



ROYAL
BALLET

13 September 2012

For immediate release

Festive Season highlights at the Royal Opera House:

The Nutcracker, The Wind in the Willows and La bohème

This Christmas the Royal Opera House presents a variety of festive family entertainment including *The Nutcracker*, *The Wind in the Willows*, a mixed bill of three one act ballets and the classic opera *La bohème*. All of these productions will run throughout the festive period and are sure to delight and enthral.

The enchanting production of *The Nutcracker* is full of Christmas sparkle. It tells the story of Drosselmeyer, a mysterious magician and maker of mechanical toys, who tries to break a curse that has turned his nephew into a nutcracker doll. He enlists the help of a young girl, Clara, and together they embark on a magical adventure; battling an army of mice and travelling to the faraway lands of the Kingdom of the Sweets and the Land of Snow. Tchaikovsky's intoxicating score and the delightfully nostalgic designs complete this enchanting tale of a magical Christmas Eve.

Director and choreographer Will Tuckett's critically acclaimed *The Wind in the Willows* makes a welcome return to the Linbury Studio Theatre this Christmas. Based upon Kenneth Graham's timeless classic, the adventures of four woodland friends is retold through dance, song, music and puppetry. Set to a wonderful score by Martin Ward that draws inspiration from the music of Edwardian composer George Butterworth, the escapades of the reckless Toad and his long-suffering friends Ratty, Mole and the wise Badger are wittily brought to life by a cast of some of the best dance-actors around. Guided by a narrator, this production captures all the darkness and delight of Graham's enchanting tale.

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The Royal Ballet presents a stunning mixed programme of ballets by three contrasting choreographers. *The Firebird's* fluttering virtuosity and intense lyricism is danced to **Stravinsky's** thrilling and colourful ballet score. This year marks the centenary of *The Firebirds'* first performances at Covent Garden. Romance is in the air in **Jerome Robbin's** *In the Night*. To rapturous Chopin's Nocturnes, three couples in turn dance contrasting *pas de deux* – tender, restrained and emotional in a contemporary reflection on the twists and turns of love. *Raymonda Act III* is a dazzling showpiece set to spirited music in the Hungarian style by **Glazunov** creating the perfect ending to this magnificent Christmas treat.

The Royal Opera's Christmas offering is a timeless favourite, Puccini's *La bohème*. The touching story has a special appeal that audiences can never resist. It is a classic production directed by John Copley with lively staging, beautiful melodies and rich orchestral colour. Performed by a cast of internationally acclaimed singers, the potent combination of Puccini's great music and intense passion of opera stars on stage makes this production the perfect Christmas treat.

The Nutcracker and La bohème can also be seen in cinemas across the UK as part of The Royal Opera House Live Cinema season. *The Nutcracker* will be screened on 13 December and *La bohème* will be screened on 10 January 2013. For participating cinema's and further details check www.roh.org.uk/cinema.

--Ends--

Christmas Productions in the 2012 / 2013 season:

7 December – 5 January	<i>The Wind in the Willows</i>
10 December – 16 January	<i>The Nutcracker</i>
17 December – 12 January	<i>La bohème</i>
22 December – 11 January	<i>Mixed Programme The Firebird / In the Night / Raymonda Act III</i>

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS

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