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Satyagraha

An opera in three acts by Philip Glass
Folkoperan / Cirkus Cirkör

BAM Harvey Theater

Oct 31, Nov 1 & 3 at 7:30pm; Nov 4 at 3pm

Running time: approx. 2 hour 40 minutes, including intermission

Libretto by **Constance DeJong** adapted from the *Bhagavad Gita*

Directed by **Tilde Björfors**

Book **Philip Glass** and **Constance DeJong**

Musical direction and conducted by **Matthew Wood**

Music arranged by **Anders Högstedt**

Set design by **Tilde Björfors** and **Dan Potra**

Costume design by **Dan Potra**

Lighting design by **Patrik Bogårdh**

Video design by **Visual Relief**

Mask and wig design by **Therésia Frisk**

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LEIF ARUHN-SOLÉN



MAGNUS BJØRU



KAROLINA BLIXT



LISA CARLIOTH



HANNA FRITZSON



AINO IHANAINEN



LARS JOHANSSON BRISSMAN



OSCAR KARLSSON



SARAH LETT



JOHAN SCHINKLER



ALEXANDER WEIBEL WEIBEL



MATTHEW WOOD

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Knitted scenography **Aino Ihanainen**

Dramatist **Magnus Lindman**

Deputy set design & costumes **Fridjon Rafnsson**

Choreography **Cecilia Roos**

Indologist & Sanskrit coaching **Mats Lindberg**

CAST

Gandhi	Leif Aruhn-Solén
Miss Schlesen	Lisa Carlioth
Mrs. Naidoo	Hanna Fritzon
Kasturbai/Mrs. Alexander	Karolina Blixt
Mr. Kallenbach/Arjuna	Lars Johansson Brissman
Parsi Rustomji/Krishna	Johan Schinkler
Circus Artists	Oscar Karlsson, Magnus Bjøru, Sarah Lett, Aino Ihanainen and Alexander Weibel Weibel

CHOIR

Sopranos **Sofia Niklasson, Elin Skorup**

Alto **Margaretha Westerlind, Tove Nilsson**

Tenors **Michael Axelsson, Carl Walin**

Basses **Arash Azarbad, John Kinell**

ORCHESTRA

Violin I **Jonas Lindgård, Anna Ivanova Sundin, Victoria Stjerna**

Violin II **Anders Åkered, Frieda Mossop, Filip Gloria**

Viola **Joel Sundin, Emma Morsten**

Cello **Mattias Rodrick, Christina Wirdegren Alin**

Contrabass **Bård Ericson, Jesper Julin**

Flute **Henrik Lundberg, Hanna Gustafsson**

Oboe **Charlotta Nässén, Maria Nyquist**

Clarinet **Jan-Erik Alm, Elin Willert, Filip Alffram**

Bassoon **Martin Krafft**

Organ **Magnus Sköld**

PRODUCTION TEAM

Assistant director **Sanna Colling**

Répétiteur **Magnus Sköld**

Technical manager **Mina Lundstedt**

Stage manager **Matilda Molino Sanchez**

Technical stage managers **Jon-Terje Sundberg, Jim Larsén**

Video, light & sound technicians **Kamilla Bjellsäter, Moltas Gabrielsson**

Stage technician & props **Emil Persson**

Circus rigger **Ulf "Poly" Nylin**

Costume technician **Carolina Borg**

Costume manager **Cilla Borg**

Wigs & make-up **Nina Lagnefeldt, Frida Ullander**

Producer **Jonas Palerius**

Artistic manager/company manager **Mia Göthe**
Assistant producer **Christoph Fielder**
Orchestra manager **Björn Nyman**
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Artistic director **Mellika Melouani Melani**
Music director and chief conductor **Marit Strindlund**

CIRKUS CIRKÖR
Technical producer **Stefan Karlström**
Constructions **Joel Jedström**
Producer **Amy Fee**
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Head of communication **Osiel Ibanez**
Managing director **Anders Frennberg**
Founder/Artistic director **Tilde Björfors**

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SYNOPSIS

ACT I—TOLSTOY

Scene 1: Kuru—The field of justice

Two royal families are engaged in a great battle. Before the conflict, Prince Arjuna converses with the God Krishna, who asks him to take a closer look at the men he will be fighting with. On closer inspection, it is clear that the armies consist of Indians against Europeans.

