



ENO Announces Second Recipient of the ENO Charles Mackerras Fellowship –Fergus Macleod

English National Opera (ENO) today (3 April 2014) announced young conductor Fergus Macleod as the second recipient of its ENO Charles Mackerras Fellowship. The award, for an outstanding emerging conductor, is an ENO initiative in association with the Philip Loubser Foundation, and celebrates the great legacy of Sir Charles Mackerras.

As the ENO Charles Mackerras Fellow, Fergus will have the opportunity to work and develop as a conductor by way of a bespoke two year programme. He will be mentored, uniquely, by both current ENO Music Director Edward Gardner and his successor Mark Wigglesworth. He will assist on productions across each of two seasons, and will have full access to the casting, staging and production departments at ENO, plus the opportunity to travel with the Music Director and make important contacts on the international opera scene.

Fergus Macleod said, “I am delighted to have the opportunity to be part of the world-class team at ENO; particularly exciting is the prospect of working under the guidance of both Edward Gardner and Mark Wigglesworth over the coming seasons. It is a great privilege to be given the chance to work with such talented and dedicated musicians and I am looking forward to benefiting greatly from their guidance, as well as the breadth of opportunities that will be on offer.”

Macleod is currently Assistant to Donald Runnicles at the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Leverhulme Conducting Fellow at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. After graduating from Cambridge University in 2009, he completed his postgraduate studies with Professor Johannes Schlaefli at Zurich University for the Arts. He has previously worked with the Colorado Symphony, London Chamber Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Biel Symphony and Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra. His operatic engagements have included the world premiere of Dennis Becker's *Tod und das Mädchen* in Zurich and performances of Dvorak's *Rusalka* with Utsi Opera.

A shortlist of eight international candidates interviewed and auditioned for the Fellowship in March at Blackheath Concert Halls. The auditions involved rehearsing with singers and the ENO Orchestra, who also provided feedback on each candidate. On the panel were Edward Gardner (ENO Music Director), Martin Fitzpatrick (ENO Head of Music), Mark Wigglesworth (conductor and ENO Music Director from 2015), Dame Felicity Palmer (singer), John McMurray (ENO Head of Casting), Janice Graham (ENO Orchestra leader) and Sally Sparrow (ENO Head of Music Administration).

ENO Music Director Edward Gardner said: “All of us at ENO are thrilled that Fergus Macleod will take up the Mackerras Fellowship in Conducting with the company. On the day of auditions he impressed the panel and orchestra with his rehearsals, conducting and accompaniment of singers, and we all believe a great career, especially in opera, beckons.”

The inaugural recipient of the ENO Mackerras Fellowship, Gergely Madaras, is quickly gaining an international reputation as one of the most promising conductors of his generation. During his



Fellowship, Madaras assisted ENO Music Director Edward Gardner on several ENO productions, and made his UK opera debut in 2013, conducting ENO's production of *The Magic Flute*, for which he was described as 'energizing' and 'terrific' (*The Telegraph*). He has recently been appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of Orchestre Dijon, Bourgogne. His upcoming operatic engagements include his *The Magic Flute* at De Nederlandse Opera, Amsterdam, as well as the opening concert of the 30th International Bartok Festival, featuring *Bluebeard's Castle*.

Madaras said of his time with ENO: "It was a true privilege to be the first recipient of such a versatile and prestigious development opportunity. Besides having been the assistant conductor for five productions, as part of the fellowship I got to know how every cogwheel works in a top opera house, from the casting department to stage management. I have received guidance and lots of inspiration from Edward Gardner, and made music with so many wonderful colleagues. The highlight of my two years at ENO was conducting my own production, *The Magic Flute*, last autumn. The Charles Mackerras Fellowship is an opportunity every young conductor dreams about, so I am very happy to pass the baton to Fergus, who is next in line for a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Michael Loubser, on behalf of the Philip Loubser Foundation, said: "Through the Philip Loubser Foundation we are trying to develop a number of cultural projects that support the development of exceptionally talented young artists from around the world, and at the same time celebrate the achievement of a great artist of the past."

"Gergely was the first recipient chosen from a huge number of applicants. Fortunately there couldn't have been a better person to set the benchmark and to help shape the Fellowship for future recipients. Now Fergus looks set to continue this high level of excellence. Hopefully one day there will be a number of great conductors in the world who will look back at their ENO days as a career changing experience - and keep the name of Sir Charles Mackerras alive."

The ENO Charles Mackerras Fellowship is one of a number of unique ENO talent development programmes for singers, musicians, composers and conductors, which underpin the company's commitment to British and British-trained talent. Other programmes include the ENO Harewood Artists for exceptionally talented singers, ENO Opera Works for talented singers wishing to develop a career in opera, ENO Evolve, which gives Royal College of Music undergraduates the opportunity to work with the ENO orchestra and the Chorus Mentor Scheme with Trinity Laban Conservatoire.

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Notes to Editors:

English National Opera (ENO) is the UK's leading producer of world-class opera, sung in English. Working with the very best talent from across the arts and creative industries, we create distinctive, highly theatrical productions and stage more new work and contemporary opera than any other UK opera company. We champion British and British-trained talent by placing it at the heart of our performances and providing unique development programmes for singers, musicians, composers and conductors. Our productions are seen by audiences across the world thanks to partnerships with its most celebrated opera houses. Through all our activities we aim to make our work enjoyable, accessible and affordable for as many people as possible.

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