

PRESS RELEASE
6 August 2013

Tenor Nicky Spence announces his plans for 2013-14

Highlights include:

- **Performing as part of the BBC's Last Night of the Proms celebrations in Glasgow**
- **Spence's debut at The Metropolitan Opera, New York in Nico Muhly's *Two Boys***
- **Debut at La Monnaie as Števa in Janáček's *Jenůfa***
- **Spence makes his role debut as Isacco at Oper Frankfurt in Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra***
- **An ENO Harewood Artist, Nicky Spence returns to the London Coliseum for *Benvenuto Cellini* directed by Terry Gilliam**

Nicky Spence's plans for 2013-14 include debuts at three prestigious opera houses: The Metropolitan Opera, La Monnaie and Oper Frankfurt, as well as a return to English National Opera (ENO). In 2012-13 Spence released his debut recital disc *As You Like it* on Resonus Classics with pianist Malcolm Martineau, and made his debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and at Grange Park Opera.

Spence's season opens with a performance at the BBC's Last Night of the Proms celebrations with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra on Glasgow Green, on 7 September. Conducted by Stephen Bell, Spence is joined by fellow Scot Kate Valentine and will sing music by Wagner, Britten and selected Scottish favourites. The performance will be broadcast live on BBC Television.

Over 4-6 September Spence will join a stellar line-up of speakers and musicians at Mid Wales Opera in a two day celebration of Benjamin Britten at Gregynog Hall, in the composer's centenary year. This short residential course will give those who know Britten's operatic works the chance to explore them in depth, and offer those who are less familiar the opportunity to learn about one of Britain's greatest composers, from those who knew and worked with him. Spence is joined by Royal Harpist Hannah Stone for a recital including extracts from the historic Pears/Ellis performance at Gregynog and will also assist Paul Kildea in a lecture recital during the course.

In October and November 2013 Spence makes his debut at The Metropolitan Opera, New York in Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, as Brian, the role that he created at ENO in 2011 in the world premiere. Spence shares the role with Paul Appleby. *Two Boys* explores the world of online relationships and chatrooms and is a co-production between The Metropolitan Opera and ENO. Directed by Bartlett Sher, the cast also includes Alice Coote as Anne.

On 20 October Spence makes his debut recital in New York at the Five Boroughs Music Festival with regular recital partner, pianist Malcolm Martineau, performing a programme of Britten including *Who are these Children?*, the recording of which won acclaim on the Britten Song disc on Onyx Classics.

In January and February 2014 Spence performs at La Monnaie in Brussels, making his role debut as Števa in Janáček's third opera *Jenůfa*. Directed by Alvis Hermanis the production is conducted by chief conductor Ludovic Morlot and is a co-production with Teatro Comunale di Bologna. The cast also includes Sally Matthews/Alexia Voulgaridou (*Jenůfa*) and Charles Workman (*Laca*).

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In March 2014 Nicky Spence joins a cast including Sophie Bevan, Franz Mayer and Jonathan Lemalu for a new production of *La Gazza Ladra* at Oper Frankfurt. Directed by David Alden, who Spence worked with on *Billy Budd* at ENO in 2012, *La Gazza Ladra* follows the story of Ninetta. Accused of having stolen some silver cutlery, a spurned admirer brings her to trial, where she is sentenced to death. The true thief is unmasked in the nick of time: a magpie. These performances mark both a role debut as Isaaco for Spence and his debut at Oper Frankfurt.

An ENO Harewood artist, Spence returns to the London Coliseum in June 2014 to take the role of Francesco in a new production of Berlioz's rarely-performed opera *Benvenuto Cellini*, directed by Terry Gilliam. Based loosely on the life of the Florentine sculptor of the same name, the production is conducted by Edward Gardner and the cast also includes Corinne Winters and Willard White.

Other highlights

In November 2013 Spence joins the Cantus Domus choir for a performance of Britten's *War Requiem* in Berlin, conducted by Murray Hipkin. On 29 December Spence joins Christopher Warren-Green and the London Chamber Orchestra at the Barbican for a performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No 9*.

In November 2013, Nicky Spence and pianist Malcolm Martineau reunite following their success with *As You Like It* on Resonus Classics, to record *Heaven on Earth* – a disc of French Song for Chandos Records at Potton Hall in November 2013, for release in 2014. Repertoire includes Caplet's *Les Prières*, Boulenger's *Claririères dans le ciel*, Debussy's *Trois Mélodies de Verlaine*, Wagner's *Trois Mélodies* and Chaminade *Mélodies*.

Biography

Leading Scottish tenor Nicky Spence is an ENO Harwood Artist who trained at the Guildhall School and the National Opera Studio. Spence is recognised as one of the UK's finest young singers and is increasingly in demand internationally and as a recording artist. His debut recital disc *As You Like it*, with pianist Malcolm Martineau, was released in January 2013. This year he makes his debut at the Metropolitan Opera, New York (*Brian, Two Boys*), La Monnaie in Brussels (*Steva, Jenůfa*) and Oper Frankfurt (*Isaaco, La Gazza Ladra*). He also returns to ENO in Terry Gilliam's new production of *Benvenuto Cellini*. He is an ambassador for Age UK and the Musician's Benevolent Fund.

Listings

Two Boys

Brian

Metropolitan Opera/Conductor
Director: Bartlett Sher
14 November 2013, 8pm
The Metropolitan Opera, New York

New York recital debut

Songfusion with Malcolm Martineau
20 October 2013
Five Boroughs Music Festival, Baruch College, New York

Britten's War Requiem

Tenor soloist

Cantus Dominus Choir/Murray Hipkin
21 November 2013

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Berlin

**Jenůfa
Števa**

La Monnaie/Alvis Hermanis

Director: Ludovic Morlot

21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 31 January and 2, 4, 5, 7 February 2014

La Monnaie, Grande Salle, Brussels

La Gazza Ladra

Isaaco

Oper Frankfurt/Henrik Nánási

Director: David Alden

30 March, 4, 6, 12, 17, 20, 26 April and 4 May 2014

Opernhaus, Frankfurt

Benvenuto Cellini

Francesco

ENO/Edward Gardner

Director: Terry Gilliam

5 June (other dates?), 4 July 2014

Coliseum, London

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