

James Bonas

Director

This double bill oozed inspiration from start to finish... Hats off to James Bonas for the flair and energy of his staging, which radiated visual imagination.

Andrew Clark, Opera, April 2019

James Bonas is a traditional storyteller for the modern era, combining imagination and intellect with a curiosity for technology and new forms, whether directing classical or contemporary theatre, opera or instrumental music. Having gained a first-class honours degree from Oxford in psychology and philosophy, and performed as a classical pianist, James Bonas trained as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, prior to developing his career as a director.

Current highlights include the upcoming Hans Abrahamsen's *Snow Queen* for Opéra national du Rhin, Jonathon Dove's *Flight* for RCS Glasgow, Carl Orff's *Der Mond* with L'Opéra National de Lyon (featuring projections by animator Grégoire Pont), Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* with Lisbon's Teatro Nacional de São Carlos and a collaboration with Damon Albarn as Artistic Consultant on the creation of the new multi-disciplinary piece, *Le Vol du Boli*, at the Théâtre du Châtelet. James directed a new narrative ballet, *The Crucible*, for Scottish Ballet, in collaboration with choreographer Helen Pickett and composer Peter Salem. This work opened the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival, winning several awards and was reviewed as "bewitchingly good" by The Times. 2019 also saw a critically-acclaimed staging of *Symphonie Fantastique* by Berlioz with Nicholas Collon and Aurora orchestra at the BBC Proms.

Further successes include Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* and *L'Heure Espagnol* for L'Opéra National de Lyon. *L'Enfant* enjoys world-wide revival including the Royal Opera of Oman, Opéra de Limoges, San Francisco Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Other recent titles include the world premiere of a new community opera *Silent City* for Matera in Italy (European Capital of Culture 2019), Chabrier's *L'étoile* with Lisbon's Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, *Into the Woods* for RADA, a double bill of *Gianni Schichchi / Les Mamelles de Tirésias* for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, a staging of Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* for the BBC Proms at the Drill Hall in Lincoln, *Hänsel & Gretel* for Bergen National Opera, *Westside Story* for Future Stages in collaboration with RNCM, *The Tempest* and *Into The Woods* for RADA and *Tales of Hoffmann* for English Touring Opera.

Previous work includes *Ariodante* and *Giove in Argo* for the London Handel Festival, Jessica Swale's play *Blue Stockings* for Babcock Theatre Utah, the UK premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Seven Angels* for the Royal College of Music, and *The Mikado* and *Hänsel and Gretel* for Co-Opera Company. As associate director James regularly worked alongside directors including Rufus Norris, Terry Gilliam, Tom Morris and Simon McBurney in projects such as *Wonder.land* at the National Theatre in London and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, *The Death of Klinghoffer* (ENO and the Metropolitan Opera), *A Dog's Heart* (Complicité) and *Benvenuto Cellini* for ENO, *Hänsel und Gretel* for Glyndebourne, Seattle Opera and Teatro Real Madrid, as well as Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Bristol Old Vic.