

OPERA
workshop

Twisted Tales



Producer & Director

Shirley Keane

Music Director

Eóin Scanlon

Production Partners

Honest Arts

CAST

DEBORAH BULGARELLI - soprano

BRENDAN COLLINS - baritone

MATTHEW CURTIS - tenor

DAVID KENNEDY - baritone

SARAH-ELLEN MURPHY - contralto

CATHERINE O' CARROLL - mezzo-soprano

SARAH RICHMOND - mezzo-soprano

EVE STAFFORD - soprano

TRIONA WALSH - soprano

ROISIN WALSH - soprano

Pianists

DOIREANN O'CARROLL (Byrne operas)

KATERINA SPERANSKAYA (Linnane operas, Thurs 27th - Sat 29th)

EÓIN SCANLON (Linnane operas, Sun 30th)

Production Team

Production management	Pius M ^c Grath & Tara Doolan
Costume	Ella Daly
Stage manager	Gráinne Fitzgerald
Lighting Operator	Matty Moran
Social Media	Eve Stafford
Photography	Shane Vaughan, Caleb Purcell & Conor O'Brien

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Limerick City & County Council Arts Office

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Redemptorist Centre of Music, Limerick

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Mullocks & Sons

Pat Franklin, Key Cutting, Limerick

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CEO David O' Brien and the board of Limerick Civic Trust

The incredible team at The People's Museum of Limerick

William O'Neill, Museum Curator,

Kevin Pearse, Brian Coughlin, Joe Creagh, Mike Shinnors



PROGRAMME

Light of the Last Candle from *The Kate O'Brien Song Cycle*

music by Fiona Linnane

lyrics by Mary Coll

Agnes - Sarah-Ellen Murphy

Hag of Loughrask

music & libretto by Fiona Linnane

Bronach of Burren - Deborah Bulgarelli

M^cGrath - Catherine O'Carroll

Donogh O'Brien - David Kennedy

Ashes

music by Luke Byrne

libretto by Shirley Keane

Julia - Sarah Richmond

Sophia and George Take Tea from *No 2 Pery Square*

music & libretto by Fiona Linnane

Sophia Vanderkist - Triona Walsh

St. George de la Hare - David Kennedy

Bloody Murder

music by Luke Byrne

libretto by Shirley Keane

Kathleen Shine - Roisín Walsh

Maeve Shine - Sarah Richmond

Fintan O'Riordan - Matthew Curtis

Michael Shine - Brendan Collins

Off Tuskar

music & libretto by Fiona Linnane

Woman 1 - Triona Walsh

Woman 2 - Eve Stafford

Woman 3 - Sarah-Ellen Murphy

An Old House Is Never Empty from *No 2 Pery Square*

music & libretto by Fiona Linnane

St. George de la Hare - David Kennedy





Light of the Last Candle from *Songs from Kate O'Brien*

Linnane & Coll

Inspired by the character of Agnes from Kate O'Briens acclaimed novel *The Ante Room*, the protagonist declares all hope lost as the man she loves is already married to another, namely her sister Marie Rose.

Hag of Loughrask

Linnane

Set in 1317, with text taken from the 19th century transcription of the story by Eugene Curry, this story tells of a meeting between King Donogh O'Brien - on his way to battle at Corcomroe in County Clare - and Bronach of Burren who he comes across at Loughrask washing skulls and bones in the lake. She warns him to turn back, that he and all his army will perish if they proceed. He does not heed the warning. Originally composed as part of an Arts Council of Ireland Artist in the Community Project, *Bells across the Burren*, in 2013, supported by the Clare Arts Office.

Ashes

Byrne & Keane

Julia has been left her estranged grandfather's ashes and a letter of instruction on how his ashes are to be scattered. She is furious at his presumption, as he abandoned her grandmother many years previously. Julia loved her grandmother. Her pride, her grace in the face of her husband's disappearance. She has positive memories of her grandmother and continues to look after the beautiful roses in her grandmother's garden. Julia considers how to dispose of his remains. As he instructed or as she considers is his due?

