

THE ROYAL OPERA

Music Director  
**SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO**  
Director of Opera  
**OLIVER MEARS**

# PICTURE A DAY LIKE THIS

LINBURY THEATRE

Music **GEORGE BENJAMIN**  
Text **MARTIN CRIMP**

Conductor **CORINNA NIEMEYER**

Co-Directors, Designers, Lighting Designers  
and Dramaturgy **DANIEL JEANNETEAU,**  
**MARIE-CHRISTINE SOMA**  
Costume Designer **MARIE LA ROCCA**  
Video Designer **HICHAM BERRADA**

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House  
Guest Concert Master **THOMAS GOULD**

Audio Description by **SIGHTLINES**

Co-commissioned and co-produced by the **FESTIVAL  
D'AIX-EN- PROVENCE, OPÉRA NATIONAL DU RHIN,  
OPÉRA COMIQUE, LES THÉÂTRES DE LA VILLE DE  
LUXEMBOURG, OPER KÖLN** and **TEATRO DI SAN CARLO**

Performed by arrangement with **FABER MUSIC, LONDON**

**WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 3.00PM**

General rehearsal

## APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

This performance will last for approximately 65 minutes  
with no interval

## GUIDANCE

Suitable for ages 16+

This production contains explicit depictions of and  
references to self-harm, suicide and baby loss

## LANGUAGE

Sung in English with English surtitles

## CAST

Woman **EMA NIKOLOVSKA**  
Zabelle **JACQUELYN STUCKER**  
Lover 1/Composer **BEATE MORDAL**  
Lover 2/Composer's Assistant **CAMERON SHAHBAZI**  
Artisan/Collector **JOHN BRANCY**

Actors **LISA GRANDMOTTET, EULALIE RAMBAUD,  
MATTHIEU BAQUEY**

## PRODUCTION

Lighting Programmer **LAURENT IRSUTI**  
Assistant Conductor **LUKA VENTER**  
Assistant Directors **SÉRINE MAHFOUD, ELEANOR BURKE\***  
Lighting Operator **LUKE MARINO**  
Video Operator **OLIVER HORNE**  
Followspot Operator **KURTIS JEREMIAH**  
Stage Crew **PATRICIA GILVAIA, ANTHONY HYMAN,  
MARIUS GOLEBIEWSKI**  
Surtitled Operator **MAGDALENA MCLEAN**  
Stage Manager **ROBERT COUPE**  
Deputy Stage Manager **MAIKEL BELLANCO**  
Vocal Coach and Répétiteur **BRETTON BROWN**  
Music Staff **CHRISTOPHER WILLIS**  
Production Manager **LUKE CHILD**  
Costume Production Manager **HELEN LOVETT JOHNSON**  
Wigs and Make-up Manager (New Productions)  
**MELANIE BOUVET**

\*Jette Parker Artist

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## SYNOPSIS

### 1. THE PAGE

*'No sooner had my child started to speak whole sentences than he had died.'*

A Woman's infant child dies. Refusing to accept this, she is told that if she can find a happy person, and 'cut one button from their sleeve,' this simple action will miraculously return her child to life. Full of hope, and taking with her a sheet of paper outlining her itinerary, she sets off on her quest.

### 2. THE LOVERS

*'We're not ashamed. We are in love.'*

Her first encounter is with a pair of young lovers. On seeing how much they appear to be in love, she asks them for a button from their discarded clothing, only to provoke a bitter conflict between them.

### 3. THE ARTISAN

*'I can enumerate every button I have ever made.'*

Her second encounter is with an Artisan. Before he retired, she learns, he was a maker of buttons, and so seems ideally placed to grant the Woman's request. But as the scene progresses, the Artisan's mind begins to unravel.

### 4. THE COMPOSER

*'Say I invent all qualities of light'*

The Woman stumbles across a famous Composer who is about to go into a rehearsal with her Assistant. When the Woman tries to impress on them the urgency of her request, the Composer is compelled to explain that her life, while superficially enviable, is less straightforward than it appears.

### 5. ARIA

*'Dead stems of flowers come to life again.'*

The Woman expresses her disillusion and anger. Nothing is working out as she had hoped: happiness is elusive, and her quest seems to have failed.

### 6. THE COLLECTOR

*'I have rooms full of miracles.'*

After this outburst of fury, and believing there is little hope left, she next meets the Collector – a man who, despite his own confused desire for the Woman herself, is moved by her grief and willing to help her. He opens a door so she can pass into a garden.

### 7. ZABELLE

*'Picture a day like this.'*

In a garden of great beauty and tranquility the Woman finally encounters Zabelle, a person seemingly similar to herself. When the Woman begs to be allowed to share her happiness, Zabelle tells her a story that forces her to see the garden – and Zabelle herself – in a new light.

Martin Crimp, July 2023

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## THE ROYAL OPERA

Patron **THE FORMER PRINCE OF WALES**

Music Director **SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO**

Director of Opera **OLIVER MEARS**

Director of Casting **PETER MARIO KATONA**

Administrative Director **CORMAC SIMMS**

Creative Producers **SARAH CRABTREE, KATE WYATT**

Producer **RACHEL CACCIA**

Administrative Producer, Linbury **GRACE COOK**

Linbury Technical Manager **THOMAS THOMPSON**

Assistant Linbury Technical Manager **NICK MANNING**

Senior Stage Technician **LUCAS RAJPAUL**

Stage Technician **ANDREAS PAPAPOPOULOS**

Senior Lighting Technician **BEN ROLLS**

Lighting Technician **SOPHIE BAILEY**

Senior Sound and Video Technician **ANDRE BIRCK**

Sound and Video Technician **LORENZO MARTELLI**

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## ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Violin **THOMAS GOULD\***, **ANNA BLACKMUR**

Viola **AMELIE ROUSSEL**, **KONSTANTIN BOYARSKY**

Cello **HETTY SNELL**, **TESSA SEYMOUR**

Bass **TONY HOUGHAM**

Flute **KATHERINE BAKER\*\***

Oboe **CHRIS COWIE**

Clarinet **ANNA HASHIMOTO\*\*\***, **KATIE LOCKHART†**, **SCOTT LYGATE††**

Bassoon **LUKE WHITEHEAD†††**

Horn **PHILIP MUNDS**, **JONATHAN DURRANT**

Trumpet **DANIEL NEWELL**, **DAVID CARSTAIRS**

Trombone **BLAIR SINCLAIR**

Percussion **HENRY BALDWIN**, **MATTHEW RICH**

Harp **EMMA GRANGER**

Keyboard **BRETTON BROWN**

\*Guest Concert Master

\*\*Also piccolo, bass flute, alto flute

\*\*\*Also tenor recorder

†Also basset horn, tenor recorder

††Also bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet

†††Also bass recorder, contrabassoon

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