

Media Release #5

Glasgow 2024 - A Worldcon for our Futures August 8th-12th, 2024

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Monday, 14th August, 2023 - For Immediate Release

New Opera by Award-winning Scottish Science Fiction Author and Acclaimed Composer to Debut at Glasgow 2024

- * Opera set on Clyde Coast inspired by classic H.G. Wells story
- * Project brings together top Scottish science fiction author and acclaimed composer
- * New work to debut at Glasgow's SEC Armadillo as part of World Science Fiction Convention

A new opera co-created by an award-winning Scottish science fiction author and an acclaimed composer is to receive its world premiere in Glasgow.

Morrow's Isle, a work inspired by the classic H.G. Wells novel The Island of Doctor Moreau, will make its debut next year at the SEC Armadillo as part of the 2024 World Science Fiction Convention (Worldcon).

The opera features a libretto by novelist Ken MacLeod, whose most recent Lightspeed series sees a group of scientists and engineers secretly develop faster-than-light spacecraft near Faslane Naval Base.

The original H.G. Wells Moreau sees a rogue scientist create human-animal hybrids on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean. MacLeod said the new production would shift its setting to Scotland, combining elements of Scottish history and folklore with present-day concerns about humanity's impact on the environment.

"The story is set on a little isle in the Firth of Clyde, with references to some of the stranger and darker episodes of Scottish history," he said.

"There's a strong fantasy tradition in Scotland, a history of interest in witchcraft and the supernatural. But we also look forward into the future, looking at the effects of things like social media, climate change and the treatment of the biosphere and the animal world."

He added that he had found inspiration for the story in his own exploration of Scotland's Clyde Coast.

"My wife and I had been on a tour of some of the lesser-visited islands of the west coast, including Little Cumbrae," he explained.

"It's a fascinating place, and right next to it is another even smaller island with its own castle. You can walk across to it at low tide. It has a real haunted appearance and has such a strange little history of its own."

Collaborating with MacLeod is the Canadian-born British composer and producer Gary Lloyd, whose work includes a project with the late Scottish novelist Iain Banks to produce a musical-narrative work based on his 1986 novel *The Bridge*.

Lloyd said he was excited to be bringing his latest production to Worldcon in Glasgow.

“Science fiction fans are a very open-minded audience,” he said, “and opera can be a really mind-expanding experience, a really emotional experience and something transformative.

“It’s certainly my ambition to put brand new work in front of people who maybe haven’t experienced opera. Just being in the presence of opera singers can shatter your expectations of what it’s going to be.

“It’s exciting, and I’m going to pour everything I can into this. And it’s a Scottish opera, with a Scottish theme, so of course there will be a piper.”

The production will also incorporate elements of dance, with choreography by Lloyd’s wife, the multiple-award-winning Bettina Carpi.

Glasgow 2024 Chair Prof. Esther MacCallum-Stewart said the opera was an important part of the convention’s five-day programme of events and entertainment.

“It’s thrilling to be able to announce this collaboration for Worldcon in Glasgow,” she said.

“We’re privileged to have some astounding creative minds working on this exciting production, with the landscape that inspired it just 30 miles from Glasgow city centre. I’m looking forward to being in the audience when it’s revealed to the world.”

ENDS

Notes for Editors

About Gary Lloyd

Gary Lloyd has composed music for productions in theatre, contemporary dance, television drama and documentary, film, art installation, son et lumière, narrative/music works, and orchestral concert performances. He also works as a record producer, and lectures on aspects of music. He is a graduate of the University of Chester where he studied mathematics, fine art and history of art, and psychology. He lives in Chester with his wife, the dancer and choreographer Bettina Carpi.

About Ken MacLeod

Ken MacLeod is a Scottish science fiction writer whose novels *The Sky Road* and *The Night Sessions* won the BSFA Award. His novels have been nominated for the Arthur C. Clarke, Hugo, Nebula, Locus, and Campbell Memorial awards for best novel on multiple occasions. Born in Stornoway, he now lives in the Clyde Coast town of Gourrock. He sits on the advisory board of the Edinburgh Science Festival.

About Bettina Carpi

Bettina Carpi is an independent dance maker, performer and teacher with over 20 years' experience. Her career highlights include co-creating and performing the award-winning dance theatre pieces Metamorphosis and The World's Greatest Show by choreographer Arthur Pita, which were performed at the Royal Opera House in London and the Joyce Theatre in New York. In 2017 Bettina and her husband, composer Gary Lloyd founded Company Carpi to give expression to their collaborative projects.

"World Science Fiction Society", "WSFS", "World Science Fiction Convention", "Worldcon", "NASFiC", "Hugo Award", the Hugo Award Logo, and the distinctive design of the Hugo Award Trophy Rocket are service marks of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary society.

The 82nd World Science Fiction Convention, Glasgow 2024, will take place in Glasgow, UK from 8-12 August 2024. For more information about the convention, including current membership rates, visit <https://glasgow2024.org/> <<https://glasgow2024.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=130ac29b547a74bf4af5a7825&id=70ab57a89c&e=77c68a16e4>> . Find us on social media at @Glasgowin2024.