Programme notes



Tea Scene from *No 2 Pery Square*

Linnane

Set in 19th Century Limerick. *No 2 Pery Square* is a contemporary opera inspired by the landmark Georgian house, built by investors of the Newtown Pery Tontine scheme. Tontine schemes were a popular form of raising capital in the 1700 and 1800s, but were riddled with rumours of foul play and scandal. The first tontine schemes were built on the premise that shares would be sold and the shareholder that outlived the rest 'won' the building or house! At this point in the opera, rumours abound regarding the mysterious deaths of people in Limerick connected with the Newtown Pery Tontine scheme. Sophia Vanderkist, a tontine investor, takes tea with her friend the artist George de la Hare, who has heard some disturbing gossip.

Bloody Murder

Byrne & Keane

A will, bungalows and bellbottoms threaten the conventional status quo of a small farm in an isolated corner of rural Ireland in 1970. The ideals and traditions of an entrenched, domineering farmer are dramatically challenged by his seemingly compliant wife, openly rebellious sister and her would be, starry-eyed fiancée. Each are driven to desperate measures to preserve or break the old order.

Bloody Murder was premiered at the Guildhall School of Music, London in July 2022

Off Tuskar

Linnane

The work details the loss of The Loop Head cargo ship during the great storm of 1927, told through the stories of the women waiting for news of loved ones on the ship. The premiere of this short opera formed part of the acclaimed Opera Workshop production *Abandoned*, in the Old Sailors' Home, Limerick in May 2019. It was composed with support from the Limerick City and County Council Individual Arts Bursary 2019.

An Old House is Never Empty from *No 2 Pery Square*

Linnane

The artist, St. George de la Hare, lived with his family in No 2 Pery Square as a child and studied art at the Limerick Atheneum in the 1870s. In this aria he contemplates the lives that continue to haunt this historic house as their spirits resonate through time.



Shirley Keane - Director

Founder and Artistic Director of Opera Workshop, Shirley has had training in both theatre and opera, at Rose Bruford College, Guildhall School of Music and the Royal Academy of Music. Shows created and produced for Opera Workshop include *The Countess' Salon*, *Opera What The Fuss!*, *The Trouble with Virtue*, *Abandoned at Limerick's Sailor* 'Home and *No 2 Pery Square* by Fiona Linnane.

She has worked as a performer, director, teacher and mentor with companies as diverse as Opera Theatre Co., Opera Holland Park, Basingstoke Haymarket Theatre, Glyndebourne Opera, Live Music Now, Accademia Solti Te Kanawa, Royal Academy of Music summer school, Newham Young Peoples' Chorus, Half Moon Young People's Theatre Co., and The Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Shirley was engaged on the Women's Conducting Programme at the National Concert Hall, led by conductor Alice Farnham. Shirley also enjoys regular cover presenter time on RTÉ Lyric Fm.

In 2021 Shirley was awarded an Arts Council of Ireland Opera Bursary, further supported by Limerick City and County Council Arts Office for the development of new opera projects and to study libretto writing. Her first libretto, *Bloody Murder*, with composer Luke Byrne was performed at the Guildhall School of Music, London in June 2022. She is grateful to the Limerick City and County Council for a recently awarded, Individual Arts Bursary 2022, for libretto writing.



Fiona Linnane - Composer

Fiona Linnane is a composer, based in Limerick and Clare, specialising in opera and site responsive work. She is director of Limerick New Music Ensemble and represented by the Contemporary Music Centre. In 2022 Linnane was recipient of the Art Council of Ireland Music Bursary Award for a project exploring composing for choirs, including a new commission for Ancór Chamber Choir, Limerick which will receive its premiere in December 2022. She was awarded an ACI Agility Award in 2021 and Music Bursary in 2020.

In 2022 Linnane worked with Limerick Bat Group for an Arts Council of Ireland Artist in the Community Research and Development Project. She has also produced several projects exploring sound art, creative audio and installation. This included a reflective piece on the pandemic based on the poem Covid-1 by Mary Coll, the soundtrack for the short film *From the Well* featuring electronics and spoken word, with imagery by Claire O'Rourke and *Inference*, a short dance film in collaboration with dancer Angie Smalis.