Scene 2: Tolstoy Farm—South Africa (1910)

Gandhi has organized the first combined resistance against South Africa's racist suppression of the Indian population. A cooperative community is established at Tolstoy Farm. It is an exercise in living a simple, new life in harmony with each other. Everything from preparing food to building houses is done by hand. The community is seeking *Satyagraha*—holding firmly to the path of truth.

Scene 3: Swearing of the Oath (1906)

The British government has proposed that all Indians in South Africa should re-register and have their fingerprints taken. They must carry their residence permits at all times and the police can search

their homes at any time. If anyone breaks these rules of order, they face fines, imprisonment, or deportation. At a mass meeting of over 3,000 Indians, they resolve to resist this legal proposal—to the death. Each individual swears to God to uphold this resolution, to the very last man.

PAUSE

ACT II—TAGORE

Scene 1: Confrontation and rescue (1896)

Gandhi has been in India for six months and reported on the situation for Indian immigrants in South Africa. Thousands of Europeans in South Africa have read his speeches, and feelings have reached fever pitch on Gandhi's return. An enraged crowd that is becoming increasingly violent pursues Gandhi as he makes his way around Durban. The chief of police's wife intervenes and opens her umbrella as a shield. She takes Gandhi's side and ushers him to safety.

Scene 2: Indian Opinion (1906)

The movement has its own newspaper—*Indian Opinion*. The paper portrays everything in the light of the struggle and reports how the Satyagraha Principles are becoming more and more widespread. It does not accept advertising to avoid any external influences. The movement's weaknesses are candidly detailed to enable them to be rectified. *Indian Opinion* also gains international distribution and becomes an important weapon in the fight.

Scene 3: Protests (1908)

Several leaders of the movement are sentenced to imprisonment for refusing to accept deportation from South Africa. The members resolve to fill the prisons by provoking arrests. After a week, 150 Satyagrahis have been jailed. The government then proposes to withdraw the proposed act, if the Indians agree to voluntary registration. They reach agreement on this, but once the Indians have met their side of the bargain, the government forces through the act in any case. The Indians then present their own ultimatum: if the act is not withdrawn, they will gather every Indian passport and burn them. The government refuses, and Gandhi holds a prayer meeting before all the passports are laid on the bonfire. Satyagraha has now had its baptism of fire.

INTERMISSION

Act III—KING

The Newcastle March (1913)

With its openly racist laws, the government now controls new Indian immigrants and keeps the former working class in an iron grip. Once again, the government promises to withdraw the act, but breaks its promise yet again. Gandhi gathers miners at the mines in Newcastle. They are to march the 40 kilometers to the Transvaal border. If they are arrested at passport control there, the five thousand-strong army would swamp the prisons, with big costs and problems for the government as a consequence. If they are allowed to pass, they can make their way to Tolstoy Farm where they can extend the strike and maybe even persuade all 60,000 workers affected by the legislation to join the fight. Whatever the outcome, the government will come under tremendous pressure to withdraw the legislation—all within the rules prescribed by Satyagraha.

ENGLISH TITLES FOR SATYAGRAHA

English version based on the following translations of the *Bhagavad Gita*: Winthrop Seargent: *The Bhagavad Gita*, New York 1994. S. Radhakrishnan: *The Bhagavadgita*, London 1948.

Swami Swarupananda: *Shrimad Bhagavadgita*, Mayavati 1909.

Please note that the texts are adaptations of the *Bhagavad Gita* texts rather than word-by-word translations. The spirit is preserved. Some verses are woven together. The work has been made by Matilda Molino Sanchez in co-operation by the Indologist Mats Lindberg, for Folkoperan 2018.

