

EMBARGOED until 6 March 2024



Eric Melear becomes Artistic Director of National Opera Studio



Eric Melear © Julian Guidera

The National Opera Studio is excited to announce the appointment of American coach, pianist and conductor Eric Melear as Artistic Director, effective July 2024.

Melear brings a wealth of experience from his distinguished career conducting, coaching and performing all over the world. Currently on the music staff of the Vienna State Opera, helping to prepare and conduct the world-class ensemble and orchestra for 40-50 productions per year, Melear has long been a champion of young singers and pianists having led renowned talent development programmes at both Houston Grand Opera and Wolf Trap Opera, as well as serving as a guest coach for programmes and universities in the U.K., Italy and the U.S.

Working alongside the National Opera Studio's Executive Director Nicholas Simpson, Melear will provide inspirational artistic direction, building on the National Opera Studio's renowned reputation as the UK's leading opera training organisation.

His responsibilities will include overseeing and delivering NOS's world-class training programmes, ensuring they respond effectively to the evolving needs of the opera profession, and managing the

organisation's strong relationships with the sector, including its partnerships with the U.K.'s six leading opera companies. He will join a highly skilled and diverse team of coaches and staff who nurture the National Opera Studio's outstanding Young Artists.

Melear says: *"I am thrilled to join the National Opera Studio's excellent team and rich history to recruit and guide the next generation's opera stars. NOS is uniquely positioned to creatively connect a diverse group of artists with our partner companies, and I look forward to building on its already strong foundations to fully prepare artists for their international careers."*

Eric Melear replaces David Sulkin OBE, who steps down from his position in June 2024, and takes on an expanded role along with Executive Director Nicholas Simpson, seeing a new joint leadership structure for NOS.

Nicholas Allan, Chair of the National Opera Studio, said: *"The Studio is excited to welcome Eric Melear as Artistic Director. Under his leadership, we are confident in our ability to reach new heights in developing world-class opera talent. I'd like to thank David for his many contributions to artist development at NOS over the last six years, not least his leadership and innovation in our initiatives to increase diversity and inclusion in our sector."*

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Images of Eric Melear can be found [here](#)

About Eric Melear

Based in Vienna, Austria, Eric Melear enjoys a diverse career as a conductor and pianist, working regularly on multiple continents and with a wide variety of singers and companies. A member of the music staffs at both the Vienna State Opera and The Metropolitan Opera, he has guest conducted at the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival and at numerous U.S. opera houses, including Houston Grand Opera, Arizona Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, among others. Melear has also long been a champion of young artists, having led Studios at both Houston Grand Opera and Wolf Trap Opera, as well as serving as a guest coach for programmes and universities in the U.K., Italy, and the U.S.

Since returning to the Vienna State Opera full-time in 2015, Melear has conducted performances of *Die Entführung ins Zauberreich*, Wagner's *Nibelungen Ring for Children* and *Pünktchen und Anton* and assisted Zubin Mehta, Peter Schneider, Simone Young, among many others. Sharing the duties of preparing the 45-50 operas a season, he also conducts the full-time stage orchestra, regularly coaches the ensemble of singers and the newly created Studio programme and can be seen in recitals and featured on continuo.

This season Melear is again on the podium for performances of *Das verfluchte Geisterschiff* and assisting and conducting stage music for productions of *Le grand macabre*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Don Pasquale*, *Lohengrin*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, among others.

ericmelear.com

About the National Opera Studio

The National Opera Studio (NOS) exists to train talented young musicians to become the leading artists of their generation. It aims to make a significant contribution to the opera ecology and the wider creative and cultural life of the UK through the provision of top-quality professional training, and by its engagement and position in the sector.

At its core, NOS provides intensive and bespoke professional training at the highest level for a small number of singers and répétiteurs each year, and prepares them for life on an international operatic stage. It works in partnership with not one, but six of the leading opera companies in the UK: English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera North, the Royal Opera House, Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera. Global Talent Programme Young Artists are with NOS for nine months and undergo a rigorous programme that is individually designed around their vocal and developmental needs.

In addition to the tailored coaching programme, Young Artists work closely with leading directors, conductors and opera orchestras to prepare opera scenes for public performance, as well as working with other artists who are leaders in their field. The intensity of the training programme is designed to create a working environment that reflects the professional opera world.

NOS also provides support, guidance and encouragement for aspiring young singers from backgrounds currently under-represented in opera through its Diverse Voices programme. This supports performers at various stages of their pathway towards becoming a singer; from its National Talent Programme, which offers bespoke, part-time, high-level training for a select number of emerging opera singers, to outreach work with schools, community choirs, and youth choirs. Working with artists, singers and choirs across a variety of levels and platforms, its work ranges from connecting young children to local musical communities all the way to training singers and répétiteurs who are already working professionally.

nationaloperastudio.org.uk