Significant vocal works include the site responsive chamber opera, *No.2 Pery Square*, commissioned by Opera Workshop through the Arts Council of Ireland Opera Commissions Award 2020; *Songs for Kate O'Brien*, a song cycle of 12 songs with lyrics by Mary Coll, and *Off Tuskar*, a short opera inspired by, and performed in, the Old Sailors' Home in Limerick City (both supported by Limerick City and County Council Individual Arts Bursary in 2018 and 2019).

Fiona Linnane is widely sought after for her work in arts in education and collaborative practice. She has undertaken training at European level through participation in the International Teacher Artist Partnership Professional Development (I-TAP-PD).



Luke Byrne - Composer

Luke Byrne is an Australian composer and musician, currently based in London where he is a Visiting Fellow at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and Associate Teacher at the London Academy of Music & the Dramatic Art (LAMDA). This year Luke completed his Masters of Opera Making & Writing at Guildhall, studying under eminent composers Julian Phillips and John Harle and in partnership with the Royal Opera. Luke's choral compositions are performed around Australia and the world, from Sydney to Hannover, Uluru to Cambridge. These include *Desert Sea*, *Capricorn* and *Earthrise* for Sydney Philharmonia, and *Storm Bird*, *Buruwan Elegy* and *Birinyi* for Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir and the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Luke is also a musical director and composer in theatre, including *The Harp in the South*, *Muriel's Wedding* and *Chimerica* for the Sydney Theatre Company, and *Snugglepot & Cuddlepie*, *Hamlet* and *The Events* for Belvoir St Theatre. Luke's first musical *Between the Sea and Sky* was selected for the 2018 New York Musical Festival where it won five awards including Outstanding Score and Best Musical.



Eóin Scanlon - Musical Director

Eóin holds a BMus and MA in Performance from MTU Cork School of Music. He is an experienced accompanist, conductor and educator. He worked as Musical Director of multiple musical groups during his time in Cork (2007-2014) and is an avid choral singer having sung with notable choirs such as Madrigal 75, the UCD Choral Scholars and Limerick Chamber Choir. Eóin teaches on the BA in Performing Arts in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in the University of Limerick, in Munster Music Academy and in the Redemptorist Centre of Music. Eóin has worked with Opera Workshop on a number of projects, most recently on the recordings for *No 2 Pery Square* by Fiona Linnane.





Deborah Bulgarelli

Born in Belo Horizonte, the Brazilian/Italian Soprano Deborah Bulgarelli has a Bachelor's Degree in Music - Qualification in Singing (2021) from Universidade do Estado de Minas Gerais (Brazil) and has Eiko Senda (Japan) and Raminta Lampsatis (Germany) as vocal coaches. Studied in one of most important Opera Studios in Brazil: the São Pedro Theater Opera Academy (Academia de Ópera do Theatro São Pedro), in São Paulo, coordinated by Maestro André dos Santos and Luis Fernando Malheiro.

Deborah has won the V and the VI Young Soloists Competition (Concurso para Jovens Solistas) organized by the Symphonic Orchestra of Minas Gerais, First Place on Linus Lerner International Competition and Best interpreter on Carlos Gomes' arias on "Carlos Gomes' competition".

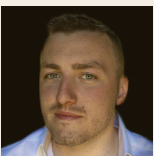


Brendan Collins

Cork Baritone Brendan Collins began his training at the Cork School of Music under Robert Beare, the D.I.T. Conservatory in Dublin and in 2007 he was granted a scholarship to study at the Opera Studio of Theatre de la Monnaie in Brussels under renowned bass-baritone José van Dam.

As a soloist he has performed across Ireland, the UK, Europe, the Middle East, China and America. Opera engagements include Irish National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, English Touring Opera, Opera Theatre Company, NI Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, Anna Livia Festival, Opera Collective Ireland, Cork Operatic Society and Iford Opera. His roles include the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Marcello (*La Bohème*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Germont (*La Traviata*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Alfio (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Paolo Albiani (*Simon Boccanegra*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*).

Highlights include his debuts at B.B.C. Proms at the Royal Albert Hall under Sir Andrew Davis, his New York debut at the Brooklyn Academy of Music under Sir Mark Elder, Opéra de Lausanne, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, and his Chinese debut in concert at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.



