



The Narcissistic Fish

A Scottish Opera Short

Age guidance 15+

Contains scenes of mild violence and adult language

Thursday 28th January 2021, 1500

Creative Team

Composer	Samuel Bordoli
Libretto	Jenni Fagan
Director	Antonia Bain

Cast

Belle	Charlie Drummond*
Angus	Arthur Bruce**
Kai	Mark Nathan*

* Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2019/20

** The Robertson Trust Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2019/20

Q&A with Antonia Bain and Samuel Bordoli after the performance

Kindly supported by Scottish Opera Emerging Artists Benefactors, Scottish Opera's New Commissions Circle and Idlewild Trust.

Synopsis

Chef brothers Kai and Angus battle with each other about whether they should visit their dying father in hospital, but it's the start of a busy shift in the kitchen of Angus's restaurant, The Narcissistic Fish.

Caught in the middle is Belle, the brains and talent behind the business, but also the least well-paid of the trio.

When a phone call confirms the death of the brothers' father, Kai is angry that they've left it too late to see him, but Angus seems more interested in what they will inherit.

Tension builds into the evening as Belle and Kai share jokes at Angus's expense. They argue over whose idea it was to open the restaurant.

Belle tries to confront Angus about his actions. His lack of remorse prompts her to walk out. Kai tries to stop her, and the brothers then begin to fight.

Belle explains her dilemma: she is pregnant, and has to make a decision about what to do about her baby. Kai tries to console himself about his brother's lack of conscience.

Tensions simmer down and all three return to work.

When the restaurant closes, they share a beer. Angus offers Belle a pay rise and says he will make her a partner in the business – although he won't acknowledge her publicly for a few years.

Angus and Kai leave Belle to make her final decision – to leave The Narcissistic Fish, and to raise her child free from the mistakes of the past.

Biographies

Antonia Bain – Director

Scottish Opera's in-house film-maker Antonia Bain studied fine art at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. An internship with multimedia design company 55degrees led to a full-time role as content producer, and in that role she made several short films for Glasgow's award-winning Riverside Museum. She has made short films, music videos and short documentaries. She joined Scottish Opera in 2015 and has produced promotional and cultural films for the Company's social media and website. Highlights include creating a

filmed performance of former Scottish Opera Composer in Residence Liam Paterson's piece *In Glasgow*, based on Edwin Morgan's poem, and an opera/pop crossover with Scottish singers Be Charlotte and Carla J Easton as part of the BBC's #OperaPassion Day. *The Narcissistic Fish* is her first opera short film for Scottish Opera.

Samuel Bordoli – Composer

Samuel Bordoli ARAM is Scottish Opera's Composer in Residence. During the 2017/18 Season he composed *Wings* and three piano interludes for the *Opera Highlights* tour, and *Grace Notes* to complement the Company's production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. In the 2018/19 Season, he composed an Overture and *To Music* for the Autumn 2018 *Opera Highlights* tour, as well as *Le trésor des humbles* for soprano and orchestra, premiered in March at Aberdeen's Music Hall. He studied at Birmingham Conservatoire and London's Royal Academy of Music, where he was the Mendelssohn Scholar. He was mentored by Peter Maxwell Davies for nine years. His broad output has included a chamber opera, *Amerika*, performed at the Tête à Tête opera festival in London, and a choral anthem, *The Great Silence*, premiered at the Windsor Festival for the Queen's 90th Birthday. His music theatre piece *Belongings* was premiered on the Caledonian Sleeper between Aberdeen and London. He has also composed four Live Music Sculptures, site-specific compositions for London landmarks, including Tower Bridge, the Monument and St Paul's Cathedral, and co-produced *Planets 2018*, a new 'Planets Suite' performed inside planetariums across the UK.

Arthur Bruce – Angus

Scottish baritone Arthur Bruce is The Robertson Trust Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2019/20. He is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Opera School, the Royal Northern College of Music, English National Opera's Opera Works programme and Scottish Opera's Connect Ensemble. He is a Britten-Pears Young Artist.

