

ENGLISH
NATIONAL
OPERA



John Berry *Artistic Director*
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PETER GRIMES

An Opera in a Prologue and Three Acts

Music by Benjamin Britten
Libretto by Montagu Slater,
derived from the poem of George Crabbe

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Directed by David Alden
Assistant director Ian Rutherford
Set designed by Paul Steinberg
Costumes designed by Brigitte Reiffenstuel
Lighting designed by Adam Silverman
Movement director Maxine Braham

English National Opera Chorus (Chorus master: Martin Fitzpatrick)
English National Opera Orchestra (Leader: Janice Graham)
Conducted by Edward Gardner

Live screening from the London Coliseum, 23 February 2014 at 3pm
Directed for the screen by Andy Morahan
Presented by Clemency Burton-Hill

Co-production with De Vlaamse Opera, Opera de Oviedo and the Deutsche Oper Berlin.
Original production supported by ENO's English Opera Group.
Revival supported by a syndicate of individual donors and the Friends of ENO.



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Characters

Peter Grimes *a fisherman*

Ellen Orford *a widow,
schoolmistress of the Borough*

Captain Balstrode *a retired naval officer*
Auntie *landlady of 'The Boar'*

First niece
Second niece
the main attractions of 'The Boar'

Bob Boles *fisherman and Methodist*
Swallow *a lawyer*

Mrs Sedley
Revd Horace Adams *the rector*
Ned Keene *apothecary and quack*
Hobson *carrier*
John Grimes's *apprentice*

Doctor Crabbe
Chorus of townspeople and fisherman

Stuart Skelton

Elza van den Heever

Iain Paterson
Rebecca de Pont Davies

Rhian Lois
Mary Bevan

Michael Colvin
Matthew Best
Felicity Palmer
Timothy Robinson
Leigh Melrose
Matthew Treviño
Timothy Kirrage

Ben Craze

Casting information is correct at time of going to print. However, as a live performance, details are subject to change.

Timings and intervals

Prologue and Act I 60 minutes; Act II 50 minutes; Act III 40 minutes
There will be two intervals of 20 minutes, following Act I and Act II.
The performance will last approximately 3 hours and 10 minutes.

Please make sure all phones are switched off during the performance.

Synopsis

The Borough, a small fishing village on the East Coast.

Prologue A boy apprenticed to the fisherman Peter Grimes has died at sea. An inquest is being held to determine the cause of death. After hearing Grimes's testimony, the coroner, Mr Swallow, finds that the boy died in 'accidental circumstances'. He warns Grimes not to get another apprentice. Grimes demands a full trial and the right to employ another boy. His pleas are ignored and the court is cleared. Ellen Orford, the local schoolteacher, assures Peter that with her help the future will be better.

Act 1

Interlude 1

Scene 1 Morning

The Borough goes about its business. Grimes returns from fishing; only Captain

Balstrode, a retired naval officer, and Ned Keene, the local apothecary, are willing to help bring in his boat. Keene tells Grimes he has arranged for a new apprentice from the workhouse. The carter, Hobson, at first refuses to fetch the boy, but consents when Ellen offers to look after the child on the journey. As a storm brews, Balstrode tries to dissuade Grimes from a course he fears will result in another tragedy, but Grimes is determined to get rich, marry Ellen and thus silence the Borough gossips.

Interlude 2

Scene 2 *The Boar*

Late that night, the storm has reached hurricane force. To the annoyance of Auntie, the landlady, Mrs Sedley arrives to wait for Ned Keene. He has promised to meet her there with a new supply of laudanum. Auntie's 'nieces' come in, to be abused by Balstrode and molested by Bob Boles, the Methodist preacher. At the height of the storm, Ned Keene enters with news that the cliff by Grimes's hut has been washed away. He is followed by Grimes himself: it is as if the eye of the storm has entered the room. Ellen and the new apprentice arrive, soaked and exhausted from their journey; before the boy can rest, Grimes insists on taking him straight home. He drags him off into the night.

Interval of 20 minutes

Act 2

Interlude 3

Scene 1 *Sunday morning*

Ellen is sitting on the beach with John, the new apprentice, while the church service begins. She encourages the boy to talk about himself, but he says nothing. Only then does she notice the bruising on his neck and immediately fears the worst. Grimes comes to take the boy off fishing. Ellen pleads for the boy's right for a day of rest. When Peter refuses, she tells him that their attempt to make a new start has failed. Peter, in a frenzy, hits out at her and rushes off with the boy. This scene has been witnessed, and when the congregation comes out of church there is a call for action against Grimes. The men set out for his hut. Auntie, Ellen and the 'nieces' are left alone to reflect on the hopelessness of loving men.

Interlude 4

Scene 2 *Grimes's hut*

Grimes orders the boy to get ready for fishing. Haunted by the death of the last apprentice, he feels his dream of marrying Ellen slipping away. When he hears the men from the Borough approaching, he immediately assumes the boy has betrayed him. As he is hurrying the boy down the cliff to the sea, the Borough knocks at the door. He panics. The boy screams as he slips and falls. Grimes climbs down after him. The men enter to find the hut deserted.

Interval of 20 minutes

Act 3

Interlude 5

Scene 1 *Outside the Moot Hall, a few days later*

In the Moot Hall a dance is in full swing. Outside, Auntie's 'nieces' manage to escape the attentions of Swallow, who retires defeated into the Boar. Mrs Sedley tells Ned Keene she has conclusive proof that Grimes has murdered his apprentice. Keene leaves her to her midnight ravings. Ellen and Balstrode appear, discussing Grimes's disappearance. Mrs Sedley overhears that Ellen has found the boy's sweater down by the shore. Ellen and Balstrode decide to try to find Grimes and help him. When they are gone, Mrs Sedley whips up the community against Grimes and a man-hunt begins.

Interlude 6

Scene 2 *Some hours later*

Grimes is alone, tortured by the distant sound of the hunt, longing for escape and peace. Ellen and Balstrode find him, and Balstrode helps him push his boat out to sea for the last time. Day breaks and the Borough goes about its business. Far out at sea a boat is sinking.

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Coming on 17 June

Berlioz's

BENVENUTO CELLINI

Directed by Terry Gilliam



Terry Gilliam's inexhaustible imagination is unleashed on Berlioz's dazzling opera which brings together themes of thwarted love, elopement, intrigue, disguise and mistaken identity.

Featuring some of Berlioz's most vibrant and tender music, the production will be conducted by ENO's Music Director Edward Gardner (*Peter Grimes*). Michael Spyres sings the title role, with stunning soprano Corinne Winters playing Cellini's lover and distinguished bass Willard White playing Pope Clement VII.

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