

**The  
EDINBURGH OPERA COMPANY**



founded 1920

presents

# **The Pearl Fishers**

by **GEORGES BIZET**

libretto by Carré and Cormon

first performed in Paris 1863

conductor **NEIL MANTLE**

producer **GIOVANNA HALFORD-MacLEOD**

**LEITH THEATRE**

Thursday 20, Friday 21 and Saturday 22 April 1978

7.30 pm

programme 10p

# THE PEARL FISHERS

NOURABAD, priest of the pearl fishers Alastair Caldwell  
ZURGA, leader of the pearl fishers Bill Dewar  
NADIR, a hunter, Zurga's blood brother Alan Borthwick  
LEILA, a priestess from the temple in Kandy Inga Dodds  
FISHERMEN, ELDERS, WOMENFOLK and GUARDS Margaret Anderson, Rosalind Ballantyne, Marjorie Begbie, Glenda Caldwell, Margaret Caldwell, James Christie, Evelyn Couper, Allan Cruickshank, Andrew Davidson, Marjory Denness, Margaret Dougal, Edith Duncan, Edith Dunnett, Mary Elliot, Frances Falconer, Anna Franchi, Anne Grant, Valerie Hogg, J. R. Hunter, Amy Jamieson, Adam Kinghorn, Sheila Law, George McArthur, Kenneth Macrae, Tom McGill, Pat Paterson, William Paterson, Norma Paylor, Ernest Reynolds, Dorothea Robertson, Jeff Rose-Slaney, Cynthia Ross, Lottie Seggie, Ruby Stephen, Barbara Thomson, Katrine Townhill, Anthony Watson, John Wightman, Joyce Wightman, Eleanor Wilson, Robin Wilson, Anne Winchester, John Withers  
CHILDREN Antonia Dodds, Andrew Hogg, Audrey Hogg, Linda Hogg, Louise McArthur  
TEMPLE DANCERS Pupils of the June Geissler School of Ballet

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CONDUCTOR Neil Mantle PRODUCER Giovanna Halford-MacLeod  
STAGE MANAGEMENT Bob Moyes and members of the Gang Show  
REPETITIEUR and ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR Janet Arthur  
LIGHTING DIRECTOR Gordon Blackburn SET DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION Hilary Watson  
COSTUME DESIGN Giovanna Halford-MacLeod WARDROBE MISTRESS Lottie M. Seggie  
COSTUMES MADE BY Giovanna Halford-MacLeod, Mary Bess Halford-MacLeod, Lottie M. Seggie, Joyce Wightman and members of the Company  
PROPS Valerie Hogg PUBLICITY John Wightman POSTER Inga Dodds

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THE EDINBURGH OPERA COMPANY acknowledges financial support from the Scottish Arts Council and the City of Edinburgh District Council, and wishes to record thanks to the YWCA and Daniel Stewart's and Melville College for rehearsal premises, to the Edinburgh Grand Opera Group for the loan of wigs, and to all associate members and friends for their assistance in the mounting of this production.

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## The Edinburgh Opera Company

*Honorary President* The Hon. K. W. Borthwick, The Lord Provost of Edinburgh

*Chairman* Alastair Caldwell

*Honorary Treasurer* Anne Grant

*Honorary Secretary* Miss Lottie Seggie  
12 Lockerby Cottages  
Lasswade Road  
Edinburgh EH16 6QU

*Business Manager* Miss Maureen Russell  
11 Derby Street  
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Prospective members are welcome and should contact the Honorary Secretary.

## THE PEARL FISHERS

The action takes place in Ceylon in the seventeenth century.

The pearl fishers are prosperous because they are daring; once a year they travel to a headland where the finest pearls are found. They bring their families and build a camp near an ancient shrine to the Hindu god Brahma. But the waters round this headland are very treacherous and many divers have been lost in sudden storms. To protect themselves from disaster, the pearl fishers bring with them their priest and the dancers from their home temple. They also send to Kandy for a special priestess who will offer constant prayers on their behalf. She must take a vow of chastity and remain veiled and unknown.

*The story before the opera begins :*

The pearl fisher Zurga was once pursued by brigands when carrying a consignment of pearls. His life was saved by a little girl who hid him in her father's house and refused, even when her life was threatened, to betray him. In gratitude he gave her a necklace. This little girl grew up to become the priestess Leila. Some years later Zurga and his friend Nadir travelled to Kandy and there in the temple saw a young priestess (Leila) with whom they both fell in love. A jealous quarrel broke out between them but because they were blood-brothers they vowed never to see her again. No longer able to bear each other's company, they parted. Zurga fulfilled his oath but Nadir returned to Kandy and secretly wooed Leila.

