

Lammermuir Festival
Autumn Special



Scottish
Opera

Online from 20 September 2020, 7:30pm | Filmed at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow

Scottish Opera

Leoš Janáček

The Diary of One Who Disappeared

Cast

Ed Lyon tenor (Jan, a village boy)

Lucy Schauer alto (Zefka, a gypsy)

Catriona Hewitson* soprano (Voice 1)

Heather Ireson** mezzo-soprano (Voice 2)

Sioned Gwen Davies mezzo-soprano (Voice 3)

* Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2020/21

** Scottish Opera Associate Artist

Creative Team

Stuart Stratford Conductor

Rosie Purdie Director

Antonia Bain Director of Film Production



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Leoš Janáček

The Diary of One Who Disappeared

New production

Song cycle by **Leoš Janáček**

Text by **Ozef Kalda**

First performed at the Reduta Theatre, Brno, on 18 April 1921

Arranged for chamber ensemble by **Miloš & Miloš Štědroň**

Edition published by Bärenreiter Praha

Performed by arrangement with Faber Music, London

Sung in Czech, with English subtitles

English subtitles translation by **Lada Valešová**

Biography

Leoš Janáček (born: Hukvaldy, Moravia, 1854; died Ostrava, Czechoslovakia, 1928)

The son of a poor provincial schoolmaster, Leoš Janáček trained as a chorister and organist in Brno and later at the Prague Organ School. He first worked as a music teacher and conductor in Brno, saving enough money to finance a few months' study at the Leipzig Conservatoire, where he fell out with his teachers. He completed his studies at the Vienna Conservatoire, returning again to Brno where he gained a position at the city's own Conservatoire, eventually becoming its director and marrying a pupil, Zdenka Schulzová.

In 1904, his third opera *Jenůfa* established Janáček as a major voice in Czech music following its premiere in Brno (he had argued with Karel Kovařovic, director of Prague's National Theatre, and was therefore denied a premiere in the Czech capital). It's one of the first works in which the composer employed a declamatory style of vocal setting that follows the rhythms of the Czech language, a style that informs the accompanying music as well. With its repeating patterns, its rhythmic drive, its stark contrasts and its intricate, montage-like texture, the result is one of the most idiosyncratic musical styles in the early 20th century.

Janáček developed his highly distinctive musical voice in his subsequent operas, including *Káťa Kabanová* (1921), often considered his first mature opera, as well as *The Cunning Little Vixen* (1924), *The Makropulos Case* (1926) and *From the House of the Dead* (1927), which all now receive regular international performances.

Alongside his professional successes, however, Janáček led a tempestuous personal life. He had a relationship with the singer Gabriela Horváthová, leading his wife to attempt suicide. And in his old age, he developed a deep and abiding passion for Kamila Stösslová, a married woman 37 years his junior, who was the inspiration behind many of his later works.

During his final creative period, Janáček composed a number of highly distinctive works for the concert stage rather than the opera house, including the profoundly spiritual *Glagolitic Mass*, the military-style *Sinfonietta*, the wind sextet *Mládí* and two string quartets. He died an international celebrity, shortly after having become a member of the Prussian Academy of Arts alongside Arnold Schoenberg and Paul Hindemith.

Synopsis

When innocent village boy Jan first meets the gypsy girl Zefka, he can't get her out of his head. She haunts his sleep, and denied rest, he finds his ploughing work exhausting. Realising there's a loose axle on his plough, Jan attempts to make another one from the wood of a nearby elder tree, but there, he discovers Zefka waiting for him. She greets him and sings him a mournful song about the gypsy people's fate to restlessly wander the earth. She seduces him. It's late the following morning when Jan awakes, ashamed to return home and incur the wrath of his family. Nevertheless, he returns night after night to meet Zefka under the elder tree, finally accepting his fate and turning his back on his family and his village in favour of his gypsy lover.

Programme Note

In the summer of 1917, while on holiday in the Czech spa resort of Luhačovice, the Moravian composer Leoš Janáček met a young woman named Kamila Stösslová. He was 63; she was 25. He was trapped in a marriage of which he had long since tired. She was married, with two small sons, to a prominent antiques dealer.

