

THE ALMA FETISH

WIDE OPEN OPERA
2013



WIDE OPEN OPERA

THE ALMA FETISH

OPERA IN TWO ACTS BY

Raymond Deane (Music)

Gavin Kostick (Text)

Concept proposed by **Pauline Bewick**

World premiere

Concert performance sung in English with English surtitles

RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra

Chorus of Wide Open Opera

17 September 2013

National Concert Hall, Dublin

This performance will be recorded
for future broadcast on RTÉ lyric fm

WELCOME



I'M DELIGHTED TO WELCOME you to the world premiere performance of *The Alma Fetish* by Raymond Deane (music) and Gavin Kostick (text). It is an exciting moment to present a first performance of an opera of this scale and ambition with a distinguished Irish and international cast, the wonderful RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and a hand-picked professional chorus of top Irish singers.

This opera has been in gestation for many years. I was introduced to the process in 2008, but it was a concept that had occupied artist Pauline Bewick for many years previously. She researched the true story of Oskar Kokoschka's infatuation with Alma Mahler, and his replacement of her as his partner with a specially commissioned life-size doll. Pauline saw this as an ideal concept for an opera, and conceived stage designs modelled on six fans that Kokoschka hand-painted for Alma. A conversation with Ethna Tinney, then opera producer at RTÉ lyric fm, led to a commission for Raymond Deane and Gavin Kostick to write one scene of the opera. Scene 3 was completed in 2008, and in 2009 I recorded it for broadcast on RTÉ lyric fm with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra.

Bursary and Project funding from the Arts Council allowed Raymond and Gavin to complete the opera in the intervening years and tonight's performance is our first opportunity to present it to a live audience.

In recent years, it has been a rarity to encounter a new Irish opera, and all the more rare to hear a performance on tonight's scale. I'm very grateful to those who made this possible – our partners the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the National Concert Hall, RTÉ lyric fm, the Contemporary Music Centre and our funders The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. It is my intention that this will be the first of many new operas to be presented by Wide Open Opera.



Our inaugural performance of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre last autumn took the opera world by storm and garnered universal acclaim. I'm delighted that this will be followed by *The Alma Fetish* – attentive listeners and Wide Open Opera followers will be thrilled by the Wagnerian reference in Scene I of tonight's opera! We follow this with a co-production with NI Opera of *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Gerald Barry in October/November in Derry, Belfast, Cork and Dublin. This is the first Irish production of this hilarious opera, which is destined to be a classic. In May 2014, again in the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, we present the Irish premiere of John Adams' opera *Nixon in China*, a seminal contemporary opera which has been seen the world over. Next summer we will also be out on the streets with a Dublin City Council commission of five operas, each of five minutes duration, by Brian Irvine (music) and John McIlduff (text).



Our mission is to present new experiences for opera-goers. We believe in the vitality of Irish composers and writers. We also plan to bring to audiences major works of the international opera repertory that are not familiar in Ireland. I hope you can support us in this journey. Enjoy tonight's performance – and please: give us some feedback. The purpose of this performance is to show the work to a live audience, and we absolutely need to know what you think.

You can reach us at:
www.facebook.com/wideopenopera
info@wideopenopera.com

Fergus Sheil

Fergus Sheil
 Artistic Director
 Wide Open Opera

WIDE OPEN OPERA



Sketch by Pauline Bewick of rehearsals of Scene 3 of *The Alma Fetish* (2009), featuring the RTÉ NSO and Fergus Sheil

Artistic Director: Fergus Sheil
 Executive Producer: Gavin O'Sullivan
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CAST

Oskar	Leigh Melrose
Alma	Majella Cullagh
Hulda/Waitress	Daire Halpin
Doll	Megan Kennedy
Voice of the Doll	Deirdre Moynihan
Russian Soldier	Graeme Danby
Female Guest 1	Laura Murphy
Female Guest 2	Deirdre Moynihan
Male Guest	Eugene Ginty
Female Student 1	Catherine Redding
Female Student 2	Maria Kelly
Male Student 1	Richard Shaffrey
Male Student 2	Nathan Morrison

Chorus of Party Guests (Act I) and Students (Act II)

Composer	Raymond Deane
Librettist	Gavin Kostick
Visuals	Pauline Bewick
Lighting Designer	Mark Galione
Conductor	Fergus Sheil

Répétiteur	David Bremner
Stage Manager	Conleth Stanley
Executive Producer	Gavin O'Sullivan

Programme edited by Áine Sheil
Graphic design by Gareth Jones

The performance will last approximately 2 hours with one interval of 20 minutes.
Members of the audience are requested to turn off all mobile phones,
pagers and digital alarms.

Wide Open Opera would like to thank The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon,
RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, National Concert Hall,
RTÉ lyric fm and the Contemporary Music Centre.

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SYNOPSIS

ACT I

SCENE I

Alma Mahler's house in Vienna

A party gathers in Alma Mahler's superb drawing-room in Vienna. There is much gossip about Alma, the 'black widow'. The artist Oskar Kokoschka is present, gloomily. Alma enters and she and Oskar meet. She seduces him by singing the *Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde* to her own piano accompaniment. They embrace and pledge eternal love.