ACT 1

Scene 1: The Field of Kuru

"I wish to look at those who are assembled here, ready to fight."

Thus addressed by Arjuna, Krishna drew up the battle chariot between the two armies.

Arjuna said:

"My very being is stricken with the weakness of pity, and my mind is bewildered as to my duty."

Krishna said:

"If you will not undertake this righteous war, Arjuna, you will have failed and avoided your duty"

Krishna said:

"Hold pleasure and pain to be alike, likewise gain and loss, victory and defeat. Thus engage in battle!"

Scene 2: The Tolstoy Farm

"He whose undertakings are free from the will of desire and whose actions are burned up in the fire of knowledge, him the sages call a man of wisdom."

"Theoretical knowledge and applied practice—only the immature see them as separate. He who applies himself well to one, gets the fruit of both"

Scene 3: The Vow

"He who renounces actions merely because of their difficulty, or out of fear of physical pain,

thereby acts only in self-interest, and is not on the path of truth."

"When a necessary action is properly performed as a righteous duty, abandoning even attachment to its fruits, such renunciation is thought to be true."

"Beings are sustained by food. Food is caused by rain. Rain arises from sacrifice, and sacrifice comes forth from action.

"He who living here on earth does not turn the wheel thus set in motion, he seeks only pleasure living a life in vain."

ACT 2

Scene 1: Confrontation

The evil-minded declare

"I am powerful! I shall slay my enemies!"

"I rejoice! I shall fulfill my desires!"

"Attached thus to insatiable desire, full of hypocrisy, arrogance and pride, they are intent on the destruction of the welfare of the world."

Scene 2: Indian Opinion

"While the unwise acts only out of attachment and desire, the wise performs his actions with detachment and for the welfare of all. Thus he attains to the highest."

Scene 3: Protest

Krishna said:

"He bears no ill-will to any being, he is friendly and compassionate, free from egoism, evenminded in pain and pleasure, ever patient. He is self-controlled and his conviction is firm."

"Holding pleasure and pain to be alike, likewise gain and loss, victory and defeat. Happy is the warrior who can thus engage in battle! You shall incur no evil."

ACT 3

Scene 1: New Castle March

"The wise who is satisfied with knowledge and

wisdom, who is stable and with all his senses under control; to whom a clod, a stone and a piece of gold are the same, he is said to have attained the state of Yoga.”

“Fire, brightness, day, the bright lunar fortnight. The six months of the northern course of the sun. Thus the wise go forth to Brahman.”

Krishna said:

“Many of my births have come and passed and I know them all. I am birthless and my nature is

imperishable. Being the Lord of all I come into being by my own power, controlling my material nature.”

“Arjuna! Whenever there is a decline of righteousness, and a rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself again.

For the protection of the good and the destruction of evil doers, for the sake of establishing righteousness, I come into being from age to age.”

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR TILDE BJÖRFORS

A conversation between dramatist Magnus Lindman and director Tilde Björfors

Lindman: So, how much is a circus director enjoying opera?

Björfors: I have come to appreciate that Glass' music is perfect circus music. There's something about this sense of the ecstatic, that the music is continuously reaching new heights with minor tweaks that suit the circus we are making here. There are plenty of similarities between circus and opera. They are two incredibly virtuosic art forms. Both try to make the impossible possible and cross the physical and perhaps mental borders of what we humans are capable of doing. We have a center for weightlessness in our brain that develops in the womb as we float around. And it is activated when we see people flying. A physical sensation that we otherwise have forgotten about.

Lindman: If we are to keep to the fetus stage, this also applies to opera. Voices... hearing is perhaps the first sense a child experiences in life. So, what does that have to do with us—a primal scene, a meeting between sound and weightlessness?

Björfors: Circus is about life and death, when you are going to perform the most difficult things, you must be so present in the moment that you are totally naked. And it's the same thing with

opera notes, too. When you are going to reach these notes—you go beyond the made-up, as it were. They are not intellectual art forms in the first instance, they are emotional, or physical...