Moreover, if we're to believe the account of Janáček's wife Zdeňka, Stösslová was neither musical nor well educated. '[Kamila] told me she didn't like going to school and didn't like learning,' wrote Zdeňka in her memoirs of 1935. 'That was certainly true because her letters were full of spelling mistakes. In music, she was totally ignorant... She called Leoš' pieces "those notes of yours" and hadn't heard of Wagner.'

No matter. Janáček fell hopelessly in love, sending Stösslová a rather forward letter a few days after meeting her, followed, over the remaining 11 years of his life, by a few hundred more. While their early correspondence frequently centred on the ability of Stösslová's husband to procure household supplies for the Janáčeks during the restrictions of the First World War, the composer increasingly gave vent to his feelings. 'Oh do love me,' he beseeched Stösslová, insisting that he had never felt the same way about anybody, not even his wife – from whom he made surprisingly little attempt to hide his new-found passion.

Beyond platonic friendship

Did Stösslová return any of that passion? With a husband who was frequently away from home, she may have welcomed the attentions of this musical celebrity. Moreover, she was possibly aware of the advantages, both financial and social, of encouraging these attentions. She replied to his letters, on occasion hinting at something beyond platonic friendship. 'Someone would just smile and ask how it was possible, but yes, it is possible you are much dearer to me than if you were young,' she eventually admitted.

But that was as far as she was prepared to go – judging, at least, on the evidence left to us. At her express wish, Janáček burned most of her replies after reading them. Who knows what the destroyed letters might have revealed. Those he preserved are enigmatic, saying nothing that could taint Stösslová's reputation, while giving the composer just enough to keep him coming back for more.

It did wonders for his creativity. Over the next ten years, Janáček wrote some of his best works, including four operas, two string quartets, two concertos, his Sinfonietta and his *Glagolitic Mass*, most of them inspired by his infatuation with Stösslová. The first of these, drafted soon after that first meeting of 1917, was *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, whose subject matter perfectly fitted his frame of mind at the time.

Escapist appeal

It is a setting of 22 poems supposedly by a young Moravian farmer, who becomes infatuated with a gypsy girl called Zefka and leaves his village to elope with her. The poems themselves, which Janáček had read a year earlier in the Brno *Lidové noviny* newspaper, were a fake: their real author was a former railway official named Ozef Kalda, dismissed by many in the Czech literary establishment as a purveyor of provincial, 'cowpat' literature. But it didn't matter. Something about the poetry's eroticism fired up Janáček's imagination.

With her dark, curly hair, her vitality, her 'sensuous mouth and buxom body' (as Zdeňka bitterly put it in her memoirs), Stösslová was the gypsy girl of Janáček's fantasies, and no doubt he saw an escapist appeal in the story's climax, in which the young farmer throws off the shackles of convention and makes a new life with his love. Janáček set feverishly to work on the songs, charting his progress in letters to Stösslová. What emerged was a 35-minute piece that defies categorisation, ostensibly a song cycle portraying a young man's sexual awakening in the Schubertian tradition, but one that, unlike any other song cycle written up to that point, tells a story rather than restricting itself to self-reflection.

It is effectively a pocket opera, composed for tenor, mezzo-soprano, three women's voices and piano accompaniment. Combining elements of European impressionism and Moravian folk music, the work looks ahead to Janáček's next operatic masterpiece, *Káťa Kabanová*, and reveals a similarly forward-thinking sense of theatricality.

Speech melodies, whereby the music follows the intonation of the spoken word, recur throughout, as do dramatic silences, with Janáček carefully indicating how long the pauses between songs should be. A talented musical painter, the composer pithily conjured up the tangle of emotions that characterise forbidden love. In a clear break with the song cycle tradition, he even included basic stage directions, stipulating that the work was to be performed in semi-darkness, with reddish lighting to heighten the erotic mood.

To stage or not to stage?

