



GARSINGTON OPERA
AT WORMSLEY

OPERA AND WELLBEING: GARSINGTON OPERA'S NEW INITIATIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Garsington Opera presents a programme of new *Opera and Wellbeing* initiatives for their 2015 season. Working with the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and linking in with an Adult Chorus drawn from all levels of the local community, the Garsington Opera Education Team aims to demonstrate the benefits for wellbeing of the arts, as well as encouraging participation from those unable to engage with the arts easily through difficult circumstances.

SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER, 10.30AM – 12PM
NATIONAL SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE, STOKE MANDEVILLE HOSPITAL

For the first time ever, Garsington Opera Education invites patients and staff of the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville to work with Garsington Opera Education in a morning workshop, linking the genre of opera and physical and mental wellbeing.

Led by Karen Gillingham and Lea Cornthwaite, the drama / singing workshop will be inspired by John Browne's *A Nightingale Sang*, a reflection of Florence Nightingale as a pioneering nurse and social reformer, chosen to express the experience of both patients and staff at Stoke Mandeville. Through performance, breathing and posture exercises, Garsington Opera hopes to demonstrate how opera and the joy of singing can promote and improve both physical and mental wellbeing.

In the afternoon, the Garsington Opera Community Chorus will perform John Browne's *A Nightingale Sang* in the foyer at Stoke Mandeville Hospital with those attending the morning workshop integrated into the performance.

OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

Garsington Opera Adult Community Chorus

A performance by Garsington Opera's Adult Community Chorus of John Browne's *A Nightingale Sang* Saturday 22 November, 6pm
North Hall, Millbrook Primary School, High Wycombe

The Adult Community Chorus, has been preparing for the performance through a series of ongoing workshops with support from Karen Gillingham, Garsington Opera Education Creative Director, and Lea Cornthwaite, Vocal Director. The Community Chorus has grown out of the highly successful community Opera, *Roadrage* that was performed in 2013.

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PRESS RELEASE

2.

Primary and Secondary Schools

A four-day residency by the Garsington Opera Education team will take place at **Stokenchurch and Lane End Primary School**. During the residency the school will produce a 5-minute film with 8 -9 year olds on the themes of the opera *Così fan tutte*. The film will be shown prior to a relay of the 2015 production to Skegness and other coastal communities and will be available on the Garsington Opera website.

A three-day residency will also be held at **Cressex School** culminating with a performance on 26 November. The team, led by Karen Gillingham, Director, and Pete Letanka, Musical Director, will include one of Garsington Opera's Young Singers and the students will devise a piece in response to the drama and musical themes of *Così fan tutte*

Garsington Opera Education

Garsington Opera Education offers a variety of opportunities for local schools and community groups, some of which are particularly hard to reach, to attend workshops and rehearsals in the build-up to the season, enabling the company to be seen in action. Collaboration with local partners and organisations enables projects to be devised with groups who would never consider attending an opera. Workshops with skilled creative teams can be a transformative experience for individuals in difficult circumstances, a key theme to this important education work.

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