Lindman: Perhaps we can say they are not bound by words alone. And this is especially so in *Satyagraha*. The libretto is in Sanskrit. An ancient Indian language that is spoken by very few people today. In other words, a language that you can guarantee almost nobody understands. It is a way to escape from the reasoning-based nature of the word—logos—and the demand by contemporary, or should we say Western people to always be able to understand what is going on. In which case, how are we going to be able to tell a story?

Björfors: I don't see it as Philip Glass trying to tell the story of Gandhi's life and history. His aim is more to understand Gandhi from the inside and that we through the music should experience these events and how this individual with his pathos of justice came to be.

Lindman: The libretto is a very carefully chosen selection of verses from the holy scripture *Bhagavad-Gita*. But rather than spoken lines, the verses in Sanskrit are given to different singers.

Björfors: We want to create order and stay in control. What Glass tries to do is to pull the rug from under us and so enable us to experience the story on another level.

Lindman: We are, however, going to translate certain verses in the production.

Björfors: This is to provide a sense of grounding in any case. But it is not the libretto as such that helps us to understand what is happening in the first place, it is more the story that emerges from the entirety. The situations Gandhi found himself in at that time are reflected in a script that is thousands of years older. And it is the same human dilemma that we are facing today, which means *Satyagraha* is always relevant. The actions I take today are reflected in future generations. These actions should not only do good in the here and now, but also in a broader and longer perspective.

Lindman: Glass is a very keen student of Indian philosophy and culture. And *Satyagraha*'s structure challenges our Western information mind set. What is meaning? What does it mean to understand?

Björfors: We are perhaps used to another form of storytelling. But *Satyagraha*'s structure is totally thought through. The more I work with it, the more I realize how thought through it is. What appears to be disordered is actually full of a different kind of order.

Lindman: We begin with the mythical battlefield. The meeting between the God Krishna and Arjuna, who in the case of the opera, becomes Gandhi. The situation that is the starting point for the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Where the fundamental question to act or not to act is posed.

Björfors: The three biographical acts then follow. They are not chronological, but we make the same journey three times, deeper and deeper each time. What Glass does, I think, is that via the spirit of Gandhi, he relates to that which has gone before us and that which lies ahead of us. We move through history through the same highs and lows, peaks and troughs, time and time again.

Lindman: Glass depicts this by naming the different acts after three historic fights for justice: Leo Tolstoy, the Russian author who preached non-violence and was labelled a Christian anarchist, Indian author and Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore, who fought against British colonial rule, and US civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. That was his thinking, when Glass composed the opera, 35 years ago. However, if we imagine a fourth act being written today. Who would you put in the heading for that?

Björfors: Naturally, I think to myself: where are all the women? I grew up in the 1970s and was very affected by the books about Katitzi written by the Swedish author Katarina Taikon. These stories depict questions of injustice, ignorance, and exclusion through the eyes of a child. Which got you thinking that it was also important to do things for other people, not just for yourself. Which is why one act could be named after Katarina Taikon, perhaps. We do not know today who the Martin Luther King Jr. or Gandhi of the future will be. Is he or she among the people who campaign for human rights around the world? We all have the chance to be the person who makes a difference. It could be you and it could be me.

Lindman: You usually refer to a Gandhi quote: "all through history, there have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they seem invincible. But in the end, they always fall. Always. Truth and love have always won."

Björfors: Wanting truth and love is not given a high status in society today. For me, the meeting with Gandhi has reminded me of how much power this contains within it. It is perhaps far more feasible to hold fast to the philosophy of *Satyagraha* than to build walls and close borders.