SCENE 2

Oskar's studio, months later; later in the scene, a battlefield

Oskar and Alma have now reached the stage of bickering. Oskar is jealous and Alma is contemptuous. Alma taunts him with cowardice for not enlisting to fight in the war (World War I). He agrees to do so, and suddenly we are on the battlefield. A chorus of Russian soldiers sings a marching song. One Russian soldier sings a solo before engaging Oskar in combat. He pierces him with a lance. Oskar believes he is dying.

SCENE 3

Oskar's studio in Dresden

Oskar has survived, but is deeply melancholic. His maid Hulda attempts to cope with his moods, and tells him that Alma has married Walter Gropius (the architect and founder of the Bauhaus School). Oskar persuades Hulda to write a letter to a doll-maker friend, describing in minute detail the doll that he wishes to have manufactured in Alma's image (the 'Alma fetish'). The Doll is delivered, but when Oskar opens the package, a grotesque object flops out. 'It's not her!', he cries out in despair.

ACT II

SCENE 4

Oskar's studio

The Doll's voice is heard wordlessly offstage. When it 'comes to life', Oskar dances with her and wants to go riding with her. Hulda, seeing that he is so transformed, reluctantly plays along with this. She manages to persuade Oskar that he still needs her, in order to look after 'Alma' (the Doll). Thanks to these deceptions, Oskar has started painting again.

SCENE 5

Oskar's studio

Oskar has painted six fans and has laid them out in his studio, covered, about to be shown for the first time. Hulda now seems to believe in the Doll's humanity, but Oskar has ceased to. The Doll has a brief soliloquy. The door flies open, and a group of art students enters to see the fans. They dance a wild Polka. Oskar unveils each fan in turn and everyone is moved. Then the Doll is brought in and, to everyone's horror, Oskar beheads it: he has no need of it now. Another wild dance follows, during which the students dismember the Doll and fling its parts out the window. The students leave. Hulda draws a bath for Oskar and they both get into it.

SCENE 6

A café in Venice, 20 years later

Alma arrives and is greeted by a waitress, who reminds her of someone (Hulda). Oskar arrives, by chance. They recognise each other and sing a duet. They go their separate ways, while the waitress laments that they have left no tip.

INTERVAL

EXPRESSING THE EXPRESSIONIST AGE

RAYMOND DEANE

IN 2006, ETHNA TINNEY – then opera producer in RTÉ lyric fm – asked me if I would be interested in writing an opera about the relationship between Gustav Mahler's widow Alma and the young painter Oskar Kokoschka, who, when she left him, transferred his affections to a doll he had manufactured in her image. I had already abandoned the idea of a work based on this material some years earlier, and now was delighted to revisit the story with a playwright of my choice – Gavin Kostick, with whom I had discussed a number of unrealised projects down the years.

I was attracted to the story for a number of reasons. For one thing, I trace a vital part of my cultural ancestry to Vienna in the first two decades of the 20th century. Mahler, Schoenberg, Berg, Zemlinsky, Schreker, Schnitzler, Kraus, Schiele and Kokoschka himself were and are congenial figures, and in some cases direct influences.

Simultaneously, the theme of the animated doll recalled Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, on which I based my 1983 radio opera *Krespel*. The theme of the double – Alma/the Doll – echoed doublings in my two other operas: Shelley/Artaud in *The Poet and his Double* (1991) and the daughter and her spirit in *The Wall of Cloud* (1997). Kokoschka's vampiric passion for Alma evoked the incidental music I had written in 1994 for a stage adaptation of Angela Carter's *Vampirella and the Company of Wolves*, in which the gothic perversion of romantic love was symbolised by a waltz inverting the Prelude to Wagner's *Tristan*, quoted here and there in *The Alma Fetish*. The *Liebestod* itself features as a Viennese waltz in the opening scene and is inverted in Scene 3, while the Prelude introduces Act II and punctuates the art students' wild Polka in the penultimate scene.

Wagner is not the only composer whose music is taken in vain: the irregular heartbeat from Mahler's Ninth Symphony accompanies the lovers' bickering in Act I Scene 2, in counterpoint with the battle rhythm from Strauss's *Heldenleben*. Other borrowings include the *Dresden Amen* and the *Internationale*. This, however, is not mere postmodern playfulness: lives and loves in the Expressionist era recognised no clear boundary between the aesthetic and the everyday; the disconcerting vacillation between parody and pathos is both my homage to the epoch and a recurrent feature of my style.

It was Pauline Bewick who suggested that the six fans Kokoschka painted for Alma should become a motif in Kostick's libretto. In turn, I adapted the idea of a fanlike expansion and contraction of intervals as one of the opera's dominant techniques. As a warm-up, I explored these possibilities in two chamber works: *Ventalia* (2006) and *Versura* (2007). As in *The Poet and his Double* and *The Wall of Cloud*, characters are symbolised less by motifs than by scales – whole tone for Oskar, chromatic for Alma, octatonic for Hulda. The chord sequence heard at the opening recurs throughout, and takes on something of the function of a 'love motif'. At other points its use is almost serial – Schoenberg, after all, knew both Alma and Oskar well – but it is never transposed. Formally, I think of the two acts as two three-movement symphonic works.

