



minack *theatre* Tête à tête

# THE FIREWORK -MAKER'S DAUGHTER

BASED ON THE BOOK BY PHILIP PULLMAN  
MUSIC BY DAVID BRUCE LIBRETTO BY GLYN MAXWELL



**The Firework-Maker's Daughter**  
music by David Bruce  
libretto by Glyn Maxwell  
based on the novel by Philip Pullman

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**Tête a Tête**

Director: Bill Bankes-Jones  
Music Director: Timothy Burke  
Administrative Director: Anna Gregg  
Marketing Director: Leo Doulton

**Minack Productions Ltd**

Executive Director: Zoë Curnow  
Production Manager: Simon Hutchings  
Marketing Manager: Vanessa Jackson



In a faraway-land lives Lila, a firework-maker's daughter, who dreams of becoming a firework maker herself. But first she must learn the most difficult and dangerous secret of all – the one that her father refuses to tell her. She sets out alone on a journey harder than she could possibly imagine, a quest for hidden knowledge ... an adventure through which she will learn so much more than the secret she longs to discover.

Commissioned by the Royal Opera House the opera premiered in 2013 and was nominated in the 2014 Olivier Awards for Best New Opera Production.



## David Bruce Composer

Since my own childhood I have thought of the theatre as a colourful place of magic and fantasy and as I've grown older I am still attracted to those same aspects - for me there is not really a difference between children's theatre and adult theatre - as I see it, it's all 'play' and we are all children.

For me there is a direct connection between the sense of fantasy that can be created in the theatre and a sense of spiritual and moral questioning. In the theatre we allow ourselves to wonder - to question 'what if' - and the question can sometimes be absurd or comical in nature, but other times be something much more profound. In a largely secular society, the theatre is one of the few places where we can still ask ourselves the big questions, and still feel wonder in all its aspects. My instinct as an artist is to set those big questions in a context that allows us to laugh, smile and relax. And this is one of the things that attracts me most about Philip Pullman's story - it contains both the absurd and fun elements that make theatre such a delight - talking elephants, a fire-fiend in a grotto, etc. - whilst at the same time making some fairly profound points about the creation of art, the need for self-expression, friendship, courage and love. To quote Pullman:

*"Fairy tales are ways of telling us true things without labouring the point. They begin in delight, and they end in wisdom. But if you start with what you think is wisdom, you'll seldom end up with delight - it doesn't work that way round. You have to begin with fun."*

As a composer for whom colour and indeed humour are passionate concerns, I believe there are huge opportunities in this piece to create a vivid and rich operatic re-telling of the story, which will enhance Pullman's wonderfully imaginative world in ways only opera can.



## *Bill Bankes-Jones* *Director*

It's such a pleasure to direct a production of *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*. It's a homecoming in all kinds of ways for me; the first actual opera that I've been able to direct at home in Cornwall, the proper resumption of professional directing for me after the pandemic, and a joyous reunion with composer David Bruce whose previous three operas were all written and premiered with me and Tête à Tête, the first being one of our very first commissions.

Pullman's novel is a huge sprawling story of individuals set against their communities and our five performers have to work very hard indeed switching characters, which in itself is thrilling for the audience and great fun to stage. The joy of theatre is anything can happen, so if you need a sword you can just pluck one from the air. *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* contains a lot of things physically impossible in the real world, but luckily we have our

imaginations and those of the audience with which to create new magic.

As ever with the performing arts, we want to make some precious memories for our audiences, not just the thrill of the moment, but also the enduring recollection of that moment they can carry with them and cherish for the rest of their lives. With such an enthralling piece performed in two breathtaking settings, the Minack Theatre and Prideaux Place, I don't think anyone will forget this. On the back of covid, it is a very much needed shot in the arm, a performance full of joy but also a tale of adversity overcome. It's also a building block in both the resettling of my company, Tête à Tête, to its new base in Cornwall, a new partnership with the incredibly creative and generous Minack Theatre, and also a stepping-stone towards many more ambitious plans we began to work on together even before the pandemic.



## Patrick Bailey Music Director

15 years ago I was the Music Director for The Opera Group (now Mahogany Opera Group) – an opera company with a great interest in commissioning and touring new operas. We had been looking into commissioning work for family audiences and cast around for a suitable story to adapt.