You might assume, then, that Janáček intended it to be staged from the start. In fact, it's difficult to gauge exactly what he planned for the work. Having written the first ten songs in rapid succession, he seemed to run out of steam, and left the piece incomplete for several months, turning his attention to other projects, including his opera *The Adventures of Mr Brouček*. On 5 October 1919, he wrote to his brother Karel: 'I am finishing my life's work, although it is not in the shape that I would wish it to be.' Then he put *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* in a chest for his manuscripts, where it lay for over a year, until his pupil Břetislav Bakala found it and performed it for the composer, with the amateur singer Jaroslav Lecián (who was also Janáček's lawyer).

The first official concert performance took place in Brno in April 1921, with Prague, Berlin, London and Paris premieres following closely behind. But in spite of its success on the concert platform, Janáček only lived to see one theatrical staging of the work – in the Slovenian capital Ljubljana in October 1926. Two years later, the director of the Municipal Theatre in the south Bohemian city of Plzeň asked Janáček to orchestrate the work for another staging. The answer: 'I like your idea... We'll do it.' They never did. In August 1928, while on an excursion with Stösslová and her son Otto, the 74-year-old composer caught a chill that developed into pneumonia. He died a few days later.

It wasn't until 1943 that an orchestration finally emerged – by the Czech composer, opera director and writer Ota Zítek, with the help of Václav Sedláček, who was a regular Janáček copyist. Since then, a few others have attempted to put their own stamp on the original, among them the Czech father and son, Miloš Štědroň Sr and Jr, whose 2007 orchestration for 11 instruments – heard in this Scottish Opera production – seeks to drive home the raw, strange power of Janáček's music.

Hannah Nepil is a freelance classical music writer and critic for publications including the *Financial Times* and *Gramophone*. She is also online editor of *The Strad* and founder of the cross-arts magazine *The Cusp*.

Biographies

Antonia Bain (Director of Film Production) is Scottish Opera's in-house film-maker. She 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. Her first opera short film for Scottish Opera, *The Narcissistic Fish*, can be watched on the Scottish Opera website.

Sioned Gwen Davies (Voice 3) was born in Colwyn Bay, North Wales. She studied at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and National Opera Studio. She represented Wales at the 2017 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Among her awards, she won first prize at the 2009 Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, and first prize at the 2009 National Eisteddfod of Wales. She was a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist in 2013/14.

Scottish Opera appearances: Kate *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Opera Highlights* 2015, Eduige *Rodelinda*, Lady in Waiting/Second Witch *Macbeth*, Marta *Iolanta*, Third Dryad *Rusalka*, Pitti-Sing *The Mikado*, Stewardess *Flight*, Olga *Eugene Onegin*, Maddalena *Rigoletto*, Third Lady *The Magic Flute*, Second Secretary to Mao *Nixon in China*.

Operatic engagements include: Tisbe *La Cenerentola* (West Green House Opera); Pitti-Sing (English National Opera); Margarida *The Yellow Sofa* by Julian Philips (Glyndebourne); Olga (Valladolid Opera); Second Lady *The Magic Flute* (Longborough Festival Opera).

Catriona Hewitson (Voice 1) is a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2020/21. Born in Edinburgh, she studied at the City of Edinburgh Music School, Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music and the Opera Studio of London's Royal College of Music. Among her awards, she won the 2018 Ferrier Loveday Song Prize. She is a Samling Artist and a Philip and Dorothy Green Young Artist 2018/20.

Operatic engagements include: Cis *Albert Herring* (The Grange Festival); Donna *Rinaldo* (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Elsbeth *Fantasio* by Offenbach (Garsington Festival Opera); Sophie (cover) *Werther* (English Touring Opera); Susanna (cover) *The Marriage of Figaro*, Tytania *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Edwige *Robinson Crusoe* by Offenbach (Royal College of Music).

Heather Ireson (Voice 2) is Associate Artist at Scottish Opera. She studied at the University of Aberdeen and Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music, and continues her studies with Patricia MacMahon.

Scottish Opera appearances: *Opera Highlights* Spring 2019, chorus *Eugene Onegin*, chorus *Iris*, chorus *Nixon in China*.