The composition of *The Alma Fetish* stretched over at least five years. The first scene to be composed (Scene 3, as it happens) was commissioned by RTÉ lyric fm, and work on the remainder was facilitated by two bursaries from The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all who have helped make this concert performance possible.

WRITING THE ALMA FETISH

GAVIN KOSTICK



IN 2006 I WROTE the Gaiety School of Acting's graduation show, *Olive Skin, Blood Mouth*, which took a number of tales from Ovid and retold them in the context of the ongoing occupation of Iraq. I asked Raymond Deane along for a post-show discussion on the subject.

Raymond and I have known each other for a long time and I admire him artistically, morally and politically. Although we had nearly worked together on a number of projects, I think that event must have jogged his memory, as shortly after that he asked me would I be interested in writing a libretto for a new opera. The idea for the opera came from the artist Pauline Bewick and an extract was commissioned by RTÉ lyric fm via Ethna Tinney.

The story itself is a gift. The agreement was very simple. We would tell the story of Oskar Kokoschka and Alma Mahler from their first meeting, through Kokoschka's 'temporary death' in World War I, Alma's fleeing with Walter Gropius, the creation and lodging with the fetish and the climactic destruction of the fetish. Finally we would meet Alma and Oskar again, some twenty years later in Venice. This would be done in six scenes, each with a painted fan as a motif and backdrop.

I reminded myself that a little learning is a dangerous thing. Culturally I know enough, for example, that that quotation comes from Alexander Pope and I know enough to complete the quotation, but the moment my mind moved to the vast domain of opera – and indeed the appallingly intense activity of late Belle Époque Vienna – I realised how very little indeed I knew. It is a difficult enough thing to be modest but I did my best to try not to claim to know anything I did not know or understand.

I decided that the best I could do was ask Raymond to be very clear as to what he was looking for and try to deliver accordingly. So over a coffee at the Irish Film Institute we went through the number of voices he required, where a chorus might be used and what kind of language he required. I worried away at this point: rhymes, not rhymes, repetitions, varieties of verse, until Raymond said: 'Can I stop you there, Gavin. It's opera. Nobody will be listening to the words.'

I found that remark oddly liberating. 'In that case', I said, 'shall I concentrate on making each scene as dynamic as I can?' And that is what we agreed. My thinking was that if people didn't hear the words – I wasn't to know about surtitles – they could follow the emotional drama of the story.

A novel comes in at around 70,000 plus words, a full-length play at a little over 20,000. This opera is just 8,000 words long. So part of the challenge was to tell the story economically and powerfully within a compact frame.

We then settled down to an excellent two-year working relationship. Raymond would ask for a scene, and I would send a version. This would be batted back and forth with Raymond testing the text and asking pertinent questions, but always, and this is a joy to a writer, presuming that it was my job to come up with the best artistic solution. He never took for granted that a single word would be changed without discussion. Then over two to three months he would compose the scene, and on we'd go, delayed only by my rather free way with dates about which Raymond showed a remarkable, if not perhaps unending, patience.

In the same way that he expected me to do the writing, I expected him to compose the work – I didn't try and chase my idea of his musicality. I think this, the trust of one artist for the other, has made this work one of the most satisfying experiences of my career. Or, to set a lower bar, the fact that we have not as yet horrifically fallen out is a source of great satisfaction.

As for the work itself, I have tried to show some integrity in my understanding of the people involved. Kokoschka was known as an expressionist and that implies that he was not trying merely to paint 'that there', but the emotional, subjective feelings of his relationship to the outside world. I took this as a cue to do something similar, and so while the work is based on the records, writings and paintings of the people involved, it is also a channelling of certain times of my life. Perhaps this is true of many public works, but writers generally keep quiet about it. In any case, I think a certain expressionism in the work itself suits it.

Also, I think, both Raymond and myself share something of a gothic sensibility. There is an intensity of feeling there and a delight in the macabre, but both he and I are painfully aware of the ridiculous and the absurd. At one of the most intense experiences in my life, for example, I can remember there being a hole in the sole of my right shoe; the sock was damp and I gave a 'squish' when I attempted to move.

There is plenty of allusion and quotation in the work. I know there is Picasso, Hoffmann and Tolstoy there along with the Greeks, and I think there is more. I'm not sure whether I was reflecting, in part, the enormous range of cultural expression these people had or showing how hard it is to struggle with the claustrophobic mass of art and make something just a little bit new. I think this freshness set in cultural fragments suits Raymond's work, but it would be presumptuous of me to second guess him there.

Finally, there was an agreement that the work is at least a three-hander. Oskar and Alma remain known, but in history, Hulda, the maid, has slipped away. We both took to the pragmatic, working Hulda, who grasped perfectly the heart of the case, no matter how strange it seemed, and with a ordinary decency steered things in the right direction. We decided to put her back into the centre of the story.

I very much hope you enjoy *The Alma Fetish*.