Matthew Curtis

British tenor, Matthew Curtis most recently enjoyed performing the role of the Sailor in If Opera's production of *Dido and Aeneas* at Belcombe Court this summer, as well as a chorus role in *La Rondine*. Other recent roles include Bill (*Flight*) for RCM's Opera Studio and previously First Priest cover/Second Armed man cover (*The Magic Flute*). Matthew's other work includes Chorus (*Silent Night*) for Opera North, Chorus (*Eugene Onegin*) at the Buxton International Opera Festival and Superstition (*The Pilgrims Progress*) at the Royal Northern College of Music. Matthew graduated with honours from the Royal Northern College of Music and later became a H R Taylor Trust Masters scholar under the tutelage of Rosa Mannion at the Royal College of Music. Matthew's next engagement will be as an Emerging artist for Nevill Holt Opera in which he will be performing Handel's Messiah as part of their Winter Festival.



David Kennedy

David Kennedy is a 20 year old classical Baritone from east County Galway. He is currently studying under the direction of his primary teacher Owen Gilhooly-Miles and répétiteur Grainne Dunne at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, where he is undergoing his Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance.

David has been successful in many aspects of his singing life. He was one of nine singers selected as a scholar for the LiedAkademie at the International Song Centre of Heidelberg, led by international acclaimed baritone Thomas Hampson. Other accomplishments include: Junior category winner for the Charles Wood Song Competition (2022), recipient of the 'Canto Al Serchio' prize at the TrenchAwards (2021), 'The Most Promising Performer Award', Irené Sandford Competition (2021), Multiple award winner Feis Ceoil.

David most notably made his National Concert Hall debut in the '*Raise our Voices*' recital series (2021) Other recitals series include; '*Soundscape of Nature*' (Birr Festival of Music 2022), and 'Lunchtime recital series at the Pepper Canister Church, Dublin.' David performed the role of Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* at Opernfest this July with the Berlin Opera Academy where he had been granted the 'Lily Niblock Memorial Full Scholarship'. David is passionate about the world of music and he is determined to bring it to life in its most authentic self.



Sarah -Ellen Murphy

Contralto Sarah-Ellen Murphy studied with Olive Cowpar and Owen Gilhooly-Miles. She holds a Bachelor of Education Degree from Mary Immaculate College. She achieved an honours diploma in singing from the London College of Music and Media. As a oratorio soloist she is much in demand across the country including

performances with Limerick Choral Union, Ancór, Mary Immaculate College Choir, Galway Choral Association, Tipperary Chamber Choir, Kerry Chamber Choir, Carlow Choral Society, West Cork Choral Singers, Sing Ireland and The Fleischmann Choir. She also presented lunchtime recitals in St. Mary's Cathedral and in Mary Immaculate College. Opera performances include roles in in *Riders to the Sea* by Vaughan Williams and *The Medium* by Gian-Carlo Menotti for the Opera Castalia Festival in Kilkenny.

She was part of the cast who devised *No 2 Pery Square* and performed in *Off Tuskar* by Fiona Linnane. She performed in the ensemble devised productions of *The Countess' Salon*, *The Countess' Legacy* and *The Trouble with Virtue*.

Sarah-Ellen recorded the album 'Cantabile' with pianist Dearbhla Collins. It was made possible through the Individual Artists Bursary Awards scheme run by Limerick City & County Council Arts Department and with the generous support of the University Concert Hall, Limerick.



Catherine O'Carroll

Mezzo-Soprano Catherine O'Carroll studied with Veronica Dunne in Dublin and subsequently completed postgraduate studies in opera at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, studying under Suzanne Murphy. She then continued her studies in London with Prof. Susan McCulloch, and currently studies in Limerick with Owen Gilhooly-Milles.

In Ireland, Catherine has been the winner of numerous competitions for Opera, Oratorio, Lieder, English Art Song, and Operetta. She has been the recipient of many bursaries and scholarships for her studies including, The Sir Geraint Evans Scholarship, The Laura Ashley Foundation Scholarship and bursaries from the Arts Council of Ireland and The John McCormack Society Dublin. Catherine has had the opportunity to perform a large variety of operatic roles by composers such as Berlioz, Britten, Dove, Mozart, Nicolai, Offenbach, Puccini, Ravel, Rossini, Verdi.