Operatic engagements include: *Hamlet* by Brett Dean, *Così fan tutte*, chorus *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, chorus *Beatrice and Benedict*, chorus *Don Pasquale*, chorus *Carmen*, chorus *Poliuto* by Donizetti, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Saul* (Glyndebourne); *Karolka Jenůfa* (Grange Park Opera); chorus *Il campanello* by Donizetti, chorus *Herculanum* by Félicien David, chorus *Vanessa* by Barber (Wexford Festival Opera).

Ed Lyon (Jan) studied at St John's College, Cambridge, and at London's Royal Academy of Music and National Opera Studio.

Scottish Opera appearances: *Don Ottavio Don Giovanni*, *Lurcanio Ariodante*.

Operatic engagements include: *Colin L'écume des jours* by Edison Denisov (Stuttgart State Opera); *Števa Jenůfa* (Opera North); *Dancing Master Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Sailor Tristan and Isolde*, *Steersman The Flying Dutchman*, *Walther Tannhäuser* (Royal Opera House Covent Garden); *Eduardo The Exterminating Angel* by Thomas Adès (Salzburg Festival, Royal Opera House Covent Garden); *Jupiter Semele* (Baden State Theatre Karlsruhe); *Hippolyte Hippolyte et Aricie* (Glyndebourne); title role *L'Orfeo* (Aix-en-Provence Festival).

He has also performed at the Bavarian State Opera, Dutch National Opera, Madrid's Teatro Real, Paris' Théâtre du Châtelet, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Vienna's Theater an der Wien, the Edinburgh and Aldeburgh festivals, and the BBC Proms. His debut solo album, *17th Century Playlist*, was released last year and was named as a *Presto* Recording of the Year.

Anthony Moffat (Leader, The Orchestra of Scottish Opera) was born in the Borders, and trained at London's Royal Academy of Music with the Armenian soloist and leader Manoug Parikian. As a member of the Da Vinci Trio, he has toured Scotland and appeared on BBC Radio 3. His career as orchestra leader began when he became co-leader of the Hallé, and he took up the post of Leader of The Orchestra of Scottish Opera in 2000. He has appeared as guest leader at Opera North, and with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera. He has also been invited to guest lead the BBC Symphony Orchestra. He plays a fine Italian violin made in 1695 by Giovanni Grancino.

Rosie Purdie (Director) studied music at the University of Bristol and after graduating trained at the King's Head Theatre in London.

Scottish Opera appearance as director: *Zanetto* and *Susanna's Secret*.

She has worked as Director and Assistant Director in opera and theatre for companies and organisations including the Royal Opera, Garsington Opera, Opera Holland Park, English Touring Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music, Barbican, Blackheath Halls Opera, Nuffield Theatre, British Youth Opera and Opera North.

Lucy Schauer (Zefka) was born in America and is now based in the UK.

She studied at Northwestern University, Illinois, and the University of Texas at Austin. She won a Grammy Award for best opera recording in 2016 for John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* with Los Angeles Opera. She is Artistic Director of Wild Plum Arts.

Operatic engagements include: Mrs Jones *Street Scene* (Teatro Real Madrid, Monte Carlo Opera); Doctor *4.48 Psychosis* by Philip Venables (Royal Opera at the Lyric Hammersmith); Modgud *The Monstrous Child* by Gavin Higgins – world premiere (Royal Opera House); Berta *The Barber of Seville*, Cherubino *The Marriage of Figaro*, Hansel *Hansel and Gretel* (Los Angeles Opera); Ruth *The Pirates of Penzance* (English National Opera); Marcellina *The Marriage of Figaro* (Los Angeles Opera, ENO, Opera Philadelphia, Arizona Opera); Aldonza *Man of La Mancha* (Central City Opera); Jennie *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* by Oliver Knussen (Aldeburgh Festival, Barbican); Older Woman *Flight* (Opera Holland Park); Suzuki *Madama Butterfly* (New Zealand Opera, Houston Grand Opera); Drummer Girl *The Emperor of Atlantis* by Ullmann, Ma Moss *The Tender Land* by Copland (Lyon Opera); Page *Salome*, Flowermaiden *Parsifal*, Suzuki (Metropolitan Opera); Judy *Punch and Judy* by Harrison Birtwistle (ENO, Grand Théâtre de Genève); Octavian *Der Rosenkavalier*, Cornelia *Julius Caesar* (Hamburg State Opera); Grandmother/Austrian Woman/Dancing Girl *The Death of Klinghoffer* by John Adams (Opera Theatre of St Louis, ENO); Ib *Becoming Santa Claus* by Mark Adamo – world premiere (Dallas Opera). She has also performed at Opéra National du Rhin, Washington National Opera and Paris' Théâtre National du Châtelet.