PAULINE BEWICK ON THE ALMA FETISH



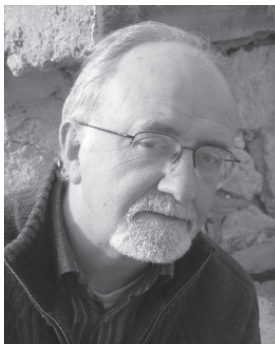
OSKAR KOKOSCHKA WROTE NUMEROUS detailed letters instructing a seamstress on how she should make him a perfect life-size doll of the woman who rejected him. 'Use only the softest of silks for the inner thigh', he stipulated. 'I must never be aware of seams. Will I be able to dress her?' The doll was of Alma Mahler, composer and Viennese beauty. She had totally rejected Kokoschka after their passionate love affair. When the doll was finally finished, Kokoschka would take it to the opera and to parties. Everyone in Vienna knew of Kokoschka's doll.



When exhibiting in London in the late 1980s, I read these amazing letters, which inspired me with an idea for an opera. I not only wrote an opera synopsis, calling it *Obsession*, but also painted the set ideas. These I took to Jeremy Isaacs and Anthony Russell-Roberts of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. They were excited by the ideas I presented to them, and Anthony Russell-Roberts wrote that 'it would be wonderful to work with you when you return from your South Seas island'. When I did return in 1991, having crab-hunted and swum with the locals for food and so on, opera seemed unnatural and histrionic. I didn't follow up the idea. Not until one day in 2006 when I heard Ethna Tinney speaking of Alma Mahler on RTÉ lyric fm. I contacted her and she got Raymond Deane to compose a part of the story called 'The Arrival of the Doll'. Fergus Sheil did a wonderful job conducting the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, and we were all interviewed on RTÉ lyric fm. Then nothing more happened until now. Raymond Deane and Gavin Kostick have finished it. They have renamed it, and it has become *The Alma Fetish*. Fergus Sheil re-engaged me to complete the artwork, and I am excited to see how it has developed.



BIOGRAPHIES



RAYMOND DEANE

Composer

Raymond Deane was brought up on Achill Island, Co Mayo, and lived in Dublin from the age of ten. After graduation from University College Dublin in 1974 he studied composition with Gerald Bennett (Basle), Stockhausen (Cologne) and Isang Yun (Berlin). He has produced over 100 works that have been commissioned and/or performed by, among others, the RTÉ NSO, the Vanbrugh, Arditti, Duke and Callino Quartets, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, Harry Sparnaay, the Schubert Ensemble of London and Ian Pace. His two previous operas, *The Poet and his Double* (1991) and *The Wall of Cloud* (1999), were commissioned by Opera Theatre Company. He was Artistic Director of the first two RTÉ Living Music Festivals (2002/2004). In 2005 he was awarded a doctorate in composition by NUI Maynooth. Also a pianist, published novelist and political activist, he divides his time between Dublin and Fürth (Bavaria). CDs of his chamber and orchestral music have been issued on the Black Box, Naxos/Marco Polo and RTÉ labels, with an album of his *Noctuary*, commissioned and performed by Hugh Tinney, due from Resonus Classics in 2014. His 60th birthday this year has been marked by numerous concerts, seminars, world premieres and Mark Linnane's short film *A Portrait of Raymond Deane*, commissioned by the Contemporary Music Centre.



GAVIN KOSTICK

Librettist

Gavin Kostick's plays have been produced in Ireland, Northern Ireland, the UK, Philadelphia and New York. His plays and theatre projects have been nominated for and have achieved various awards, including The Stewart Parker Trust Award, Irish Times Theatre Awards, Dublin Fringe Festival Awards and First Irish Festival Awards, New York. Most recently, *Pocket Musical* won the Bewley's Award (Dublin Fringe Festival) and *Fight Night* was nominated for an Irish Times Theatre Award. His current work includes a series of short plays in the *Show in a Bag* project with Dublin Fringe and the Irish Theatre Institute to provide Irish actors with quality works suitable for touring. *The Games People Play* for Rise Productions is being performed as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival 2013. As Literary Manager for Fishamble: The New Play Company, Gavin Kostick works with new theatre writers through a range of innovative programmes. He also teaches at The Lir National Academy of Dramatic Art. For Dublin Fringe Festival 2007, his 5 ½-hour performance as Charlie Marlow in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* received the Spirit of the Fringe Award, went on to the Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival 2008, and was performed at the South Bank as part of the London Literature Festival 2009.



PAULINE BEWICK

Visuals

Pauline Bewick is one of Ireland's most well-known artists. She works in a variety of media, including painting, tapestry and ceramics. She is also active as a writer. Since the 1950s she has worked with international media including television, radio, book publishers, newspapers and journals. Her work is in collections worldwide, and she is the subject of many documentaries. On reaching the age of 70, she donated to the Irish State 600 of her life's works created between the ages of two and 70. These works are on permanent display in Waterford Institute of Technology and the Kerry County Council Offices, Killorglin, Co. Kerry. Her autobiography will be published by Arlen House in 2014. Pauline Bewick conceived the idea of this opera in 1986, when Kokoschka's work was on exhibition at the Tate Gallery London.