We became very keen, very quickly, on Philip Pullman's excellent novella *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*. The story felt the right length with a direct story and a great central cast of characters. The fact that it needed a talking (singing!) elephant and a full-on firework contest seemed to be of little concern... we could work that out later.

Glyn Maxwell had written several libretti for us by this point, we loved his words, and we were keen to involve David Bruce who had composed a mini-opera for us for performance in Selfridges in London the year before. As music director, I felt David's experience and feel for opera were brilliant but also he would respond well to the pan-asian setting of the book. The music of David's that I knew and know often has strong influences of folk music from all over the world – Polish (in his song cycle *Piosenki*), Persian (*Prince Zal and the Simorgh*, a piece for story-teller and orchestra), African (the clarinet quintet *Gumboots*).

But...I moved on from The Opera Group at about the same time so never got to conduct the work or enjoy those early performances. So it was such a delight when Zoë Curnow from the Minack and Bill Bankes-Jones leaped at the chance of putting it on here and it has been a joy to finally spend time with David and Glyn's piece.

David has, indeed, absorbed some influences from far-eastern music – particularly in the melodic writing where he uses ornamentation that is often fast and florid, sometimes delicate but sometimes furious. This rich and creative technique allows the music to feel spontaneous and also a little timeless. He also treats these melodies in a way I have come across in folk music from Shanghai in that he asks for 2 or 3 slightly different versions of the same melody to be played simultaneously (a technique known as heterophony in western music) – allowing each player to express themselves slightly differently but keeping them heading in the same direction.

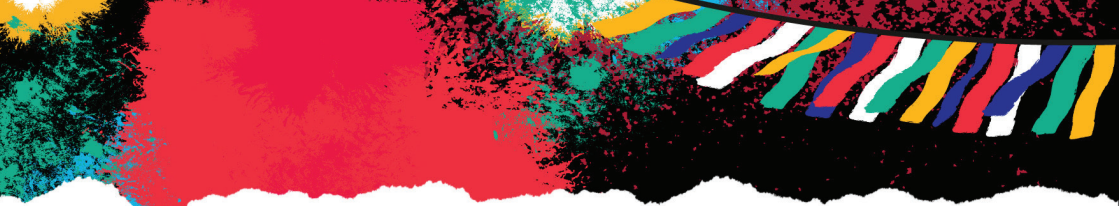
It is not 'asian music' at all – it is David's – it has fantastic rhythmic vitality, harmonic directness and acute sensitivity to the drama. I hope you all enjoy the noise it makes!

## *Sarah Jane Booth* *Designer*

I love creating theatre outdoors, I feel like it always gives a greater feeling of the shared community of the audience. Over the years I've created work in all sorts of places from town centres, churchyards, forts, abbey ruins, a port, on beaches but nothing holds quite the challenges of the Minack Theatre! The elements, the sheer force of beauty of the surroundings, the precipitous sightlines and the logistical challenges of working on the edge of a cliff. Though all of the challenges only add to the magic of making theatre in a place like this and I hope our show can match the surroundings with colour, energy and imagination.

*The Firework-Maker's Daughter* has been a joy to design. It is a whirlwind of an opera that sprints through many characters & places at pace. The design needs to be nimble and most importantly tell the story. We've tried to embrace a sense of place, both using the geography of the theatre and taking inspiration from Cornish festivals and traditions - the recognisable 'Obby Osses', Cloutie trees, colourful rags and willow lanterns. My first creative job was working with a team to make lanterns for the Thames Festival Carnival. For the first show I designed at the Actors' Church in Covent Garden I built a 22ft willow tree. So it's been a real pleasure to indulge in using these materials that are very much my wheelhouse. Willow is a brilliant and a sustainable sculptural material and give us the ability to instantly summon some of the many characters.





