautifully scored that every word is clear whether sung by professional or amateur.”

**Richard Morrison** | The Times



## A Community Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by April De Angelis

Commissioned by Glyndebourne and Saffron Hall Trust. Project initiated by Jim Potter and generously supported by Jim and Hilary Potter

World Premiere: Glyndebourne, 26 February 2025

Jonathan Dove and April De Angelis’ community opera looks at the climate emergency through the eyes of those whom it will affect the most – the young. From teenage rebellion to the connective power of the internet, family dynamics to business ethics, it asks searching questions on an issue that should unite us all. How do we cast our eyes beyond the here and now? What is the most effective form of protest, and are we listening carefully enough to those that do?

De Angelis’ lyrical, witty words are matched by Dove’s urgent, impassioned music for a drama that melds the everyday with fantasy, laced with humour, honesty and warmth. Above all it gives a persuasive voice to the principal players in this crisis – young adults, and nature itself.

“Inspiring opera for a modern audience.”

Keith Bruce | The Herald





## Synopsis

Lola refuses to go to school. Overwhelmed by the loss of the rainforest, she can't see the point of school if there's no future. Sitting alone outside the school gates, she is mocked by her classmates and the townspeople. But encouraged by activists she meets online, she persists, and gradually fellow pupils start to join her strike. They soon find themselves part of a global movement.

Lola's mother has won a new contract that threatens the local ancient woodland, the loss of which may have catastrophic consequences. She is on a collision course with her daughter. What will the future hold?



## Uprising (2023)

Opera in Two Acts | 105 minutes

Libretto by April de Angelis

Lyric S, S, Drmtc Mz, T, Bar, B; SATB teenage and adult choruses

2[II:pic].2[II:ca].2[II:bcl].2[II:cbn]/4.3.3.1/timp.3perc/hp/str; 7 on-stage percussion

Commissioned by Glyndebourne and Saffron Hall Trust. Project initiated by Jim Potter and generously supported by Jim and Hilary Potter.

First performed 26 February 2025, Glyndebourne

2025 Ivor Novello Award for Best Community and Participation Composition

2026 RPS Award for Opera and Music Theatre



## Roles

Lola Green, 15	High Lyric soprano
Angela Green, Lola's mother	Dramatic Mezzo-soprano
Zoe Green, 18, Lola's sister	Soprano
Clive Green, Lola's father	Baritone
Mayor/Quercus	Bass
Doctor	Tenor

## Secondary Roles

A schoolkid	Teenage high or low voice
Passer-by	Adult
Teacher	Adult
Townsperson 1	Adult high voice (or small group)
Townsperson 2	Adult (or small group)
Townsperson 3	Adult low voice (or small group)
Birch tree	Adult high voice
Bracket Fungus	Teenage or adult high voice
Weevil	Small child, high voice
Root	Adult low voice (or small group)

## Chorus Roles

Police (Act 1 Scene 9)	Mixed adult, unison (c.5) loud voices, possibly with megaphones
Workers (Act 2)	Mixed adult, unison (c.5)
Teenage Activists	10 solo teenage voices (soprano, mezzo, 1 boy treble)
Schoolkids/Young People	Teenage SATB chorus (c.20)
Schoolkids in Act 1 Scene 9 / River / Young People in Act 2 Scene 5	Large teenage SATB chorus (c.75-100)
Townsperson / Trees / People of all ages	Adult mixed SATB chorus

## Production History

**Glyndebourne**, February 2025

**Saffron Hall**, March 2025

**Royal Scottish National Orchestra**, March 2025

**Opera Zuid**, Maastricht, Netherlands  
November 2026

**Nationale Opera & Ballet**, Amsterdam,  
Netherlands May 2026

## OTHER STAGE WORKS

### L'Augellino Belverde

(The Little Green Swallow) (1994)

Opera in Three Acts | 130 minutes

Libretto adapted from Carlo Gozzi

English singing translation by Adam Pollock

3Tr,2S,3Mz,Ct,2T,2Bar,B

0+pic.1(ca).1.0/2.1.0.0/perc/pf(CEL).hp/vn.vc.db

Commissioned for the 20th Anniversary of Musica Nel Chiostro

First performed July 1994, Batignano, Italy.  
First performance of English version, 2 June 2005,  
Guildhall School of Music & Drama London