MARK GALIONE

Lighting Designer

Mark Galione's designs in Ireland and Northern Ireland include works for Irish Modern Dance Theatre, CoisCéim Dance Theatre, Dance Theatre of Ireland, the Peacock Stage at the Abbey Theatre, Fíabín, Hands Turn Theatre Company, Classic Stage Ireland, Barabbas, Holocaust Memorial Day at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, Vesuvius Theatre Company, The Playhouse Theatre, Derry, The Ark, Fishamble, Peer to Peer, Theatre Lovett and Barnstorm Theatre Company. In the UK his lighting designs have included work for Nigel Charnock, Emilyn Claid, Ricochet, Small Axe, Gaby Agis, Sadler's Wells Theatre, The Royal Ballet, Sherman Theatre and Soho Theatre Company. Recent television credits include 'Jack Lukeman – The 27 Club', 'All Ireland School's Talent Search' and TG4's 'Country Music Legends'.



FERGUS SHEIL

Conductor

As Artistic Director of Wide Open Opera and Wide Open Music, Fergus Sheil is active as a conductor and creative producer of new opera and music experiences. He has also recently become Artistic Director of Opera Theatre Company. In opera, Fergus conducted Wide Open Opera's acclaimed 2012 production of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (Bord Gáis Energy Theatre/ Dublin Theatre Festival). During the 2013/14 season he will conduct the Irish premiere of John Adams' *Nixon in China* and co-produce Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest* with NI Opera. With OTC he will oversee *Carmen*, *L'elisir d'amore* and *Albert Herring*. He has previously worked for Opera Ireland, Wexford Festival Opera, NI Opera, Lyric Opera Productions, Scottish Opera and WNO in a wide range of repertoire. For Carlow Local Authorities, he oversaw the commissioning and performance of *Shelter Me From the Rain* by Brian Irvine (music) and John McIllduff (text), which received the Allianz Business to Arts award for 'Best Use of Creativity in the Community' (2011). With Wide Open Music and RTÉ NSO, Fergus has toured Ireland with Beethoven's *Symphony No 9 (Choral)*; a subsequent tour is planned for December 2013. He has also involved the RTÉ NSO in community projects (*Merge* to mark the 600th anniversary of Drogheda) and youth initiatives (*Rain Falling Up*, 2012). Fergus has also conducted the Ulster Orchestra, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the RTÉ CO, the Northern Sinfonia, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the State Choir Latvija and BBC Singers. Internationally, Fergus has undertaken engagements in the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia, UK, France, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Estonia.



LEIGH MELROSE

Oskar

Leigh Melrose is noted for his performances of new works and core opera and concert repertory by Brahms, Mozart, Berg and Mahler. He has sung the title role in *Wozzeck* (Salzburg, ENO), Papageno (Seattle Opera), Rossini's Figaro (New York City Opera), Escamillo (ENO, Royal Albert Hall, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra) and numerous leading roles at ENO, WNO, La Monnaie, Brussels, Liceu, Barcelona, and many other European opera houses. His world premiere performances include Cholawicki in Johannes Kalitzke's *Die Besessenen* (Theater an der Wien, Vienna), Elliot Carter's *On Conversing with Paradise* (Aldeburgh Festival) and Evan in James MacMillan's *The Sacrifice* (WNO). *On Conversing with Paradise* was recorded and nominated for a Gramophone Award for 'Best Contemporary Album'. Other contemporary music performances include Rihm's *Der Maler träumt* (Maggio Musicale, Florence), Matthias Pintscher's *Solomon's Garden* (Ensemble Intercontemporain, Paris), John Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer* (Channel 4 film), Punch in Birtwistle's *Punch and Judy* (Porto), Xenakis' *Ais* (BBC SO at BBC Proms and Berlin Festival), and Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (Madrid and Queen Elizabeth Hall). His plans include the UK premiere of Francesconi's *Quartett* (ROH Covent Garden), the title role of Birtwistle's *Gawain* (BBC Scottish SO) and *Peter Grimes* (ENO).



MAJELLA CULLAGH

Alma

Majella Cullagh is one of Ireland's foremost international opera singers. She has performed with Opera di Verona, Donizetti Festival Bergamo, Royal Swedish Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Vlaamse Opera, Opéra de Toulon, Opera St. Gallen, Opera North, Glyndebourne on Tour, Opera Holland Park, Garsington Opera, Grange Park Opera, Opera Ireland, Opera Theatre Company, Dallas Opera and Opera New Zealand. Her repertory includes Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *Linda di Chamounix* and *Roberto Devereux*; Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La gazza ladra*, *Le comte Ory* and *Le siège de Corinthe*; Verdi's *La traviata*; Puccini's *La bohème*; Handel's *Amadigi*; Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *Le nozze di Figaro*; Bizet's *Carmen*; Massenet's *Manon*; and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Her contemporary music appearances include Gavin Bryars' *Medea* (BBC Scottish SO), James Wilson's *A Passionate Man* (Trinity College Dublin), John Adams' *The Death of Klinghoffer* (Concertgebouw, Amsterdam) and Gerald Barry's *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival). She has given bel canto recitals in La Coruña, Catania, Pesaro, Stuttgart and London, and has performed extensively in oratorio and on the concert platform, including in Milan, Amsterdam and London and at La Fenice, Venice. She has recorded roles by Wallace, Rossini, Mozart, Donizetti, Mercadante and Balfe, and has a discography of over thirty recordings on the Opera Rara, Chandos and Naxos labels.