Lixin Liu } **Lila**  
Ryan Vaughan Davies } **Chulak**  
Daniel Norman } **Hamlet**  
Feargal Mostyn-Williams } **Lalchand**  
William Dazeley } **Rambashi**  
Andrew Slater } **Dancers**  
Lila Sefi }  
Dorka Zátanyi }  
Hannah Jacobs }

*Other parts played by members of the company*

## *KEVOS*

William Sleath } **Flute**  
David White } **Clarinet**  
Jacqueline Kershaw } **French Horn**  
Philip Montgomery Smith } **Violin**  
Zoë Curnow } **Double Bass**  
James Robinson } **Percussion**  
Ross Hamilton } **Harp**  
Esther Beyer } **Accordion**  
Karen Street }







**Bill Bankes-Jones** Director  
**Patrick Bailey** Musical Director  
**Sarah Jane Booth** Designer  
**Sadie Benning** Design Assistant  
**Grace Murdoch** Choreographer  
**Sarah Playfair** Casting Director  
**Marion Harrison** Costume Making  
**Jordan Lever** Company Stage Manager  
**Marian Haynes** Assistant Stage Manager  
**Simon Hutchings** Production Manager  
**Set Building** Lynn Batten, David Gibson  
& Garry Bickmore  
**Publicity Design** Matt Travis  
**Programme Design** Vanessa Jackson  
**Programme Photography** Mike Newman  
**Producer, Tête à Tête** Anna Gregg  
**Producer, Minack Productions** Zoë Curnow  
**Repetiteur** Stella Pendrous  
**Repetiteur** Ute Weickenmeier  
**Understudy** Ben Kernow

*The company would like to thank the following for their kind assistance:  
Prue & Nigel Wicken, Tim & Ruth Dean, Chris Cooke, Matt Harrison,  
Germaine Boselli-Horner, the staff of the Minack Theatre  
& St Buryan Village Hall*



## Lixin Liu (soprano)

### Lila

Lixin started her classical music training and finished her Bachelor and Master's degrees at the Royal Northern College of Music where she was generously supported by a James and Mary Glass Scholarship. She finished an Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Performance (post-Master Level 8) at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in 2019 and she was supported by an RBC Tuition Scholarship. During her studies, Lixin has been awarded the *St Claire Barfield Memorial Bowl for Operatic Distinction*, she won 1st Prizes in both the *Edwards Brooks Lieder Prize* and the *Cecil Drew Oratorio Prize* respectively in 2019 and 2018. She also received the *Claire Croiza Prize* for French song and she was one of the finalists for the *Joyce and Michael Kennedy Award for the Singing of Strauss* in 2017.

Lixin is currently doing the chorus fellowship to work with English National Opera for the 2021/2022 season and she covered the role(s) of Janine/Ofwarren in ENO's production of *The Handmaid's Tale* in April 2022. She has just



confirmed that she will be working with ENO again for the 2022/2023 season. Lixin has also created the role of the Monkey King in the world's premiere of *Budda & the Monkey King* and *The Monk of the River* as part of the *Tête à Tête Opera Festival* in 2020 and 2021. Lixin performed the full role of Königin der Nacht (*Die Zauberflöte*) at Crescent Theatre in Birmingham, 2019. She also played the role of Controller (*Flight*), Sprite (*Cendrillon*), Nanetta (*Falstaff*), Frasquita (*Carmen*), Sophie (*Werther*), Constance (*Dialogues de Carmelites*), Clara (*La Vie Parisienne*), Laurette (*Le Docteur Miracle*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Gretel (*Hansel und Gretel*), Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*) and Fox Cubs (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) as part of Opera Scenes. Her solo experiences include singing at Cadogan Hall, the O2 Arena, Newcastle and Leeds Town Halls.



## Andrew Slater (bass-baritone)

### Rambashi

Andrew Slater studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. He was in the chorus at Glyndebourne in 1990, given the *Christie Award*, and has been constantly engaged as soloist with one opera company or another ever since.

Amongst his 80 roles are: *Wozzeck* (Birmingham Opera Company), Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Glyndebourne on tour), Colline in *La Boheme* (ENO), Nachtigal in *Der Meistersinger* (Glyndebourne), Ben Selim in *Dom Sebastien*

(Royal Opera Covent Garden), Wurm in *Luisa Miller* (Buxton Festival), Truffaldino in *Ariadne* (Edinburgh Festival), *Falstaff* (English Touring Opera), Geronimo in *The Secret Marriage* (Scottish Opera), Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Dublin), Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Bergen), Sacristan in *Tosca* (Opera North), Golaud in *Pelleas et Melisande* (New York)

He is married to a soprano, whose international career allows him to travel the world in style, but he still finds time to teach and periodically mount opera productions at the University of Huddersfield. Andrew's interests include emptying red wine bottles and killing things on his computer, always as a character with an operatic moniker.