In Recital, she has performed in such venues as St. David's Hall Cardiff, Dublin Castle, the Mansion House Dublin, Killruddery House Wicklow, and at the Sligo International Choral Festival.



Sarah Richmond

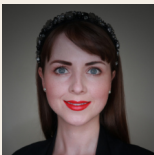
Mezzo soprano Sarah Richmond is known for her emotional engagement, with Opera Magazine remarking “Her voice was bright and clear, her acting wholly convincing”.

Prominent conductors of solo engagements include Vasily Petrenko with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul Daniel and Sir Mark Elder. Extensive UK and Ireland concert performances incorporate Elgar’s *Sea Pictures*, Brahms’ *Alto Rhapsody* and Respighi’s *Il Tramonto*. International concert credits feature Monte Carlo and Soriano nel Cimino. Recital appearances comprise of the Royal Opera House, Oxford Lieder Festival and Chester Music Festival, amongst others.

Sarah’s favourite roles to-date are Willie *Guglielmo Ratcliff*, Yelena Popova *The Bear*, Erika *Vanessa*, Veronique *Le Docteur Miracle*, Lucrece *What Happened to Lucrece*, The Boy *The Musician*, Meg *Falstaff*, Mercédès, La Zia Principessa, Suzuki, Dido, Cherubino and Dritte Dame.

Competition successes include winning the Toronto Mozart Vocal Competition, ‘Best Performance in German’ at Donauwelle International Music Competition and both Third Prize and ‘Premio Speciale Mozart’ at Concorso Internazionale di Canto Lirico Toscanini.

Sarah has enjoyed several training programmes: English National Opera Opera Works, inaugural Wexford Festival Opera Factory, DEBUT Horizon Project and the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme. Sarah is grateful to be supported by The Arts Council of Northern Ireland.



Eve Stafford

Limerick soprano Eve Stafford holds a Licentiate and Diploma in Classical Music Performance with the London College of Music and has studied voice with Olive Cowpar and Owen Gilhooly-Miles. Eve has won all the main awards at Féile Luimnigh including ‘Voice of the Féile’ 2013 and Feis Maitiú Corcaigh. Eve has given recitals at The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, Mary I College Chapel and St. Mary’s Cathedral and has performed for several “Opera Delights” concerts as part of Culture Night in association with UCH. Eve has performed regularly with Opera Workshop since its inception in 2017 and was part of the cast involved with the devising of *Off Tuskar* with composer Fiona Linnane performed at the Sailors’ Home. In November 2019, Eve appeared as the soprano soloist with the MIC Choral Union for their performance of Mozart’s *Coronation Mass in C major, K.317* at the Redemptorist Church, Limerick. In March 2021, Eve was a soloist for the inaugural Limerick Early Music Festival.

Eve was delighted to win the ‘Creative Professional’ Category in the Limerick Branch of Network Ireland for their Women in Business Awards 2022 and went on to compete at the National Awards in October. Eve is also a proud member of the National Concert Hall’s new Health and Harmony outreach healthcare program 2022-2023. In December Eve will debut with the UL Orchestra for their Christmas concert.





Roisín Walsh

Roisín is an Irish soprano who began her training with Olive Cowpar in Limerick, before studying at Guildhall School of Music & Drama and subsequently at the National Opera Studio, London. She has worked with companies such as Glyndebourne, Scottish Opera and the Grange Festival to name but a few.

Most recently, Roisín returned to Scottish Opera to cover Helena in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Prior to this, she worked with Wexford Festival Opera singing Una Dama in *Edmea* as well as concert performances of *Ein Wintermärchen* and semi-staged performances of *Le Songe d'un nuit d'été*. Previous engagements include First Bridesmaid and Barbarina (cover) in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Grange Festival including a masterclass series with Ann Murray DBE, First Lady *The Magic Flute* with Waterperry Opera Festival, Page/la Duchessa *Rigoletto* and Siren (cover) *Rinaldo* with Glyndebourne Tour. Previous roles to date include Tatyana *Eugene Onegin*, Tina *Flight*, Micaela *Carmen*.

