

## **PUPPETRY IN OPERA**

9 & 10 November 2012

A unique and fascinating look at the use of puppetry in opera will be offered in November when the Puppet Centre, a development agency for the art form of puppetry, in collaboration with the Central School of Speech and Drama and in association with Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and the Barbican Arts Centre presents a two day event. The aim is to deliver a nationally strategic initiative by examining the ways director and companies are already using puppetry in opera and looking at the way forward. This exciting initiative will be organised and run by Linda Lewis, Director of the Puppet Centre, based at Battersea Arts Centre in London.

The planning of this event has involved a project Steering Committee, who are John Fulljames, Associate Director of Opera at the Royal Opera House; Dominic Gray from Opera North; Peter Glanville, Artistic Director of Little Angel Theatre; Mark Down from Blind Summit; Bill Bankes-Jones, Artistic Director of Tete a Tete Opera Festival; Cariad Astles from Central School of Speech and Drama and Linda Hirst from Trinity Laban.

**Day One on 9 November** takes place at the Barbican and will consist of presentations and discussions. Confirmed speakers on 9 November include William Kentridge, a highly renowned director and visual artist who has directed for Handspring Puppet Theatre Company in South Africa; David Pountney (UK); Japanese opera director Nori Sawa; Anna Karinsdotter, Head of Education at Royal Swedish Opera; Roberto Jona from Controluce (Italy); Daniel Snowman, Social and Cultural Historian and Penny Francis MBE, Founder of the Puppet Centre and distinguished puppeteer. Further speakers will be announced later.

As an integral part of this project, students and young people (7 puppeteers, 8 opera singers and 2 makers) will be given the opportunity to work at Trinity Laban with emerging opera directors and puppetry directors in two groups under the general direction of Linda Hirst and Cariad Astles. Their puppetry in opera presentations will be shown to attenders in the Barbican Pit on the evening of the conference on 9 November. The composers for these short works are Gillian Weir (King Harald's Saga) and Evelyn Ficarra (The Empresses Feet).

**Day Two on 10 November** further workshops, presentations and master classes will take place at the Central School of Speech and Drama.

Although the event is brief, the results will, it is anticipated, be far reaching. The young people who work on the project will be introduced to the possibilities of working with opera and puppetry across two different, stylised art forms and will, it is intended, emerge more sensitive to the use of other arts forms when creating a piece of theatre work. In short, the experience should have an effect on their future careers and the way in which they work.

Both young performers and their directors will be asked to keep a diary so that the Puppet Centre and all concerned can properly evaluate the process and take all the positives from the project for use in future work.

Cont...

# Puppet Centre

t: 020 7228 5335

w: [www.puppetcentre.org.uk](http://www.puppetcentre.org.uk)

e: [pct@puppetcentre.org.uk](mailto:pct@puppetcentre.org.uk)

The implications for opera and puppetry will also be substantial. By beginning a dialogue between directors, performers, composers and other creative artists, established theatre and opera makers are being encouraged to step outside their usual ways of working and explore other possibilities.

The funders of Puppetry in Opera are Grants for the Arts and the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. The project is delivered in partnership with Central School of Speech and Drama and in association with Trinity Laban and the Barbican Arts Centre.

Linda Lewis says of this landmark event...

"Puppet Centre has created and promoted this initiative from its inception and is excited to have the resources to deliver PUPPETRY IN OPERA. New ways of creating theatre, using collaborations and fusions of art forms such as puppetry and opera can influence an inspiring approach by artists for the future." .....

Tickets to Puppets in Opera are available from [louise.alexander@puppetcentre.org.uk](mailto:louise.alexander@puppetcentre.org.uk)

For further information on tickets visit [www.puppetcentre.org.uk](http://www.puppetcentre.org.uk)

#### Further information on the event from:

**Anne Mayer**

**Press Agent**

020 7254 7391 or 07764 192842

[annemayer@btopenworld.com](mailto:annemayer@btopenworld.com)

**Linda Lewis**

**Director, Puppet Centre**

020 7228 5335 or 07850 576660

[linda.lewis@puppetcentre.org.uk](mailto:linda.lewis@puppetcentre.org.uk)

*Puppetry in Opera is funded by Grants for the arts and The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. It is presented by Puppet Centre in collaboration with Central School of Speech and Drama and in association with Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and the Barbican.*



Registered Charity no. 1056021

Limited Company no. 3185339

Puppet Centre, BAC, Lavender Hill, London SW11 5TN

Puppet Centre is a development agency supporting all forms of puppetry