## Ryan Vaughan Davies (tenor) *Chulak*

Welsh tenor Ryan Vaughan Davies is currently studying in the opera school at The Royal Academy of Music. He is a Bicentenary Scholar and his studies are also generously supported by the Norman Ayrton Award, the John Clemence Trust, the Ryan Davies Memorial Fund and the Bryn Terfel Foundation. In 2019 Ryan won the *National Eisteddfod of Wales' Blue Ribband Prize* for the under 25 solo competitions. He was also awarded the *David Lloyd Memorial Award* for most promising tenor at the event. Recent operatic performances include *Peppe (I Pagliacci)*, Iford Arts, *Rinuccio (Gianni Schicchi)*

and *Torquemada (L'heure Espagnole)*, *Der Tenor (Ariadne auf Naxos)* and *Interrogator (WITCH)*, Royal Academy Opera. Ryan has performed with many of the UK's summer festivals including Longborough Opera Festival, Buxton Opera Festival, Garsington Opera Festival and The Grange Festival. He is now also an extra-chorus member of the Royal Opera House and looks forward to working at this prestigious house. International Engagements include performances in The Grieg Hallen, Bergen and with the North American Festival of Wales in Milwaukee.

Ryan is thrilled to be back at the Minack Theatre following his performances in 2020 in *Opera Under the Stars*. In July, Ryan will also return to Iford Arts (now IfOpera) to sing the role of Prunier in Puccini's *La Rondine*.

## Daniel Norman (tenor) *Chulak*

Acclaimed "multi-talented tenor" Daniel Norman (Financial Times) has been praised for his ability to inhabit complex characters and for his powerful and expressive vocal performances. His career-to-date has covered a versatile range of repertoire, from early and baroque music through to contemporary works.

Daniel Norman has built an impressive operatic career both in the UK and internationally, working with companies including English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Opera Holland Park, Opera North, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, L'Opéra National de Paris, Nederlandse Reisopera, Wexford Festival, the Bayerische Staatsoper, New Israeli Opera, Bergen National Opera, Fondazione di Arena di Verona, Opera Boston, the Mariinsky Theatre, Central City Opera Colorado and Oviedo Opera.

Active on the concert platform, Daniel has sung with orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Concert,



London Sinfonietta, Southbank Sinfonia, BBC Scottish Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Firebird Ensemble (USA), Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Columbia, Het Gelders Orkest, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Taiwan and the Chamber Orchestra of Belgium; with appearances at the BBC Proms, Three Choirs Festivals, Aldeburgh Festival and Oxford Lieder Festival.

Daniel Norman was a choral scholar at New College Oxford, where he read Engineering. He went on to study in the US and Canada and at the Royal Academy of Music.



## Feargal Mostyn-Williams (countertenor) *Hamlet*

Feargal Mostyn-Williams trained at the National Opera Studio, the first countertenor to have been selected as a Young Artist, the Royal College of Music, studying with Russell Smyth as an RCM Scholar supported by the Yvonne Wells Award, the Sylvia Harris Fund and the Josephine Baker Trust, and as a choral scholar at King's College Cambridge. He is also a Daiwa Foundation Scholar and a member of the National Centre for Circus Arts. He is dedicated to expanding the appeal and repertoire of the countertenor voice, has a particular ability in contemporary music, and a love of lute song and folksong.

Recent and future roles in opera include Bryn Bevan (*Blaze of Glory*, David Hackbridge-Johnson) for Welsh National Opera (world premiere), Cheshire Cat (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Will Todd) for Opera Holland Park and Welsh National Opera, Piero (*Seven Angels*, Jonathan Dove) in collaboration with NOS and the V&A, Antonio (*The Merchant of Venice*, Andrei Tchaikowsky) for Welsh National Opera, Marie Stopes (*Dear Marie Stopes*, Alex Mills) for Tête à Tête, Salai (*Leonardo*, Alex Mills), a new opera about Leonardo da Vinci, and *Sleep Future Sleep* by Jasmin Kent Rodgman, a new binaural audio opera for Shadwell Opera. He was due to make his English National Opera debut in *El Niño* by John Adams in 2021, which was cancelled due to Covid.