Roisín is very keen to explore contemporary music and performed a new commission by Irish composer Fiona Linnane "*Songs of the Meteorologist*" as part of a site specific production "Abandoned" at the Old Sailors' Home, Limerick. Subsequently, Opera Workshop commissioned these songs to be recorded and filmed in a unique virtual project which was completed in 2020. Roisín was also part of the devising team with Opera Workshop collaborating on the site specific opera *No. 2 Pery Square*, featuring in the filmed production of a selection of scenes, which was released as part of Culture Night 2020.



Triona Walsh

Limerick born Soprano, Triona Walsh, completed her music education at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts before continuing on to further study at The University of Western Australia. As a performer, Triona has appeared in numerous recitals and operatic productions as well as featuring regularly as a concert soloist. She has performed as a chorus member in a number of productions for organisations including The Australian Opera Studio and Opera Ireland.

Since returning to Limerick, Triona has been an ensemble member of Opera Workshop Limerick; performing in a number of productions including *The Countess' Salon*, *Opera, What the Fuss?*, and *The Trouble with Virtue*. She created the role of 'Woman 3' in Fiona Linnane's chamber opera, *Off Tuskar* in 2019 and was involved in the research and development process for *No 2 Pery Square* between 2020 and 2022, where she created the role of 'Sophia Vanderkist'.

Triona is a member of Limerick New Music Ensemble and also has a special interest in working with children. In 2022 she received an Arts Council Ireland Agility Award to assist with the development of her creative process.





Doireann O'Carroll

Doireann O'Carroll has recently completed her MMus in Piano Performance at the Royal Irish Academy of Music under the tutelage of Prof. Therese Fahy and holds a BMus First Class Honours degree from MTU Cork School of Music where she studied with Eleanor Malone and Michael McHale. She has taken part in a number of exciting projects including the Iain Burnside project at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in February 2022 as well as performing in the Dublin Song Series at the Hugh Lane Gallery in May 2022. In August 2022 she was awarded the Peter Rankin piano internship at the Northern Ireland Opera Festival of Voice in Glenarm where she worked closely with Simon Lepper and Ingrid Surgenor. She performed at the final of the Festival of Voice competition accompanying singers in the Irish Song round. She also recently participated in a course for répétiteurs at the National Opera Studio in London working with Andrew Griffiths, Brenda Hurley, Liz Rowe and Susanna Stranders. Doireann has been awarded the 1848 scholarship at the Royal Irish Academy of Music for the coming year as she continues to further her career by doing the Professional Mentorship course at RIAM under Dearbhla Collins and Thérèse Fahy.



Katerina Speranskaya

Katerina Speranskaya is a pianist and cellist, with a special interest in ensemble playing and piano accompaniment. She holds a Masters Degree in Piano Accompaniment from TUD Conservatory of Music and Drama. Her performances have taken her to such venues as the National Concert Hall and the Mansion House stages, and she has performed for President Michael D. Higgins.

She is a multiple prize winner of various national competitions, including Feis Ceoil competitions. Katerina's most recent engagements include playing piano/keyboard for the Junk Ensemble dance show for the Dublin Theatre Festival this year, and being the accompanist for Limerick Conducting International Summer School by Sing Ireland, which involved a week of playing choral music. Katerina also holds an ATCL diploma in cello performance from Trinity College, London. Over the pandemic Katerina developed an interest in computer science, and completed a HDip in Software Development in Maynooth University.

Opera Workshop is a Limerick based opera production company set up in 2017 by Shirley Keane. We commission new works and re-imagine familiar opera, mounting productions in unexpected places and in unexpected ways. Our unique ensemble approach to making opera inspires artists who want to work with us and excites audiences, many of whom experience opera for the first time. We are proud that our work stimulates new perceptions of opera: what it is and who it is for.

Though our skills as singers, writers and composers are embedded in historic, revered traditions, to which we are indebted, we are quite happy to discard, adapt and remake these mores as our imaginations and creative instincts demand. Imbued with this spirit of adventure and possibility, we always seek to share joy.