—Magnus Lindman, Dramatist

PHILIP GLASS (composer)

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Woody Allen to David Bowie, Philip Glass has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times. The operas *Einstein on the Beach*, *Satyagraha*, *Akhnaten*, and *The Voyage*, among many others, play throughout the world's leading houses. Glass has written music for experimental theater and for Academy Award-winning motion pictures such as *The Hours* and Martin Scorsese's *Kundun*, while *Koyaanisqatsi*, his initial filmic landscape with Godfrey Reggio and the Philip Glass Ensemble, is a radical and influential mating of sound and vision. His associations, personal and professional, with leading rock, pop, and world music artists date back to the 1960s, including the beginning of his collaborative relationship with artist Robert Wilson. Indeed, Glass is the first composer to win a wide, multi-generational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film and in popular music—simultaneously. He was born in 1937 and grew up in Baltimore. He studied at the University of Chicago, The Juilliard School, and in Aspen with Darius Milhaud. Finding himself dissatisfied with much of what then passed for modern music, he moved to Europe, where he studied with the legendary Nadia Boulanger and worked closely with the sitar virtuoso and composer Ravi Shankar. He returned to New York in 1967 and formed the Philip Glass Ensemble—seven musicians playing keyboards and a variety of woodwinds, amplified and fed through a mixer. The new musical style that Glass was evolving was eventually dubbed “minimalism.” Glass himself never liked the term and preferred to speak of himself as a composer of “music with repetitive structures.” Much of his early work was based on the extended reiteration of brief, elegant melodic fragments that wove in and out of an aural tapestry. Or, to put it another way, it immersed a listener in a sort of sonic weather that twists, turns, surrounds, develops. There has been nothing “minimalist” about his output. In the past 25 years, Glass has composed more than 20 operas, large and

small; 10 symphonies (with others on the way); two piano concertos and concertos for violin, piano, timpani, and saxophone quartet and orchestra; soundtracks to films ranging from new scores for the stylized classics of Jean Cocteau to Errol Morris' documentary about former defense secretary Robert McNamara; string quartets; and a growing body of work for solo piano and organ. He has collaborated with Paul Simon, Linda Ronstadt, Yo-Yo Ma, and Doris Lessing, among many others. He presents lectures, workshops, and solo keyboard performances around the world, and continues to appear regularly with the Philip Glass Ensemble. He has performed at BAM since *Satyagraha* in 1981 more than two dozen times.

TILDE BJÖRFORS (director)

Tilde Björfors is the founder and artistic director of Cirkus Cirkör. Björfors has over 20 years of experience creating cross-boundary stage performances and is the main driving force in establishing contemporary circus as art form in Sweden. In 2005 Björfors obtained Sweden's first professorship in contemporary circus at the University of Dance and Circus (DOCH). Her artistic research combined with Cirkör's education, entrepreneurship, and work with democracy and cultural policy have had an impact beyond the realm of circus. Björfors has directed the majority of Cirkus Cirkör's large-scale performances, including *Limits* (2017, BAM), *Borders, Inside Out* (2009, BAM), *Knitting Peace, Wear It Like a Crown* (2012, BAM), and *Epifónima*. Tilde Björfors has received numerous awards, for example the Swedish H.M. The King's Medal of the 8th dimension with blue ribbon, the Swedish Theatre Critic's Theatre prize, The newspaper *Expressen's* Theatre Prize for outstanding theater arts, plus the achievement Swede of the Year— art/culture for 2017.

MATTHEW WOOD (music leader/conductor),

equally at home on the concert platform or in the orchestra pit, is a conductor of great versatility, regularly conducting symphonic, opera, ballet, and new music repertoire. In the UK Wood has worked with many leading orchestras including the London Philharmonic



Orchestra, Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Ballet Covent Garden, and held the post of associate conductor with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Wood also lectures in conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. He has made numerous appearances outside the UK, being a regular guest conductor with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Chile, Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia Madrid, and the Brasov Philharmonic Romania. In 2016 Wood made his Swedish debut, conducting performances of Philip Glass' *Satyagraha* with Folkoperan Stockholm. In Australia he held the post of artistic director and chief conductor of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra (2012—18). He has also conducted many of Australia's leading ensembles including the Melbourne, Tasmanian, and Queensland Symphony Orchestras.

