

THE BEGINNING OF AN IDEA

**A NEW OPERA BY JOEL BALDWIN
DIRECTED BY JONNY DANCIGER**



**ADAPTED FROM THE SHORT STORY BY
JOHN MCGAHERN**

**JOP MUSIC BUILDING
ST HILDAS COLLEGE**

**SATURDAY 19TH JANUARY
8:00PM**

Synopsis

Eva Lindberg has the beginning of an idea. An imaginary life of Chekhov. A life that begins and ends with oysters. Her proven success as a theatre director seems unimportant compared to the potential of this idea. She tries to escape. She wants to try to write. But life can be inescapable.

Since 2005, students of the Opera and Music Theatre course directed by Professor Martyn Harry have created a number of cutting-edge productions of works by Berio, Wishart, Kagel and Cage, as well as the memorable world premieres of Chris Garrard's *A Handmaid's Tale* in 2013 and Toby Young's *Witch* in 2017. This year, a new opera by Joel Baldwin (St Hilda's), *The Beginning of an Idea*, adapted from the short story by John McGahern, has been written to showcase some of the brightest contemporary opera talent Oxford has to offer.

Jonny Danciger



Jonny graduated with a degree in music from St Peter's last year, and now works as a freelance sound designer, composer and director in London. Whilst at Oxford, Jonny took on a number of directing, technical and acting roles. Oxford directing credits include *Candide* (Oxford Playhouse, 2017), *Witch* (JdP, 2018), *A Clockwork Orange* (OSO/O'Reilly, 2016) and *Mercury Fur* (Pilch, 2016). Professional acting credits include 'Tall Boy' in Stephen Daldry's *Billy Elliot* (Victoria Palace Theatre, 2009) and 'Young Dahl' in Polly Findlay's *Twisted Tales* (Lyric Theatre, 2011). Jonny is the artistic director of theatre company Barricade Arts, with whom he is currently directing an international tour of *Lord of the Flies* in association with the British Council School in Madrid. It plays at the OSO Arts Centre in London at the end of the month.

Joel Baldwin

After graduating from the University of Southampton, Joel studied for an MMus in Composition with Jonathan Cole at the Royal College of Music, London. He is currently studying for a DPhil in Composition at St Hilda's College, supervised by Martyn Harry and Gascia Ouzounian. He is also the Manager of the JdP Music Building at St Hilda's College. He has collaborated with some of today's foremost performers of new music and regularly works on projects with visual artists and film directors. His most recent project was a monodrama with dance inserts performed by Ensemble Klang and mezzo-soprano Michaela Riener. He was recently commissioned by Konscht Maschinn to write a new opera for a performance in October 2019.



Freddie Meyers



Freddie is currently studying a masters in composition at the Royal Academy of Music. At Oxford, Freddie has had many compositional opportunities. He has been commissioned twice by the Oxford University Brass Band to write pieces—*The Dragon Curve* (2016) and *Griffin* (2017)—as part of their programme at the national university brass band championship, UniBrass. He has also written pieces commissioned by his fellow students at the time, having his *Sonata for Solo Horn and Piano* premiered in JDP Concert Hall in November 2016.

Aside from his composition, Freddie is also a keen conductor, having conducted the Oxford University Sinfonietta as well as his own 18th-century period instrument orchestra that was based at St Hilda's College.



**Laura
Coppinger**



**Emelye
Moulton**



**Caleb
Bester**



**Kerenza
Hurr**



**Isabella
Pitman**



**Jessica
Bradley**



**Priya
Radhakrishnan**

Cast

Eva Lindberg - Laura Coppinger
Narrator - Emelye Moulton
Arvo Meri - Caleb Bester
Arvo's Wife - Kerenza Hurr
Natasha - Isabella Pitman
Traveller - Jessica Bradley
Policeman - Priya Radhakrishnan
Severi - Matthew Jackson

Band

Flute - Alex Moss
Clarinet - Lucy Gibbs
Horn/Cello - Lennox Smith
Percussion - Josh Cottell
Piano - Lauren Hill

Ensemble

Trumpet - Zerlina Vulliamy
Saxophone - Chris Hill
Oboe - Nadia Buckingham
Cello - Holly Jackson

Creative / Production Team

Composer - Joel Baldwin
Producer - Yi Yun Soo
Director - Jonny Danciger
Musical Director - Freddie Meyers
Assistant Director - Holly Jackson
Assistant Director - Cassie White
Assistant Musical Director - Alix Middleditch
Production / Company Manager - Jessica Bradley
Sound Designer / Filmography - Chris Hill
Set Designers - Zerlina Vulliamy
Alex Moss
Costume / Makeup Design - Priya Radhakrishnan
Marketing Manager - Máth Roberts
Sound Engineer - Jamie Morris
Videographer - Sophie Sparkes

With thanks to the Faculty of Music
And St Hilda's College, Oxford