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PRESS RELEASE

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SEEVIC Student Lewis achieves Highly Commended in prestigious Royal Opera House Design Challenge competition

SEEVIC student Lewis Cannon is Highly Commended in the Royal Opera House Design Challenge 2017/18.

The **Royal Opera House Design Challenge** competition saw 69 entrants from 36 colleges from all over the country including Lewis Cannon from SEEVIC College. Lewis was Highly Commended in the Hair, Wigs and Make Up category. The competition was based on Strauss' opera *Salome* and one winner was selected for each of Costume Design, Set Design, Marketing Strategy and Design, and Hair, Wigs and Make Up categories.

Lewis' work was exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum on Friday 9 February together with the other winners and highly commended entrants, in a one-day pop-up exhibition. This was displayed alongside the *Opera: Passion, Power and Politics* exhibition currently at the museum. Lewis was congratulated by **ROH Chief Executive Alex Beard and Tristram Hunt, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum.**

Lewis said: "*When my tutor informed me that she was submitting my work for the challenge I never dreamt that I would gain a place to have my work exhibited in the V & A. It was an amazing experience that I will never forget.*"

Bridget Foster, ROH Head of Ballet Wigs and Make Up said: *“The interpretation of the brief never ceases to amaze me. This competition for Wigs, Hair and Make Up design proves when it comes to realising a creative idea there is no finite depth or width to realising your imagination within this craft area. It is very encouraging to see the entry increase year on year with such enthusiasm and attention to detail.”*

Gabrielle Forster-Still, ROH Head of Learning and Participation Thurrock said: *“It is wonderful to see the range and quality of the work from the Design Challenge students and to see them present their work so confidently. Salome is a complex opera dealing with some difficult issues but the students really rose to that challenge and produced some exciting and thought provoking designs. Both the judges and the visitors to the exhibition were very impressed.”*

The Royal Opera House’s prestigious annual Design Challenge competition gives students the opportunity to test and develop their design skills, based around an opera or ballet production. The competition is open to all UK FE colleges and sixth form schools or colleges. Participating students work through six stages of design using a director’s brief, build a portfolio of their process and a final piece in one of the four categories: Costume Design, Set Design, Marketing Strategy and Design, and Hair, Wigs and Make Up.

To see a list of Design Challenge winners please go to: www.roh.org.uk/learning/young-people/design-challenge

To register your interest in taking part in the 2018/19 project, or to book a place at the Design Challenge Launch event on Thursday 7 June 2018, please email design.challenge@roh.org.uk

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Notes for Editors

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock has been offering innovative and creative projects and programmes in schools, colleges and across communities in the Thames Gateway since 2006.

Since then, more than 60,000 people have participated in activities ranging from schools' projects to teacher training, from work-based learning to fully-staged community operas. People in Thurrock have both been able to watch special performances at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden and gain a very special insight into the behind-the-scenes process.

The Learning and Participation team runs the Royal Opera House Thurrock Community Chorus which currently has over 140 members of all ages and regularly performs across Thurrock and at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. For further information, please go to: www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus. Details of future performances and taster session for the Community Chorus can be obtained by emailing getinvolved@roh.org.uk or calling 01708 891200.

Regular public tours of the state-of-the-art Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop where the sets and scenery for the Royal Opera House stage in Covent Garden are built, and the Bob and Tamar Manoukian Costume Centre, which opened in October 2015, are now available. Please go to www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours for further details.

In April 2012, the Royal Opera House agreed to become a [Bridge](#) organisation, working to connect children and young people to great art and culture across Essex, North Kent, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

The Learning and Participation team is based at the High House Production Park in Purfleet which is supported by a unique partnership including Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills, the Royal Opera House and Thurrock Council: www.hhpp.org.uk