Appearances on the concert platform include his debut at the Aldeburgh Festival in 2021 in a recital programme of *English Song, Folksong and Britten Canticles* with Allan Clayton, the world premiere of *Orpheus and Izanagi* at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall in partnership with the Daiwa Foundation, *Magnificat* (Bach) and *Dettingen Te Deum* (Handel) at Hereford Cathedral, *Te Deum* (Purcell) at the Three Choirs Festival, a staged version of *St. John Passion* (Bach) and the world premiere of *The Judas Passion* (Sally Beamish) both for The Orchestra of the Age of

Enlightenment, Joad (*Athalia* by Handel) with Konzertchor Darmstadt, *St Matthew Passion* (Bach) with Hereford Cathedral, *The Messiah* (Handel) with the Royal Northern Sinfonia and with Arundel Cathedral, Liverpool Cathedral, York Minster and Ampleforth Abbey, *Gloria* (Vivaldi) at the Singapore Esplanade Concerts Hall and *Schubert Lieder* at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

During the global lockdown, he recorded and released a solo voice Album: *Folksongs – An Unaccompanied Collection*.

He has covered Akhnaten and Amenhotep (*Akhnaten*, Philip Glass) for English National Opera, Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Britten) for Scottish Opera, Athamas (*Semele*, Handel) as an Alvarez Young Artist for Garsington Opera, Unulfo (*Rodelinda*, Handel) for English National Opera, and Antonio (*The Merchant of Venice*, Andrei Tchaikowsky) for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.

At the National Opera Studio he performed: Orfeo (*Orfeo ed Eurydice*, Gluck), Angel 1/The Boy (*Written on Skin*, George Benjamin), Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Britten), Orlando (*Orlando*, Bertarido (*Rodelinda*), Arsamenes (*Xerxes*) all by Handel, and the Cherub (*Figaro Gets a Divorce*, Elena Langer).

Previous concert repertoire includes *Dixit Dominus* (Handel), *Solo Cantata Geist und Seele BWV35* (Bach), *Carmina Burana* (Orff), *Come Ye Sons of Art* (Purcell), *Chichester Psalms* (Bernstein), *V Lieder Op.38* (Korngold), *Liederkreis Op.39* (Schumann) and *Virtuosic Arias and Cantatas* written for Farinelli.

His recordings include *Rejoice in the Lamb* (Britten) with King's College Cambridge, *Veneer* (Fitkin) with the Graham Fitkin Band, and *Requiem* (Arnold Rosner) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra.



## William Dazeley (baritone) *Lalchand*

Most recently, William sang Father (*Hansel & Gretel*) and Marcello (*La Bohème*) for Grange Park Opera, Prosecutor Frankenstein in the world premiere of Mark Grey's opera (*Frankenstein*) at Theatre de la Monnaie, Brussels and returned to Glyndebourne on Tour to sing Pandolfe (*Cendrillon*). Further recent appearances include Claudius in Brett Dean's new award winning *Hamlet* for Glyndebourne on Tour, Count (*Capriccio*) for Garsington Opera and *Bernstein Mass* at the L'Auditori Barcelona with the Orquestra Sinfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya. Future engagements include Le Forestier the world premiere of *Like Flesh* at Opéra de Lille and Music Master (*Ariane auf Naxos*) Opéra National de Montpellier.

William has appeared in many of the world's opera houses, where roles have included Count (*Cherubin*), Marcello (*La Bohème*), Guglielmo (*Così fan Tutte*), Anthony (*Sweeney Todd*), Yeletsky (*The Queen of Spades*), Mercutio (*Romeo et Juliette*) and Figaro (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) English National Opera, Alfonso (*Così fan Tutte*), title role *Don Giovanni*, Posa (*Don Carlos*), Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Danilo (*The Merry Widow*), Mr Gedde (*Albert Herring*) Opera North, L'Ami (*The Fall of the House Usher*), Count (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) Welsh National Opera, Baron Douchol (*La Traviata*), Harasta (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Starveling (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) Glyndebourne Festival, Claudius (*Hamlet*), Count (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Figaro (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), title role *Owen Wingrave* Glyndebourne on Tour, Enrico (*Maria de Rohan*) Buxton Festival, Figaro (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) Deutsche Staatsoper, Count (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) and *Don Giovanni* Deutsche Oper Berlin, DR FAUST Salzburg Festival and Théâtre du Châtelet.