Scottish Opera appearances: *Amadeus & The Bard*, *Opera Highlights* Spring 2020.

Operatic engagements include: title role *Gianni Schicchi* (RCS Opera School); Papageno *The Magic Flute* (Berlin Opera Academy); Zurga *The Pearl Fishers* (Edinburgh Grand Opera); Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* (London Young Sinfonia); Wolfram *Tannhäuser* (Edinburgh Players Opera Group);

Sam *Trouble in Tahiti* (RCS Opera School); Prince Yamadori *Madama Butterfly* (Bowdon Festival Opera).

Charlie Drummond – Belle

Born in Lincoln, Charlie Drummond is a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2019/20. She studied at King's College London, the Opera School at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the National Opera Studio. She is also a Samling Young Artist.

Scottish Opera appearances: *Opera Highlights* Autumn 2019, *Iris*.

Operatic engagements include: title role *Anna Bolena* (cover) (Longborough Festival Opera); Donna Anna *Don Giovanni* (British Youth Opera); Rosalinde *Die Fledermaus*, Fiordiligi *Così fan tutte*, Countess *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mrs Julian Owen *Wingrave*, Eleonora *Prima la musica e poi le parole* by Salieri (RCS); Sofia *Il signor Bruschino* (Raucous Rossini); Serena Farage *The Secretary Turned CEO* by Danyal Dhondy – world premiere (Lucid Arts); Voice *Simoon* by Erik Chisholm – world premiere (Music Co-OPERative Scotland).

Jenni Fagan – Librettist

Born in Scotland, poet and novelist Jenni Fagan graduated from Greenwich University and won a scholarship to the Royal Holloway MFA programme. She is currently completing a PhD on structuralism and Kafka's *Metamorphosis* at the University of Edinburgh. She has won awards from organisations including Creative Scotland, Dewar Arts and Scottish Screen, and has twice been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. She was selected as one of *Granta's* Best Young British Novelists after the publication of her debut novel, *The Panopticon*, which was shortlisted for the Desmond Elliott Prize and the James Tait Black Prize. Her own adaptation of *The Panopticon* was staged by the National Theatre of Scotland. Her second novel, *The Sunlight Pilgrims*, was shortlisted for the Royal Society of Literature Encore Award and the Saltire Fiction Book of the Year Award, and won her Scottish Author of the Year at the Herald Culture Awards. Her third novel, *Luckenbooth*, is due for publication in January 2021. She has also published four collections of poetry, and recently directed her debut short film. She has written a second short film, *Isolation*, as part of the National Theatre of Scotland's *Scenes for Survival* project, which is being shown on BBC iPlayer and online. *The Narcissistic Fish* is her first opera libretto.

Mark Nathan – Kai

Born in Surrey, Mark Nathan is a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2019/20. He is a graduate of the Opera School at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where he studied with Scott Johnson, following earlier studies at Birmingham University and London's Royal College of Music.

Scottish Opera appearances: Rabotnik *The Fiery Angel*, *Opera Highlights* Autumn 2019.

Operatic engagements include: title role *Don Giovanni*, Marcello *La bohème* (Opera Loki); Papageno *The Magic Flute* (Hampstead Garden Opera); Joseph De Rocher *Dead Man Walking*, Death *Savitri*, Director *Les mamelles de Tirésias* (RCS); Joseph De Rocher (cover) (Welsh National Opera, Israeli Opera); Dr Falke *Die Fledermaus*, Judge and Counsel *Trial by Jury*, Wagner *Faust* (Winterbourne Opera); Jack Point *The Yeomen of the Guard* (Portsmouth Guildhall); Koko *The Mikado* (Co-Opera); Dr Pangloss *Candide* (London Musical Theatre Orchestra); Sir Joseph Porter *HMS Pinafore* (Harwich Festival of the Arts); Doctor *La traviata* (Opera Euphonia); Gob *The Poisoned Kiss* (Barber Institute Summer Festival); Moralès *Carmen* (Riverside Opera).

