



PRESS RELEASE

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Announcing Investec Opera Holland Park's 2017 season dates

Opera Holland Park's 2017 season will run from 1 June to 29 July, with 28 main-stage opera performances as well as a return of Will Todd's family opera *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland* and the Royal Ballet School's end of year show. There will be three new productions, of Puccini's *La rondine*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Leoncavallo's *Zazà*, as well as a revival of the highly acclaimed 2009 production of Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová*.

Booking opens in January, earlier than ever before. Ambassador, Benefactor and Founder tickets will be available from 9 January, Envoy tickets from 16 January, all Friends' tickets from 23 January, and tickets go on sale to the general public on 30 January. In a feature brand new to 2017, Opera Holland Park is also offering the option to purchase a season ticket, where audiences who book for every production in the season will receive a discounted overall price.

Last June Investec Wealth & Investment (IW&I) renewed its title sponsorship of Opera Holland Park (OHP) for a further three years, taking the partnership to a total of nine years. OHP is very grateful to IW&I for its continued support, which enables OHP to maintain its high artistic aims as well as extending its reach to the community. It is a particularly exciting time for OHP, following the huge success of the 2016 season, its first since independence from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which achieved 98% capacity. The 2017 season is the first entirely planned and programmed as an independent company.

OHP continues its commitment to bring opera to schools, hospitals, youth groups and other organisations in the area via the *Inspire* programme, which also provides exceptional ticket offers for the season. In 2017, around 1000 free seats will be available to young people and those aged 60 and over. A total of approximately 2600 tickets are priced at just £18 and available to all.

OHP is excited to be opening its season with ***La rondine***, which celebrates its centenary year in 2017. This opera has enjoyed growing popularity in recent years, in tandem with its re-evaluation as one of the composer's most exquisitely crafted and touching works. Astonishingly, it is sometimes referred to as a 'comedy', presumably because no one dies, but it is in fact a story of love and loss. Magda is the 'swallow' of the title, a society girl, flighty and free, who falls in love with Ruggero, but ultimately his good family name, and her desire not to sully it, drive them apart. The score is warm and delicious, the choruses breathtakingly shaped and the evocation of Parisian life is beguiling - but there is no escaping the tears of the finale.

Leoncavallo's deeply moving ***Zazà*** is a long-awaited addition to Opera Holland Park's repertoire, continuing OHP's tradition of exploring rare operas from the late Italian 'verismo' period. Best known for *I Pagliacci*, Leoncavallo is often condemned as a one-hit wonder like his contemporary Mascagni – a grossly unfair judgment of both composers as those who saw OHP's *Iris* in 2016 will attest. Lyrical, sumptuous and poignant, *Zazà* follows the life of a Parisian music hall singer and her passionate love affair with Milio Dufresne, an acquaintance to whom she grows hopelessly and devotedly attached until she discovers that he is married with a child. With its lush orchestration, evocative dance styles and infectious rhythms, Leoncavallo's music bursts with colour.

Mozart's dark comedy ***Don Giovanni*** returns to OHP in a new production, which will open the season alongside *La rondine*. Concerned only with hedonistic thrills and wooing his 'conquests', Don Giovanni's philosophy is to live every day as if it were his last, caring little about the hearts he has broken or lives he has taken along the way. But as the victims of past relationships seek revenge, the unrepentant Don pays the price for his wicked ways in a terrifying final scene. With Mozart's dazzling score, seductive arias, comedic jolts and irresistible drama, the audience is torn between love and hate for this complicated character who, despite his faults, charms you with every note. His status as opera's great anti-hero deservedly remains.

Janáček's sensual masterpiece ***Káťa Kabanová*** makes a welcome return to OHP in Olivia Fuchs' production, deemed in 2009 "not simply the highlight of Holland Park's season, [but] the highlight of the summer" by Anna Picard in *The Independent*. The distinctive score, replete with traditional Czech folk styles, brings the drama to life effortlessly. One can't help but sympathise deeply with *Káťa* as she journeys through internal conflicts of love, adultery, innocence, guilt - feelings heightened by the claustrophobia of a repressed society. Gradually descending into madness, *Káťa*'s story ends as she commits suicide in a moment of heart-breaking pathos – the composer's *Madama Butterfly*.

Performance and booking dates for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and the Royal Ballet School annual performance are to be announced soon.

City of London Sinfonia will be the house orchestra for the 14th year running, joined by the Opera Holland Park Chorus, who received high praise during the 2016 season. OHP has always championed emergent singers, conductors and directors, giving those on the Young Artists' Programme a performance within the main season each year. Many of those who started out on the programme go on to become stalwarts of OHP's main casts. In 2017 there's a chance to see some of the opera world's rising stars in *Don Giovanni* on 22 June.

Details of the casts and creatives for all productions will be revealed in November. For further information about Opera Holland Park and the 2017 season please visit **www.operahollandpark.com**.

Investec Opera Holland Park 2017

1 June – 29 July

La rondine by Giacomo Puccini

1, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 23 June 2017 at 7.30pm

£77/£71/£63/£53/£18 (INSPIRE)

Don Giovanni by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

3, 5, 7, 9, 14, 16, 18 (matinee at 2.00pm), 20, 22 (Young Artists), 24 June 2017 at 7.15pm

£77/£71/£63/£53/£18 (INSPIRE)

Young Artists Performance tickets: **£30/£28/£25/£22/£18 (INSPIRE)**

Kát'a Kabanová by Leoš Janáček

15, 19, 21, 26, 28 July 2017 at 8.00pm

£70/£65/£59/£49/£18 (INSPIRE)

Zazà by Ruggero Leoncavallo

18, 20, 22, 27, 29 July 2017 at 7.30pm

£70/£65/£59/£49/£18 (INSPIRE)

Notes to Editors

2017 season booking dates

9 January – Ambassador, Benefactor and Founder

16 January – Envoy

23 January – All Friends

30 January – General public

10 April – INSPIRE £18 tickets

1 May – In person booking

General booking

- Online and telephone: from Monday 30 January, 10.00am at <https://bookings.operahollandpark.com/> or 0300 999 1000.
- In person at the Box Office: from Monday 1 May 2017, 1.00pm

INSPIRE ticket scheme

- £18 INSPIRE tickets: booking (online only) from Monday 10 April, 10.00am. These are available to all, with a limit of two per production and four per season for each individual.

Travelling to Opera Holland Park

Address: Holland Park, W8 6LU

Nearest station: Holland Park. Many others are also close - Kensington High Street (10 minutes' walk), Kensington Olympia (15 minutes' walk), Notting Hill Gate (16 minutes' walk) and Earl's Court (18 minutes' walk).

Santander Cycle sites are situated at the Ilchester Place gates and Duchess of Bedford's Walk gates to Holland Park.

Buses: 9, 10, 27, 28, 49, 328, C1 (Kensington High Street) and 31, 94, 148, 228 (Holland Park)

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