Stuart Stratford (Conductor) is Music Director of Scottish Opera. He studied conducting at the University of Cambridge with David Parry, and with Ilya Musin at the St Petersburg Conservatoire. He joined Scottish Opera in 2015 as the Company's sixth Music Director, joining a distinguished succession that originated with the Company's founder, Sir Alexander Gibson. For Scottish Opera, he has conducted productions of *The Telephone*, *Tosca*, *Jenufa*, *Rusalka*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *La bohème*, *Greek*, *Flight*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Kátya Kabanová*, *Anthropocene* (world premiere), *Breaking the Waves* and the groundbreaking *Pagliacci* in 'Paisley Opera House', as well as the recent successful outdoor production of *La bohème* at the Company's Production Studios. He introduced the popular Sunday Series of lesser-known Operas in Concert, which has featured such titles as *L'amico Fritz*, *Le villi*, *Iolanta*, *Francesca da Rimini*, *Aleko*, *Edgar*, *Silvano* and *Iris*.

In the UK he has worked with Opera North, Welsh National Opera, Opera Holland Park, English National Opera, the Buxton Festival and Birmingham Opera, in repertoire ranging from Giovanni d'Arco to Satyagraha. He is known for his expertise in Russian and Czech music, and his passion for bringing opera to new audiences outside of a traditional theatre setting.

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Scottish Opera is Scotland's national opera company and the largest performing arts organisation in Scotland. Founded by Alexander Gibson in 1962, it was inaugurated with a production of *Madama Butterfly* at the King's Theatre in Glasgow. In 1974, Scottish Opera purchased the Theatre Royal Glasgow, and The Orchestra of Scottish Opera was established in 1980.



Notable awards include a 2004 South Bank Show Award for Best Opera (for the *Ring* cycle); an Achievement in Opera Award at the 2017 UK Theatre Awards for Sir David McVicar's production of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*; and a Herald Angel Award for soprano Sydney Mancasola in the lead role of Bess McNeill in the European premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking the Waves* at the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival.

Recent commissions include the double bill of *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* (premiered at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival); 2016's *The Devil Inside*, with which Scottish Opera made its North American debut in Toronto; and 2019's *Anthropocene*. *Ghost Patrol* won a South Bank Sky Arts Award, and *In the Locked Room* and *Ghost Patrol* received Olivier Award nominations. In 2018, the Company made its US debut with *Bambino* at New York's Metropolitan Opera, and returned to the city's Brooklyn Academy of Music with Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* in December that year. In February 2020 the Company travelled to Australia to perform *Breaking the Waves* at the Adelaide Festival.

Scottish Opera is committed to bringing the widest possible range of opera to the broadest audience throughout Scotland. In 2018/19, Scottish Opera gave a total of 331 public performances in 55 cities, towns and villages across the nation. Over 3,000 people attended Pop-up Opera performances, and in total more than 40,000 primary school children participated in Scottish Opera events. The Company presents Audio-Described and Dementia Friendly main-stage performances, as well as Unwrapped taster sessions.

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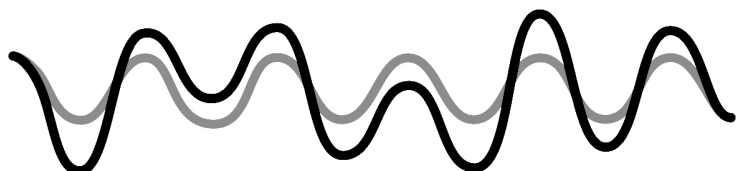
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