DAN POTRA (scenography and costume design)

is a designer across the full spectrum of the arts, designing sets, costumes, concepts, and animation for opera, theater, large-scale events, dance, and film. Potra has received six Helpmann Award nominations for his design work in opera and theater. International opera and theater productions include *The Portrait* for Opera North and Opera de Lorraine, *Cyrano de Bergerac* for the National Theatre of Greece, *Sweeney Todd* at Southbank London, *The Barber of Seville* for Houston Grand Opera, *A Streetcar Named Desire* for St. Gallen Opera in Switzerland, *Double It* directed by Shi Zheng in China, and *The Tales of Hoffmann* with Folkoperan and *Dracula* for the Royal Swedish Opera. Potra has designed large-scale sporting and cultural events such as the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and *Clusters of Light* in Egypt. He also designed ceremony segments for the 2018 and 2006 Commonwealth Games, as well as the opening of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. He designed the costumes and projections for the Global Creatures/Dreamworks US stage adaptation of *How to Train Your Dragon*. Potra has recently completed designs for *Turandot*, Sydney Opera House: *The Opera*, *Le Comte Dory*, *Satyagraha*, and the Royal Swedish

Opera's production of *Askungen*. In 2018 he has completed productions of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *La Bohème* on Sydney Harbour, the opening ceremony of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, *The Misanthrope*, and *The Almighty Sometimes*.

PATRIK BOGÅRDH (lighting design)

Patrick Bogårdh works as freelance lighting designer and scenographer in Sweden and internationally. His latest works include lighting design, fire effects plus scenography of *Carmina Burana* at the outdoor venue Dalhalla, and the lighting design of *Turandot* at Folkoperan. Previously he has worked at the Royal Ballet in Copenhagen, Teater Vaneemuine in Tartu, Royal Opera in Stockholm, and Grand Théâtre de Genève, among others.

VISUAL RELIEF (video scenography)

Visual Relief's main focus is to create artistic experiences with projected light. Its projection mapping, whether for stage design, installations, or events, is highly regarded in Sweden. Visual Relief is based in Stockholm and was initiated by two video artists, Per Rydnert and Johannes Ferm Winkler. Rydnert previously worked as an animator and editor in television and Winkler had worked as a VJ-artist and light designer in the Swedish film industry. Since they began in 2012 they have worked on a range of projects, from the Eurovision Song Contest and Nobel banquet to Mando Diao, Dalhalla and productions at the Royal Dramatic Theater, Malmö Opera and more.

THERÉSIA FRISK (mask and wig design)

got her education by being an apprentice to renowned mask artist Robin Carlsson whom she followed through many productions; she also holds a master craftsman's diploma in wigmaking. Since 2000 she has been the manager of the mask and wig department at Folkoperan where she has designed and created the mask and wigs for productions such as *Turandot*, *La Traviata*, *Il ballo de maschera*, *The Tales of Hoffman*, *Don Quixote*, and many more.

MAGNUS LINDMAN (dramatist)

Lindman works as dramaturg at Folkoperan, Swedish Radio Drama, and Folkteatern in Gothenburg. He also works as a translator

and playwright at venues such as Stockholm House of Culture & City Theatre, Royal Dramatic Theatre, Wernland Opera, and Teater Tribunalen.

SOLOISTS AND CIRCUS ARTISTS

LEIF ARUHN-SOLÉN (tenor, Gandhi)

For nearly two decades, the Swedish tenor Leif Aruhn-Solén has been a sought-after singer on the world's concert and opera stages. Orchestral engagements include appearances with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Les Arts Florissants, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Freiburger Barockorchester, and Concerto Copenhagen. Some opera engagements include Grand Théâtre de Genève, Opéra National de Montpellier, Royal Opera in Stockholm, and Salzburger Landestheater. He studied at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm followed by Oberlin College, where he earned an artist diploma in 2001. In the US, Aruhn-Solén was a young artist at Glimmerglass Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He appeared at BAM as Pastore in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* during the BAM Monteverdi cycle in 2002. Recent US appearances includes concerts and recordings with New Trinity Baroque in Atlanta and concerts with the National Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony. Recent opera engagements include Rinaldo in Haydn's *Armida* with Pinchgut Opera in Sydney (Antony Walker) and the title role in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* with Göteborg Baroque.