In concert he has sung the title role *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Celebrant in *Bernstein's*

*Mass* with the Orquestra Sinfonica de Barcelona, *Schumann Requiem* for Mignon Gardiner/MonteVerdi Orchestra, Mahler *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* Herreweghe/Royal Flanders Philharmonic and at the Casa da Musica, Corigliano, *Dylan Thomas Trilogy* Slatkin/BBC Symphony Orchestra, *Christmas Oratorio* Berlin Philharmonic, *Fauré Requiem* Ulster Orchestra, Mahmoud *The Death of Klinghoffer* BBC Symphony Orchestra, *Das Paradies und die Peri* San Francisco Symphony, *Das Klagende Lied* RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, *Carmina Burana* Orchestre du Capitole, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, *Britten War Requiem* Aspen Festival, *L'Enfance du Christ* Davis/London Symphony Orchestra and Bayerische Rundfunk, *Brahms Requiem* Gardiner/MonteVerdi Choir and *L'Enfance du Christ* Bolton/Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg. World premières include Jesus in Birtwistle's *The Last Supper* Barenboim/Deutsche Staatsoper, later reprised at the Glyndebourne Festival, and Hosokawa's Hanjo Aix-en-Provence Festival and Théâtre de la Monnaie. William has also given recital performances at the Wigmore Hall, the Purcell Room, St George's Bristol, at the Théâtre du Châtelet, the Cheltenham, Aix-en-Provence and Saintes Festivals.

In the 2019-2020 season William makes his house debut at the Royal Danish Opera as Don Alfonso *Così fan tutte*, which subsequently embarks on a tour of Denmark, and sings the role of Music Master *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Opera de Montpellier, another house debut. Concert performances include Finzi's *In Terra Pax* at London's Cadogan Hall alongside the City of London Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

William is a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge. He studied singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he received several notable prizes including the prestigious *Gold Medal*, the *Decca/Kathleen Ferrier Prize* and the *Richard Tauber Prize* and won such competitions as the *Royal Overseas League Singing Competition* and the *Walther Grüner International Lieder Competition*.



## *Dorka Zátonyi* *Dancer*

Dorka has always been fascinated about movement and dance as well as live theatre. Originally, she is from Budapest but following her passion she is currently based in Cornwall and going into the third year of her studies at the BA Dance & Choreography course of Falmouth University.



*Dorka Zátonyi*



*Hannah Jacobs*

## *Hannah Jacobs* *Dancer*

Hannah is currently a student at Falmouth University studying Dance and Choreography. Movement is her passion and she is always excited to explore new ways of moving and expressing her creativity. Since moving to Cornwall she has fallen in love with the beautiful and inspirational landscape.

## *Lila Sefi* *Dancer*

Lila Sefi is 17 years old and in her first year at Truro College studying dance, theatre studies and sociology A levels. Her past performances include *Orfeo* at the Minack, curtain raisers for TavaZiva, NYDC and the Eden Project. This is her first performance since covid and she is very excited to be back on the stage.



*Lila Sefi*





Bill Bankes-Jones is the founder and Artistic Director of Tête à Tête, leading opera into the future since 1998 both through its own productions, most recently *#SongOfTheSea* as part of the G7 Arts Programme in 2021, and by hosting many others in *Tête à Tête: the*

## Bill Bankes-Jones Director

*Opera Festival*. He also continues to freelance as director, librettist, translator and dramaturg. Plans include the fifteenth *Tête à Tête: The Opera Festival* and *Home* in North Shields in partnership with Timothy Burke and the Royal Northern Sinfonia. Bill is a founder-director of Freelancers Make Theatre Work and was awarded the BEM 'for services to opera and diversity' in the Queen's 2020 Birthday Honours.

He lives between Penzance, Hayle and St Ives at the foot of Trencrom.

## Patrick Bailey Music Director

Patrick Bailey is a conductor, composer, arranger and presenter.

He continues to conduct concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and many others.

He has given concerts across Europe and in Dubai, India, Oman, China and the USA. In this country he has appeared at festivals in Aldeburgh, Brighton, Bath, Buxton and Cheltenham, broadcast concerts and opera for BBC Radio 3 and recorded for NMC and Tartan Film.

Whilst he was Music Director of The Opera Group, he conducted numerous new productions and tours including *Blond Eckbert* (with Royal Opera House), *The Nose* (also arranger and co-translator), *The Shops* (world premiere, Bregenz Festival, Austria) and *Street Scene* (Young Vic & winner of the *Best Musical* at the Evening Standard Awards). Other notable performances include the UK premiere of Nono's gargantuan *Prometeo* with the London Sinfonietta at the Royal Festival Hall.