Production Team

Director of Photography
Gordon Ballantyne

First Assistant Director
Stuart Cadenhead

Dubbing Mixer
John Cobban

Colourist
Colin Brown

Editor
Lucy Armitage

Executive Producer
Andrew Lockyer

First Assistant Camera
Andy Brown

Second Assistant Camera / DIT
Tom Armstrong

Additional Footage
David McGinty

Audio Engineer
Bob Whitney

Sound Assistant
Benny Robb

Lighting Gaffer
Derrick Ritchie

Console Operator
Joe Breslin

Hair and Make-up
Ana Cruzalegui
Carol Fairfield
Dialect Coach
Flora Munro

Props Supervisor
Marian Colquhoun

Deputy Head of Costume
Lorna Price

Costume Supervisor
Jasmine Clark
Scottish Opera Elizabeth Salvesen
Costume Trainee

Food Stylist
Clair Irwin

Repetiteur
Susannah Wapshott

Production Managers
Catriona Downie
Emily Henderson

Props Assistant
Jenni Murison

Workshop Manager
Edd Smith

Set Builders
Andrew Steel
David Gillies
Aaron Goddard

Audio Description
Jonathan Penny

Forthcoming soundfestival events

Ensemble Court Circuit | Thu 28 January | 1700

World premiere of Tansy Davies' *Grand Mutation* and works by Grisey and Ligeti

Richard Ingham and Pete Stollery | Thu 28 January | 2000

Music for saxophones and electronics by Pete Stollery, Denis Smalley and Richard Ingham

socialsound | Thu 28 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists.

Rookh Quartet | Fri 29 January | 1200

Programme includes works written for the Rookh Quartet, exploring unusual sounds as well as capturing the soul of the horn.

The Metalization of a Dream | Fri 29 January | 1500

Duncan MacLeod's *The Metalization of a Dream* is an open form sound-work responding to the dada and surrealist-inspired collages of artist Eduardo Paolozzi.

We Ask These Questions Of Everybody | Fri 29 January | 1700

Operatic event sharing disabled people's experiences under austerity in the UK, performed by an exceptional cross-genre, all-disabled ensemble.

Ensemble Court Circuit | Fri 29 January | 2000

Works by Philippe Hurel and Ravel

social sound | Fri 29 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists.

Promenade Concert | Sat 30 January | 1000

Join us for a winter themed discovery of new music for the whole family with Ruth Wall (harp), Richard Watkins (horn) and Richard Ingham (saxophone).

Gold.Berg.Werks | Sat 30 January | 1200

Karlheinz Essl's unusual take of Bach's *The Goldberg Variations* performed by Xenia Pestova Bennett (piano) and Ed Bennett (electronics)

Aberdeen | Sat 30 January | 1500

New collaboration between David Fennessy, Sonia Cromarty and Tim Cooper.

Any Enemy & Brandon University New Music Ensemble | Sat 30 January | 1700

Unique live digital performance including new works specially commissioned for joint performance by the two ensembles.

Richard Watkins, horn + Composer Conversation | Sat 30 January | 2000

Philip Cashian's *Scenes from the Life of Viscount Medardo* and discussion with Philip Cashian, Aileen Sweeney and Rylan Gleave.

social sound | Sat 30 January | 2130

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists.

Listen Carefully | Sun 31 January | 1000

Siobhan Dyson's audio-visual work depicts a day in the life of an autistic person.

Hebrides Ensemble *Diversions* | Sun 31 January | 1300




Works by Joe Stollery, Ben Teague, Rylan Gleave, Siobhan Dyson, Ben Lunn, Jason Hodgson and Lucy Hale.

Available throughout the festival:

[Digital French Horn Exhibition](#)

Most of the performances will be available on our YouTube channel until 28th February. Please see our website for more information.

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#soundfest20

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