LISA CARLIOTH (soprano, Miss Schlesen)

Carlioth gives life to complex female characters in opera literature and moves people with her heartfelt, shimmering lyrical soprano voice. After some years as a member of the ensemble at Staatstheater Oldenburg in Germany she returned to Sweden. The first role she sang there was Amelia in Folkoperan's adapted version of *Un ballo in maschera*. Among other roles since then is Alice Ford in Läckö Opera's production of *Falstaff*.

HANNA FRITZON (soprano, Mrs. Naidoo)

Fritzon has performed in roles such as Pamina

in *The Magic Flute*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* (Mozart), Comala in *Comala* (Morandi), Allison in *The Wandering Scholar* (Holst), Ophelia in *The Jester's Hamlet* (Jennefelt), and the Daughter in *Hos oss* (Jennefelt) in Sweden and Germany. Other parts in her repertoire are Liu in *Turandot* (Puccini), The Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart), Micaela in *Carmen* (Bizet), and Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold* (Wagner), plus a great number of sacred pieces by Mozart, Brahms, Bach, Carissimi, and more. She is one of the founders of the fringe opera group Den Andra Operan (The Other Opera). Its first project is the French queer opera *Les Surprises de l'Enfer* by Isabelle Aboulker.

KAROLINA BLIXT (mezzo soprano, Kasturbai/ Mrs. Alexander)

Since 2007, Blixt has worked as a freelance opera singer with a wide artistic range. She has performed on opera stages and concert halls in Sweden and Europe, including Royal Opera Stockholm, Drottningholms Slottsteater (Stockholm), Theatre Megaron (Athens), Le Grand Théâtre (Aix en Provence), Theater Carré (Amsterdam), Beckett Theatre (Dublin), Gothenburg Opera, Malmö Opera, and Wexford Opera. At Folkoperan she has been a soloist in *Julius Caesar* and *La Traviata*. Blixt has sung parts such as Orfeo in *Orfeo ed Eurydike*, Fricka in *Die Walküre*, Pauline in *The Queen of Spades*, Ottone in *The Coronation of Poppea*, Prins Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Fenena in *Nabucco*, Xerxes, Cornelia in *Caesar*, and Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. She has also done cross-over parts—the baritone part in Puccini's opera *Le Villi*—and has worked with American choreographer Trisha Brown and the Trisha Brown Dance Company in the role Phaedra in *Hippolyte et Aricie* in a production for the 2010 Aix-en-Provence Festival with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants.

LARS JOHANSSON BRISSMAN (baritone, Mr. Kallenbach/Arjuna)

Brissman has performed in opera roles such as Shaunard in *La Bohème*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Baron Mirka Zeta in *Die lustige Witwe*, and Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas*. As one of Scandinavia's most sought-after concert singers, he is a regular guest with major orchestras



and festivals throughout Europe, the US, and Australia. He has a wide repertoire spanning from the Renaissance to the romantic period, as well as including a large number of pieces by contemporary composers.

JOHAN SCHINKLER (bass, Parsi Rustomji/Krishna) has sung a large variety of opera parts among others, Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Jovellanos in *Goya*, Veit Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Gothenburg Opera. At Wermland Opera he has sung Hagen in *Götterdämmerung*; at the Latvian Opera, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, plus Fafner and Hagen in Wagner's *Ring* and Priest Fotis in the *Greek Passion*. At Folkoperan he has sung Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, the title part in *Il nozze di Figaro*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Kaspar in *Der Freischütz* and Mefistofeles in *Faust*, Lindorff in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and the title part in *Don Quichotte*.

CIRCUS ARTISTS

AINO IHANAINEN

Ihanainen is an artist from Finland specializing in the handstand and body knitting. She started to train in circus at the age of 10 and was amazed with the circus world's possibilities and range of interesting people. By combining her two big passions, circus and knitting, she has created a new discipline: body knitting, where parts of her body are the needles that knit the yarn into beautiful creations. Ihanainen is a co-creator in *Satyagraha* as well as in the Cirkör show *Knitting Peace*, where she has knitted parts of the scenography.