### ACT I

The pearl fishers have arrived at their annual camp-site. They seek the protection of Brahma with gifts and dances and they elect Zurga as their leader during the dangerous days ahead. Nadir, whom Zurga has not seen since their quarrel, appears and the two are reconciled, each swearing he has been true to his oath. They recall their first sight of Leila, then Zurga invites Nadir to join the fishers. The veiled priestess arrives. She is Leila. She recognises Nadir, although he does not recognize her, but takes the solemn vows which Zurga administers.

At nightfall the pearl fishers put out to sea but Nadir remains behind. He feels guilty because he has deceived Zurga. He thinks of Leila and falls asleep dreaming that she is near. Leila is led by the priest Nourabad into the shrine where, lit by a brazier, she is visible to the fishing fleet. She invokes the protection of Brahma upon it. She parts her veil a little and Nadir, who has awoken, recognises her.

### — INTERVAL —

### ACT II

The fleet has returned safely. Nourabad comes to release Leila from her vigil. To prove to him that she will keep her vows she tells him the story of how she saved a brave man from brigands and shows him the necklace. Leila falls asleep. She is awoken by Nadir's voice and he climbs up into the shrine and they pledge their love. As he leaves a shot rings out. Nourabad and his guards have seen him and go in pursuit. A storm breaks. The pearl fishers hurry to the shrine for protection. Nourabad returns with the captured Nadir and denounces him and Leila as lovers. The pearl fishers are about to lynch Nadir when Zurga arrives and intervenes. He has Nadir and Leila released and bids them go. As they do so Nourabad tears off Leila's veil. Zurga recognises her and knows his friend has betrayed him. He condemns them both to death.

### ACT III

#### scene 1 :

Zurga, alone and sleepless, thinks of Nadir and Leila and is tortured by remorse. Leila, guarded, comes to him and begs him to free Nadir. She alone will be the sacrifice. At the sight of her Zurga's jealousy returns and he refuses. Nourabad and some fishermen come to announce that dawn, the hour of execution, approaches. Leila gives her necklace to a young diver and asks him to give it to her mother. After she has been taken away Zurga recognises the necklace.

#### scene 2 :

The pearl fishers prepare for the execution. Suddenly they see a glow in the east and believe that dawn has come. But Zurga rushes on to announce that the camp is on fire and all must go if they wish to save their children and goods. When Nourabad and the crowd have hurried away Zurga tells Leila he is repaying her for saving his life when she was a child, for it is he who has set fire to the camp. He releases her and Nadir and gives them his boat for their escape.

G.H.-M.

## Scottish Sinfonia

Conductor NEIL MANTLE

Leader Philip Taylor

### *Violins I*

Philip Taylor  
Robin Adair  
Sheena Black  
Anne Harper  
Jan Kouvenhoven  
George Murphy  
Andrew Rodden  
Carolyn Thompson

### *Violins II*

John Hiley  
Lawrence Dunn  
Nicola Foot  
Bridget Maclean  
Graham Holton  
Alex Manning  
Alison Scott

### *Violas*

Patrick Criswell  
Alison Dundas  
Sarah Lupton  
Helen Tasker

### *Cellos*

Astrid Gorrie  
Edward Kingsley  
Alan Anderson  
John Busbridge

### *Basses*

Eric Jeffrey  
Paul Spiers  
Anna Boron  
Colin Stephen

### *Flutes*

Anne Evans  
Jean Murray

### *Oboes*

Charles Dodds  
Caroline Williams

### *Cor Anglais*

Caroline Williams

### *Clarinets*

Pamela Turley  
David Millar

### *Bassoons*

Bruce Gordon  
Graham Fraser

### *Horns*

Dick Rimer  
John Maynard  
Fiona Elliot  
David Pryce

### *Trumpets*

Colin Douglas  
Andrew Kinnear

### *Trombones*

Bill Giles  
James Bertram  
Noel Bertram

### *Timpani*

Anne Douglas

### *Percussion*

Euan Fairbairn  
Timothy Miller  
Jennifer Rimer

### *Harp*

Moirá McCallum

### *Orchestral Manager*

Stuart Wilson

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Next concerts of the SCOTTISH SINFONIA

conductor Neil Mantle

MOZART Symphony in D (K133)  
Exsultate, jubilate (K165)

MAHLER Symphony No. 4

Inga Dodds *soprano*

SATURDAY 17 June 7.30

REID CONCERT HALL

*In aid of the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children*

ELGAR Triumphal March from Caractacus

BRUCH Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor

Miles Baster *soloist*

SAINT-SAENS 'Organ' Symphony (No. 3)

Dennis Townhill *organ*

SUNDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

5 pm ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL  
CATHEDRAL

Tickets will be available a month before each concert from the Usher Hall Box Office and the Edinburgh Bookshop.