### Diana and Actaeon (2012)

Ballet in One Act | 30 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

S,T

2[ll:pic].2[ll:ca].2.2[ll:cbn]/6.2.3.1/timp.2perc/cel.hp/str

Commissioned by the Royal Ballet

First performed 14 July 2012,  
Royal Opera House, London

### Greed (1993)

A Deadly Sin in Six Minutes | 6 minutes

Libretto by April de Angelis

S,Mz,T,B

pf/2vn.va.vc

One of seven works written for outgoing artistic directors of English National Opera based on the seven deadly sins

First performed 13 June 1993, Great Hall,  
Lincoln's Inn, London

### The Hackney Chronicles (2001)

Opera in Four Acts for Children (Soloists, Chorus)  
and Piano | 50 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

Commissioned by Hackney Music Development Trust

First performed 1 December 2001, Lauriston  
Primary School Hackney

### Hear Our Voice (2006)

A Dramatic Cantata for Soprano, Young People's  
Voices and Chamber Orchestra | 70 minutes

1.1.1.1/1.1.1.1/perc/pf.hp/acn/str

Music by Jonathan Dove and Matthew King written  
with young people as part of the *Hear Our Voice* Project,  
arranged and orchestrated by Matthew King

Libretto by Tertia Sefton-Green, compiled from  
writing by children of the Holocaust

Commissioned by Hackney Music Development Trust,  
funded by a generous grant from Culture 2000  
and the PRS for Music Foundation

First performed 15 July 2006, Bloomsbury  
Theatre, London

### Kwasi & Kwame (2007)

Opera in Two Acts | 120 minutes

Libretto by Arthur Japin based on his novel *The Two  
Hearts of Kwasi Boachi*

GirlSop,3BoyVce,S,2Mz,3T,2Bar,Bbar,2B;  
children's chorus

1(pic).1(ca).1(bcl).1(cbn)/1.1.1.0/2perc/hp/str (1.1.1.1.1)

Commissioned by Onafhankelijk Toneel/Opera OT

First performed 26 October 2007, Onafhankelijk  
Toneel/Opera OT, Rotterdam

**Man on the Moon** (2006)

Libretto by Nicholas Wright | 50 minutes

Opera for television

3S,2Mz,4T,5Bar; male chorus

2(2pic).2(II:ca).2.1(cbn)/4.3.3.1/2perc/kbd.pf(CEL).hp/str

Commissioned by Channel 4

First broadcast 26 December 2006, Channel 4

Opera Special Prize – Rose d’Or Festival for Television Programming 2007

Gold Medal for Excellence in a Performance Film – Park City Film Music Festival 2008

**On Spital Fields** (2005)

Community Cantata | 70 minutes

Libretto compiled by Alasdair Middleton

S,T; children’s chorus, community chorus, senior citizen’s chorus, SATB chorus

0.0.1.0/1.2.1.1/3perc/pf.hp/acn/str (1.0.1.1.1)  
off-stage band: 0+4pic.0.0.0/1.2.1.1/2perc

Commissioned by the Spitalfields Festival with funds from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to celebrate the life of Christopher Robert Vaughan 1961-1999

First performed 22 June 2005, Christ Church Spitalfields, London, Spitalfields Festival

Royal Philharmonic Society Award 2005

British Composer Award 2006

**The Palace in the Sky** (2000)

Community Opera in Two Acts | 110 minutes

Libretto by Nick Dear

S,Mz,T,Bar,Bbar; chorus

4.0.0.0.sax.2asx.2tsx.barsx/1+3E<sup>h</sup>hn+2barhn.6.6.0+2B<sup>p</sup>  
tuba+2E<sup>p</sup>tuba.2cnt.flg.euph/2perc.dmkit.steeldr.djembe/  
kbd.pf.hp/egtr/str4tet.vn.vc.2db

Commissioned by the ENO Opera Studio with funds provided by ING Barings and the Baring Foundation