OSCAR KARLSSON

Karlsson is a Swedish teeterboard artist who graduated from University of Dance and Circus (DOCH) in Stockholm. He has toured the world as a circus artist and won gold medals at both Cirque de Demain and YoungStage as well as participating in the Monte Carlo Festival. He was last seen in Cirkus Cirkör's successful performance *Limits* and in *Ronia, the Robber's*

Daughter at the House of Culture & Stockholm City Theatre.

SARAH LETT

Lett specializes in acrobatics, silks, and Cyr wheel. She was born in Canada and has studied at circus schools in Montreal and Quebec City. She has worked with Cirque du Soleil, toured in Switzerland, and was featured in the acclaimed project *GYN♀IDES* and the Cirkus Cirkör show *Limits* and *Epifónima*.

MAGNUS BJØRU

Bjørø is a juggler, acrobat, and clown from Norway. He graduated from the Cirkuspilots in Stockholm and has performed in shows all over the world including the US and Canada with his previous circus company Magmanus. He is currently touring with the circus-musical *Havet* with his newly-created circus company Fjård.

ALEXANDER WEIBEL WEIBEL

Weibel is a Spanish-American circus artist and musician currently based in Sweden. He has specialized in slack rope but also performs hand-to-hand acrobatics, unicycle, knife throwing, and juggling. He studied circus at Carampa in Madrid at the National Circus School in Moscow and at the University of Circus in Stockholm (DOCH), where he earned a master's degree in New Performative Practices. He toured the world for over three years as part of Cirkus Cirkör's performance *Knitting Peace*. He was part of the Cirkör show *Borders* and assisted in the creation of *Limits*. Weibel is currently touring with his own performance, *Breaking Point*.

THE SWEDISH FOLKOPERA—FOLKOPERAN

Folkoperan is a small opera house in Stockholm driven to develop the art of opera through new expressions and unexpected interfaces. By working across artistic borders with opera we explore our art in-depth through narrative. Most performances are sung in Swedish which enables a closeness to the audience, to the story being told, and to the creation of new perspectives.

The founders of Folkoperan had a vision of making opera close-up and something for everyone. Folkoperan has been nurturing, exploring, and developing since 1976. The company is passionate about bringing opera to a wider audience irrespective of age, background, or experience. Folkoperan creates opera that everyone can relate to in their own way, opera that becomes people's opera and a platform for introspection and how you see the world. Folkoperan has previously visited BAM with Verdi's *Don Carlos* in 1996 and Bizet's *Carmen* in 2000.

Folkoperan was founded in 1976 and receives annual funding from the Swedish Arts Council, Stockholm County Council and the City of Stockholm. Sponsor: Riksbyggen.

CIRKUS CIRKÖR

Cirkus Cirkör started when Tilde Björfors and a group of artists went to Paris and fell in love with the possibilities that the contemporary circus offered. They decided to stop dreaming big and living small and instead give their all to make reality of their dreams. Twenty-three years later almost 2.5 million people have seen a Cirkus Cirkör show on stage and in festivals around the world. About 500,000 children and youths have taken part in training, creating, and education programs with Cirkus Cirkör. Contemporary circus is now an established art form in Sweden. You will find the circus in all sorts of places—from pre-schools to universities and in homes for the elderly. A Cirkus Cirkör performance is typically big-hearted, chaotic, and colorful with an optimistic sense of potential in the face of adversity.

Cirkus Cirkör has previously performed at BAM with the performances *Inside Out* (2009), *Wear It Like a Crown* (2012), and *Limits* (2017), all directed by Artistic Director Tilde Björfors. Cirkus Cirkör was founded in 1995 and receives annual funding from the Swedish Arts Council, Stockholm County Council, the City of Stockholm, and the Municipality of Botkyrka.