DAIRE HALPIN

Hulda

Daire Halpin is an Irish soprano based in London. She is a graduate of TCD, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and the prestigious Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. She has made a number of recordings including RTÉ lyric fm's *Joycesongs* and the soundtrack for BBC Radio 4's recent adaptation of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Her performance of Lucy Lockit (*The Beggar's Opera*) for the European Opera Centre with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra will be released later this year. Her roles include: Zerlina (Opera Ireland/DIT), Jano in Janáček's *Jenůfa* and Amore in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Opera Ireland); Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* (Yorke Trust and Endellion Festival); the title role in *Theodora* and Tytania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Yorke Trust); Despina in *Così fan tutte* and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Candlelight Opera); Julia in the world premiere of Torsten Rasch's *The Duchess of Malfi* (ENO); Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* (Pavilion Opera); Diana in *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Scottish Opera/NI Opera/Young Vic); Hilde in the world premiere of Craig Armstrong's *Lady from the Sea* (Scottish Opera); Gianetta in *The Gondoliers* (RTÉ CO); and Proserpina/Ninfa in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (Opera Theatre Company). Also at home on the concert platform, she has recently performed as a soloist with the European Union Youth Orchestra (London and Reykjavik).



DEIRDRE MOYNIHAN

Voice of the Doll

Deirdre Moynihan has performed with operatic, orchestral, choral and chamber music groups in Ireland and internationally (Canada, the USA, Israel, Brazil, Lebanon, Japan, China, and throughout Europe). She has been the soloist for premieres of contemporary works by composers such as Ian Wilson, Brian Irvine, Rob Canning, Marian Ingoldsby and Ben Dwyer. She has sung as a soloist with, among others, the RTÉ CO, RTÉ NSO, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, National Chamber Choir of Ireland and Crash Ensemble, and has broadcast on RTÉ lyric fm, RTÉ Radio 1 and BBC Radio Ulster. Recent performances in 2013 include a UK performance of Ian Wilson's *Bewitched* with the Irish Chamber Orchestra string quartet, the premiere of *Fuill is Uisce* (a song cycle for soprano and guitar), Handel's *Neun Deutsche Arien* with the Irish Baroque Orchestra Chamber Soloists (Irish tour), and appearances at the Galway Arts Festival, the Mottolo Festival, Italy (as part of the Moynihan O'Leary Duo), Poland and Budapest. Her debut CD of Vivaldi cantatas will be released by Naxos in January 2014. Her plans include the premiere of *A State of Light* by Bill Whelan and Michael Coady, and a number of concerts in Japan. Deirdre Moynihan holds an MA in Vocal Performance from the Cork School of Music.



GRAEME DANBY

Russian Soldier

Graeme Danby has appeared at the ROH Covent Garden as Billy Jackrabbit (*La fanciulla del West*), Charrington (*1984*), Gonzalo (*The Tempest*), Second Armed Man (*Die Zauberflöte*), Casino Manager (*The Gambler*) and Sacristan (*Tosca*). For ENO he has sung over 200 roles, including Bartolo, Basilio, Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Dulcamara, Quince and Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Pistol (*Falstaff*), Pooh-Bah, Count Ribbing (*Un ballo in maschera*), Sacristan, Sarastro and Somnus (*Semele*). His most recent appearances with the company include *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *The Passenger* and *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Further UK engagements have included Superintendant Budd in *Albert Herring* (Opera North); Bartolo (Opera North and Garsington Festival); Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Glyndebourne); Collatinus (Buxton Festival); and Sacristan, Bosun (*Billy Budd*), Benedict (*La vie parisienne*) and Masetto (Scottish Opera). Internationally, he has sung at the Liceu, Barcelona; La Scala, Milan; De Vlaamse Opera; Opéra national du Rhin, Strasbourg; Salzburg Landestheater; and the Palau Reina Sofia, Valencia. He has appeared in concert with the LSO, LPO, RPO, Philharmonia, Royal National Scottish Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He broadcasts regularly for the BBC.



MEGAN KENNEDY

Doll

Megan Kennedy trained at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in New York City and received a BA (Hons) from Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. She is Co-Artistic Director of dance theatre company junk ensemble, which has been awarded a Best Production Award, a Culture Ireland Touring Award and an Excellence and Innovation Award. The company's new production *Dusk Ahead* can be seen at Dublin Theatre Festival in October 2013. Megan Kennedy has performed with Retina Dance Company (UK), Storytelling Unplugged (Romania), Firefly Productions (Belgium), and in Ireland with CoisCéim Dance Theatre (*Faun, As You Are*), Brokentalkers (*The Blue Boy, On This One Night*), The Abbey Theatre (*Romeo and Juliet*), Bedrock Productions (*Pale Angel*), Blast Theory and for The Pavilion and The Ark. Her film credits include *The Wake* (Invisible Thread Productions, 2013), *Blind Runner* (junk ensemble/Dance Ireland Commission, 2013), *Wonder House* (Jameson International Film Festival, 2012), *Her Mother's Daughters* (Winner of Best Actress Award at Capalbio Festival, Italy, 2011; Dance on Camera Festival, NYC; RTÉ Dance on the Box, 2010). Other choreography includes Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* (Edinburgh Festival Theatre), *eX Choral Ensemble* (Ireland) and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Samuel Beckett Theatre). Megan Kennedy is a Director of Dance Ireland and a Fellow of Salzburg Global Seminar.

