



## Attending opera for the first time?

### Noye's Fludde

God is angry, and a flood is coming. But Noah is building a boat: wide enough and deep enough not just for his family, but for a cargo of birds and beasts, both great and small. For forty days and forty nights, this chorus of unlikely shipmates endure a mighty storm, in the hope that a new world will be waiting for them on the other side.

Lyndsey Turner directs a joyous new production of Benjamin Britten's masterpiece combining the talents of professional singers, actors and musicians with those of school children and the local community. Marking the first collaboration between Theatre Royal Stratford East and English National Opera, Noye's Fludde speaks of courage, redemption and the promise of a new beginning.

### What to expect

We want you to have a truly brilliant experience at the opera. This partnership between Stratford East and English National Opera is to ensure that opera exists for everyone and will create new experiences that inspire, nurture creativity and makes a difference.

Noye's Fludde was written in 1958 by the British composer: Benjamin Britten. It features professional opera singers (Mr & Mrs Noah), alongside young performers (Noye's Sons & Wives), groups of primary school children (the animals) and young instrumentalists in the orchestra.

There will also be moments for the audience to join in the singing as part of the chorus.



## Glossary of Opera terms

**ARIA** A long accompanied song for a solo voice.

**BARITONE** An adult male mid-range singing voice. The role of Mr Noah is sung by a baritone.

**CHOREOGRAPHER** A person who creates and directs dance movements. Look out for the raven and dove who dance in this production.

**CHORUS** A large group of singers which performs with an orchestra or opera company. There are moments in Noye's Fludde where the audience will sing as part of a chorus.

**CONDUCTOR** The person who keeps all the singers and musicians playing and singing together. Martin Fitzpatrick is the conductor for this production. You will see him standing on the platform in front of the orchestra. The musicians and singers follow his hands and arms to keep in time.

**COMPOSER** A person who writes music. Noye's Fludde was composed in 1958 by a British composer called Benjamin Britten.

**DIRECTOR** The person who decides how to tell the story on stage with the performers.

**DESIGNER** The person who decides what the costumes, the set and the props (the objects the characters hold or move) should be like. There is also a lighting designer and a video designer who have been working on this production to create the lighting effects and moving images you will see projected onto the stage.

**FANFARE** a short musical flourish played on brass instruments, typically to introduce something or someone important. In this opera trumpets play a fanfare for the animals as they enter the ark.

**HARMONY** The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes. In Noye's Fludde you will hear singers performing different parts to create layers of harmony.

**LIBRETTO** The sung text of an opera. The libretto for Noye's Fludde has been adapted from English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes.

**MEZZO-SOPRANO** A female singer with a voice pitched between soprano and contralto. The role of Mrs Noah is sung by a mezzo soprano.

**OPERA** A story told using words (the libretto), music (the score) and images (stage design).

**ORCHESTRA** A group of instrumentalists who accompany singers in an opera. Noye's Fludde features nine different instruments –violin, viola, cello, double bass, recorder, trumpet, percussion, piano and organ.

**RANGE** The distance from the lowest to the highest pitch of an instrument or a singer. The double bass plays the lowest notes in the Noye's Fludde orchestra. The violins play the highest.

**REHEARSAL** The process through which the creative team and cast develop ideas, practise and prepare for a performance.

**VIBRATO** A rapid, slight variation in pitch, producing a stronger or richer tone. Opera singers sing with vibrato which means they do not have to use a microphone when they perform.

## 'Mouse' head-dress activity



The artwork for the animal head-dresses in this production of Noye's Fludde was created by the famous children's illustrator: Oliver Jeffers. The 'Mouse' has been specially created for the production.

You can make a mouse head-dress with your pupils in preparation for your visit to see the opera. You will need scissors and tape; cut out and tape the two head-band strips together, so that it can go round the head. Then tape the mouse to the front of the head-band and decorate however you wish!

