

# Fidelio

Beethoven (1770-1827)

Conductor, Edward Gardner  
Director, Calixto Bieito

## **Calixto Bieito returns to ENO with a new production of Beethoven's masterpiece, *Fidelio*.**

*Opening Wednesday 25 September, 7.30pm (7 performances)*

Acclaimed opera and theatre director Calixto Bieito returns to English National Opera (ENO) to direct a new production of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. This universal tale of love and fidelity triumphing over injustice will be the first staging at ENO for 17 years.

Collaborating with Bieito for the first time is ENO music director Edward Gardner who will conduct an internationally celebrated cast featuring Stuart Skelton as Florestan and Emma Bell as Leonore.

The opera's underlying depiction of the struggle for justice and liberty – informed by the political upheavals of a Europe emerging from decades of war – are as relevant to contemporary audiences as they were in 1805. In a characterisation echoing today's famous whistleblowers, when we first encounter Florestan he has been secretly imprisoned for attempts to expose the crimes of the nobleman Don Pizarro.

Bieito, arguably the most sought-after European opera and theatre director of his generation, is best known for his radical reinterpretations of classic operas and plays. His recent production of *Carmen* for ENO, 'a cogent, gripping piece of work' *The Guardian*, launched a long term partnership between Bieito and the company which will see new productions in coming seasons.

Set designer and long term collaborator Rebecca Ringst's Escher inspired set reflects the claustrophobic nature of the tale in which all the characters are in some way lost. Completing the creative team are costume designer Ingo Krügler and lighting designer Tim Mitchell.

ENO's critically acclaimed music director and 2009 Olivier Award winner, Edward Gardner will be conducting four major productions for the company this year, starting with *Fidelio* and finishing with *Benvenuto Cellini* in 2014.

Since Stuart Skelton's unforgettable performance as *Peter Grimes* at ENO, a role that he is reviving in January 2014, Skelton has been hailed as one of the finest heldentenors of his generation. Appearances at the world's major opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Paris Opera and Bavarian State Opera,

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have cemented his reputation for outstanding musicianship and intense, dramatic portrayals.

Emma Bell is one of the UK's leading lyric sopranos. Her appearance as Leonore in *Fidelio* is her first at ENO since 2010, when she won acclaim for her performance as Electra in *Idomeneo*. The cast is completed with James Creswell as Rocco, Sarah Tynan as Marzelline, Adrian Dwyer as Jaquino and Roland Wood as Don Fernando.

*Fidelio* opens at the London Coliseum on 25 September 2013 for 7 performances – September 25, 27 (7.30pm); October 01, 03, 12, 17 (7.30pm) & October 06 (3.00pm)

Pre-performance talk, Friday 27 September 5.15pm - 6pm, £5/£2.50 concessions.

Co-produced by ENO and the Bavarian State Opera, Munich

**Notes to Editors:**

ENO is:

- Staging contemporary highly theatrical work which is world class
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- Reaching new audiences
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