CHORUS OF WIDE OPEN OPERA

**Sopranos**

Grace Bermingham
Margaret Bridge
Niamh Browne
Deirdre Moynihan
Gemma Prince
Catherine Redding

Altos

Constance Gardiner
Maria Hughes
Maria Kelly
Laura Murphy
Gemma Ní Bhriain
Dominica Williams

Tenors

Ernest Dines
Eugene Ginty
Ciaran Kelly
John McKeown
Peter O'Donohue
Richard Shaffrey

Basses

Cian Brady
John Dempsey
Eoghan Desmond
Nathan Morrison
Gyula Nagy
Ciaran Olohan

RTÉ NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Principal Conductor: Alan Buribayev

The RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra plays a central role in classical music in Ireland through a year-long programme of live performances, schools and educational projects, broadcasts, recordings and new commissions.

The orchestra has been critically acclaimed at home and abroad for its recordings across a variety of labels including Naxos, Claves and RTÉ lyric fm. Recordings on the RTÉ lyric fm label include *Finghin Collins: Mozart Piano Concertos*; the Composers of Ireland series, a landmark recording project funded by RTÉ and The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, which to date has recorded works by Gerald Barry, Raymond Deane, Seóirse Bodley, Deirdre Gribbin, Ian Wilson, John Kinsella and Stephen Gardner; and recordings of selected orchestral works by Aloys Fleischmann, Frederick May and Seán Ó Riada. 'Disciplined and responsive playing by the RTÉ NSO ... set the seal on an impressive disc' was how *Gramophone* magazine responded to the release of Stephen Gardner's orchestral works in August 2013.

2013–14 includes a range of Main Season and Beyond the Season concerts at the National Concert Hall as well as performances around Ireland in Castlebar, Cork, Kilkenny, Limerick, Navan, Tullamore and Waterford. With in excess of 50 concerts, the orchestra will welcome over 50 international conductors, soloists and singers and will profile some 20 Irish soloists and conductors. Six world

premieres will be presented, including three new RTÉ commissions. The season includes weekly concerts and pre-concert interviews and talks; FORTE, the musical discovery educational programme; early and late-night concerts; concerts in celebration of Culture Night and RTÉ Big Music Week; a mentoring scheme for young musicians, open rehearsals and Horizons, the contemporary music series focusing on new music by Irish composers Rhona Clarke, Marion Ingoldsby, Seán Clancy and Brian Irvine, as well as the composers they admire.

New initiatives include *Big on Britten*, three concerts marking the centenary of Benjamin Britten (4 October, 18 October, 29 November); *Shakespeare in Music*, in collaboration with Ireland's national theatre, involving two matinee performances at the Abbey Theatre celebrating Shakespeare through words and music (15 December); and a performance of Harrison Birtwistle's *Earth Dances* which will see the orchestra welcome the ground-breaking composer to the stage of the National Concert Hall in association with Trinity College Dublin's Music Composition Centre as part of the New Music Dublin festival (7 March). Beyond the Season highlights include *The Three Sopranos Christmas Galas* (19 December), a New Year Gala Celebration with soprano Cara O'Sullivan in Dublin and Cork, and an all-Bach concert on Good Friday.

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First Violins

Helena Wood, Leader
Elaine Clark, Co-Leader
Claire Crehan
Audrey McAllister
Catherine McCarthy
Ting Zhong Deng
David Clark
Anne Harte
Brona Fitzgerald
Claudie Driesen
Karl Sweeney
Orla Ni Bhraoin

Second Violins

David MacKenzie, Section Leader
Elizabeth McLaren, Associate Principal
Mary Wheatley
Rosalind Brown
Paul Fanning
Melanie Briggs
Evelyn McGrory
Elena Quinn
Jenny Burns-Duffy
Magda Kowalska

Violas

Adèle Johnson, Section Leader
John Lynch, Associate Principal
Randal Devine
Aine O'Neill
Cliona O'Riordan
Niamh Nelson
Adele Greene
Errika Horsley

Cellos

Martin Johnson, Section Leader
Polly Ballard, Associate Principal
Violetta Muth, String Sub-Principal
Niall O'Loughlin
Una Ni Chanainn
Elizabeth Fletcher

Double basses

Dominic Dudley, Section Leader
Aura Stone, String Sub-Principal
Helen Morgan
Edward Tapceanu

Flutes

Catriona Ryan, Section Leader
Sinéad Farrell

Piccolo

Sinéad Farrell, Principal

Oboes

Sylvain Gnemmi, Associate Principal
Deborah Clifford

Cor Anglais

Deborah Clifford, Principal

Clarinets

John Finucane, Section Leader
Fintan Sutton

Bass Clarinet

Fintan Sutton, Principal

Bassoons

Michael Jones, Section Leader
Hilary Sheil

Contra Bassoon

Hilary Sheil, Principal

Horns

Fergus O'Carroll,
Acting Section Leader
Ian Dakin
Bethan Watkeys, Principal

Trumpets

Colm Byrne, Principal
Killyan Bannister

Trombones

Jason Sinclair, Section Leader

Bass Trombone

Sean Fleming, Principal

Tuba

Francis Magee, Section Leader

Timpani

Martin Metrusty, Section Leader

Percussion

Richard O'Donnell, Section Leader
Jonathan Herbert, Principal
Roger Moffatt
Maeva O'Hara
Chris Stynes
Peadar Townsend

Harp

Andreja Malir, Section Leader

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Norma O'Connor

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Liam Hennessy

Orchestral Assistant

Andy Dunne

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIDE OPEN OPERA

IF YOU HAVE ENJOYED TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH AND HELP US DEVELOP SOME OF OUR FUTURE PLANS.