First performed 3 November 2000, Hackney Empire, conducted by Stuart Stratford

**Pig** (1992)

Short Opera in One Act | 14 minutes

Libretto by April de Angelis

2S,Bar

1.0.1.0/pf.hp/vn.vc.db

Written for ENO Contemporary Opera Studio

First performed 24 April 1992, Almeida Theatre

**Le porte di Bagdad** (2003)

Ballet chanté | 35 minutes

Text by Italo Calvino

Mz,Bar; 6 solo dancers

0.1.0.0.ssx/perc/hpd/theorbo/str (1.1.1.2.1)

Composed for Musica Nel Chiostro

First performed 24 July 2003, Batignano, Italy

## Racconti di speranza e desiderio (Tales of Hope and Desire):

### L'altra Euridice (The Other Euridice) (2001)

Opera in One Act | 30 minutes

Libretto by the composer after Italo Calvino

English singing translation by Adam Pollock

Baritone

0.1.0.0.ssx/hpd/theorbo/str (1.1.0.2.1)

Composed for Omar Ebrahim and Musica Nel Chiostro

First performed 9 August 2001, Batignano, Italy

First performance of English version, 12 July 2002, Almeida Opera

### La dama ed il pulitore di Damasco (The Lady and the Sweep from Damascus) (2003)

Opera in One Act | 20 minutes

Story from the *Arabian Nights*

English singing translation by Adam Pollock

Mz, T

ob/perc/theorbo/va.2vc.db

Composed for Musica Nel Chiostro

First performed 24 July 2003, Batignano, Italy

### An Old Way to Pay New Debts (Un vecchio modo di pagare i nuovi debiti) (2006)

Opera in One Act | 30 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton based on  
Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Shipman's Tale*

Italian singing translation by Adam Pollock

Mz, T, Bar

0.1.0.0.ssx/perc/hpd/theorbo/str (1.1.1.2.1)

Composed for Adam Pollock

First performed 28 October 2006, London

### Seven Angels (2009)

Opera in seven scenes for soprano, countertenor  
and harp | 30 minutes

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

First performed 17 January 2010, 20th-Century Theatre,  
London

### Siren Song (1994)

Opera in One Act | 70 minutes

Libretto by Nick Dear, based on the book by  
Gordon Honeycombe

Actor; S, 2T, Bar, B

1(pic).1.1(bcl).0/hn/perc/pf(cel).hp/str (1.0.0.1.1)

Commissioned by the Almeida Theatre

First performed 14 July 1994, Almeida Theatre

### When She Died... (2002)

Opera for television | 50 minutes

Libretto by David Harsent

2S, 2Mz, T, 2Bar, Bbar

2(2pic).2.2.1(cbn)/2.2.2.1/2perc/pf(cel).hp/str (2.2.2.2.2)

Chamber version for Staged Performance:

1(pic).1.1(ssx).1(cbn)/2.1.1.0/2perc/pf(cel).hp/str (1.1.1.1.1)

Commissioned by Channel 4 commemorating the 5th  
anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales

First broadcast 25 August 2002, Channel 4

First performance of the version for staged  
performance, 29 March 2007, Kammeroper Wien



Head office:

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LONDON

**Chester Music Ltd  
Novello & Company Co Ltd  
Edition Peters**  
14-15 Berners Street  
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promotion@wisemusic.com

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**Wise Music Classical Berlin  
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Dorotheenstr 3  
10117 Berlin, Germany  
classical.berlin@wisemusic.com

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**Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS**  
Bornholmsgade 1A  
1266 Copenhagen K, Denmark  
ewh@ewh.dk

LEIPZIG

**C.F. Peters GmbH & Co. KG**  
Talstraße 10  
D 04103 Leipzig  
info.de@editionpeters.com

MADRID

**Unión Musical Ediciones**  
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**G. Schirmer, Inc. & Associated  
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Première Music Group**  
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75009 Paris, France  
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**G. Schirmer Pty. Ltd.**  
4th Floor, Lisgar House  
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Sydney NSW 2000, Australia  
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