As a composer, workshop leader and presenter, Patrick has led projects and written and presented concerts for BBC orchestras, BBC



Proms, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Royal Opera House, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Music for Youth.

He is the founder and Artistic Director of Kevos, a group of Cornwall-based musicians dedicated to performing contemporary music. For the Minack he has conducted *Orfeo*, *Soldier's Tale*, *Ocean World* and *Last Night of the Proms*. He directs the big band, Leskyn Kernow, at the Minack in September after their acclaimed Christmas shows at Eden Project. He continues to divide his time between Cornwall, where he lives, and working across the UK.



Sarah Jane Booth

Sarah Jane Booth is a freelance set and costume designer trained on the Motley Theatre Design Course, working across theatre, opera and live events.

Design credits for Tête à Tête include; *Odysseys* (2022), *Robinson Crusoe* (2019), *Frankenstein* (2018), *Crime & Punishment* (2016) and *Hogarth's Stages* (2014). All in collaboration with the Royal College of Music. Sarah has also designed many contemporary pop-up operas at the Tête à Tête festival.

## Sarah Jane Booth Designer

Other design credits include *If Not Now* (Rochester Castle), *The Last Abbot of Reading* (Reading Abbey), *BEAM* (Aldeburgh Festival), *The Rebellious Women of Wimbledon* (touring libraries for Attic Theatre), *Dead & Breathing*, (Liverpool Unity and The Albany), *The Mrs McMoon Show* (The Egg, Bath), *A Tale of Two Cities* (Darlington Civic Theatre), *Caught* (Pleasance Theatre), *Grass* (Unicorn Theatre and national tour), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (Park Theatre), *Living Histories* (Bletchley Park), *A World Elsewhere* (Theatre 503), *The Fosterling* (Ovalhouse), *The Poet's Manifesto* (Theatre Royal Stratford East), and *The Enchanted Story Trail* (Bad Physics for RHS Wisley). Live event and photo shoot clients include Zoella, PlayStation, Ray Ban, Assassin's Creed Syndicate and the Wellcome Trust.

## Grace Murdoch Choreographer

Grace is a choreographer and director based in the South West, working as a freelance artist with theatre, opera, dance and comedy. Grace splits her time between working with a plethora of organisations in Cornwall and across the UK. Whilst also being director of Cheap Date, combined arts company and Murdoch Design Cornwall, which she runs with her husband Nick. Grace's collaborations include working with organisations such as Falmouth University, the Minack Theatre, Cornwall Council, Eden Project, Trebah Gardens, The Fresh Air Fund NY.



Grace Murdoch

Creating original touring work with Cheap Date for audiences in the UK and Sweden. Grace also passionately enjoys her work with young people in educational establishments in Cornwall across both primary and secondary settings.







## David Bruce

### Composer

Born in Stamford, Connecticut in 1970, composer David Bruce grew up in England and now enjoys regular performances of his music on both sides of the Atlantic. As well as *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* he wrote the 2016 opera *Nothing*, which premiered at Glyndebourne and recently given a 2nd production at the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen. David's first operas were all written for Tête-à-Tête, including 3 short operas and the evening long *Push!* which premiered in Hammersmith in 2006.

David has also written orchestral pieces for the BBC Proms (*Sidechaining*, 2018), the San Diego Symphony, with whom he was composer in residence, and for whom he wrote *Night Parade* which opened the orchestra's Carnegie Hall debut. He will have a new piece for Guitar and Orchestra premiered by the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 2023 with guitarist Miloš. He is also currently writing a violin concerto for Daniel Hope and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra.

In chamber music, David's fourth Carnegie Hall commission *That Time with You* (2013) for mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor followed *Steampunk* (2011), *Gumboots* (2008) and *Piosenki* (2006), which have all gone on to be widely performed by leading ensembles around the world. He collaborates regularly with musical friends like mandolinist Avi Avital and oboist Nicholas Daniel and has written a number of chamber works specifically for them, including *Death is a Friend of Ours* for Avital which was recently released on Deutsche Grammophon's label.

David is well known for his popular YouTube channel where he talks about music and composing. The channel currently has over 200,000 subscribers and regularly attracts large audiences, even when covering the more obscure areas of contemporary classical music.