At Wide Open Opera we have ambitious plans ahead. In the immediate future we are co-producing Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest* with NI Opera. This is a new opera, premiered in Los Angeles in 2011, and it has already created a sensation, with performances in the UK and France and others planned. We are delighted to present the Irish premiere in a new production directed and designed by Antony McDonald. We follow this with another large-scale work, *Nixon in China* by John Adams, which sees us return to the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre in May 2014. This visually stunning production with high-tech sound and video has been staged in Vancouver and San Francisco in 2010 and 2012. We have many further operas in development and we aim to continue to provide unique experiences for Irish audiences.

We ask for your help through attending our productions, spreading the word, and donating to Wide Open Opera if you can. Please note our future dates for your diary:

GERALD BARRY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

26 October 2013, 7.30pm
Millennium Forum, Derry~Londonderry
 Box office: 028 7126 4455 / www.millenniumforum.co.uk

30 October 2013, 7.30pm
Grand Opera House, Belfast
 Box office: 028 9024 1919 / www.goh.co.uk

2 November 2013, 8.00pm
Cork Opera House
 Box office: 021 427 0022 / www.corkoperahouse.ie

8 and 9 November 2013, 8.00pm
Gaiety Theatre, Dublin
 Box office: 0818 719 388 / www.gaietytheatre.ie

JOHN ADAMS: NIXON IN CHINA

(booking opens late September – check with venue)

11, 14, 17 May 2014
Bord Gáis Energy Theatre
 Box office: 0818 719 377 / www.bordgaisenergytheatre.ie

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2. Give us Feedback
 We would be very happy to hear your thoughts and suggestions via our website, Facebook or Twitter

3. Don't Keep it a Secret If you have enjoyed tonight's production, and would like to see more, spread the word. Tell your friends and colleagues, tell the media, tell politicians, tell The Arts Council

4. Fundraising and Donations
 If you would like to donate towards a future production, or arrange a fundraising event, please contact us via our website www.wideopenopera.com



GERALD BARRY



The Importance of Being Earnest

THE HILARIOUS NEW OPERA BASED ON OSCAR WILDE'S PLAY
ALL-IRELAND TOUR 26TH OCTOBER - 9TH NOVEMBER 2013



PERFORMANCE DATES

October 26, 7.30pm – Millennium Forum, Derry~Londonderry

October 30, 7.30pm – Grand Opera House, Belfast

November 2, 8.00pm – Cork Opera House

November 8 and 9, 8.00pm – Gaiety Theatre, Dublin




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A photograph of a bedroom. In the foreground, a bed with a white metal frame is covered with a white duvet and a dark quilted blanket. A bright yellow blanket is folded at the foot of the bed. To the left, a window with white frames looks out onto a green landscape. To the right, a lamp with a yellow shade is mounted on a stand. The background wall is dark.

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A portrait of Sir James Galway, an older man with white hair and a beard, wearing a patterned brown jacket and a purple tie. He is holding a flute. The background of the portrait is a dark, ornate pattern.

SIR JAMES GALWAY

National Concert Hall

Lifetime Achievement Award 2013

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 8PM

This gala concert event will be hosted by **Miriam O'Callaghan**. The evening will see Miriam talking to Sir James about his life and music. It will also feature Sir James performing some of his most popular music with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and a number of very special guests.

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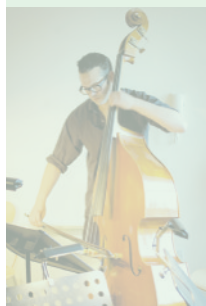
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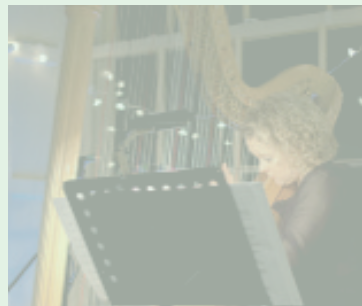
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The first part of the paper discusses the importance of understanding the cultural context of the research. It highlights the need for researchers to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of the communities they are studying. This is particularly important in the field of education, where cultural differences can significantly impact learning outcomes.

The second part of the paper focuses on the methodology used in the study. It describes the process of selecting participants, collecting data, and analyzing the results. The authors emphasize the importance of using a mixed-methods approach to capture both quantitative and qualitative data.

The third part of the paper presents the findings of the study. It discusses the results of the quantitative analysis, which showed a significant positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The authors also present the results of the qualitative analysis, which provided valuable insights into the experiences of the participants.

The final part of the paper discusses the implications of the findings for practice and policy. It suggests that the results of the study can be used to inform the development of culturally responsive teaching practices and educational policies.