## Glyn Maxwell

### Librettist

Glyn Maxwell's books of poetry include *Pluto*, *Hide Now* and *The Breakage*, all of which were shortlisted for major awards. His latest volume, *How The Hell Are You*, was shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize in 2020. *The Nerve* won the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize in 2004. His book-length poem *Time's Fool* (2000) is in development as a feature film with Fox Searchlight. His critical guidebook *On Poetry* (2012) is regarded as a modern classic; it was followed by the fictional sequel *Drinks With Dead Poets* (2016). His plays include *Liberty*, which premiered at the Globe in 2008, *The Lifeblood*, *After Troy*, *The Only Girl In The World* and several adaptations of classics for Chester's Storyhouse and Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre, including *Alice In Wonderland*, *Cyrano De Bergerac*, *The Jungle Book*, *The*

*Beggar's Opera* and *Wind In The Willows*. His opera libretti include *The Magic Flute* for Opera UpClose, *Nothing* with composer David Bruce, which was nominated for a Sky Arts South Bank Award in 2017, *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*, also with David Bruce, which was nominated for an Olivier Award in 2014, *Seven Angels* with Luke Bedford, *The Birds* with Ed Hughes, and *The Lion's Face*, *Ariadne* and *The Girl of Sand* with Elena Langer. His new libretto for Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* (Opera UpClose) opens in September this year and will tour various port cities, including London, Southampton, Bristol, Worthing, Liverpool and Hull. Glyn chaired the T S Eliot Prize for Poetry in 2021. He is Head of Studies on the Writing Poetry MA at the Poetry School.



## *Tête à Tête: the future of opera*

Tête à Tête is a charity which makes extraordinary performances, often in extraordinary places, and also helps others to do the same. Over the past 24 years we have produced way over 100 new operas and supported thousands of artists to create hundreds more via Tête à Tête: The Opera Festival.

As so often, Tête à Tête paved the way for the opera sector throughout 2020 and 2021 staging the only opera in the government's DCMS pilots for the return to indoor performance in July 2020 in partnership with The Cockpit and hosting over 50 safely delivered productions for live audiences through the pandemic.

2022 sees us busier than ever. We started the season off with *Odysseys* in association with the Royal College of Music. After we leave the Minack Theatre and tour *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* to Prideaux Place Padstow on 3rd July, we make our way straight up to the North East for our intergenerational participatory opera *HOME* on 16th July, before heading to London for our annual festival, 15th August - 11th September.

Tête à Tête is part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio. Their support and that of trusts and foundations including the Cockayne Foundation, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Nicholas Boas Trust and the Marchus Trust and many generous individuals in 2020 & 2021 enabled us to keep supporting artists through the toughest times.

If you would like to contribute our work find out more at [www.tete-a-tete.org.uk/support](http://www.tete-a-tete.org.uk/support)



## *Minack Productions: the legacy of Rowena Cade*

In 1932, the first production staged at the Minack was *The Tempest*, produced by a community group of which Rowena Cade was a leading member. In the following years she nurtured and supported successive productions by both professional and amateur organisations, many of them created especially for the Minack. She rarely appeared on stage herself but worked on design and production, and ensuring that the needs of the audience - tickets, refreshments and amenities - were catered for. Most importantly, of course, she created the unique arena in which they could take place. Rowena Cade enabled performances to happen in the most fundamental ways and throughout her life she nurtured and supported live theatre.

90 years later, we seek to honour her legacy through the creation of new productions and developing opportunities for arts organisations and theatre practitioners based in Cornwall and the South West. We create independent productions and encourage new work as well as partnering with other organisations such as Tête à Tête. Our work so far in 2022 includes collaborating with Mike Shepherd and imPossible Producing to bring the premiere of *Calvino Nights* to the Minack; joining with Ha-Hum-Ah Theatre to stage Carl Grose's *Superstition Mountain*, currently on tour; our own adaptation of David Melling's delightful children's story, *The Kiss that Missed*, and working with impossible Producing to enable Liz Richardson's acclaimed one woman show *SWIM* to tour the South West.

We also prioritise the engagement of children and young people in live performance, working with our education team and local schools to stage dedicated youth productions. In 2021, our schools' production of *Ocean World* gained international recognition when it was attended by the partners of global leaders during the G7 summit in Cornwall. In 2022, *One Small Bird*, will involve over 200 primary and secondary school children.