



# Independent Opera

announces 2015 Director Fellowship

**MAX HOEHN AWARDED £15,000 PLUS PRODUCTION COSTS OF £285,000**

**ŠIMON VOSEČEK'S *BIEDERMANN UND DIE BRANDSTIFTER* TO BE PRESENTED AT SADLER'S WELLS IN NOVEMBER 2015**

Independent Opera (IO) today announced 25-year old Max Hoehn as the winner of its 2015 Director Fellowship. This new award - the largest of Independent Opera's annual fellowships – is valued at £300,000 inclusive of a £15,000 director's stipend.

IO's 2015 Director Fellowship will enable Max Hoehn to stage the UK première of Šimon Voseček's *Biedermann und die Brandstifter* at Sadler's Wells in November 2015. He will additionally receive mentoring from David Pountney and Welsh National Opera between January and June 2015.

Nominated by Graham Vick (Artistic Director, Birmingham Opera Company) for whom he translated *Khovanshchina/Khovanskygate: A National Enquiry* and on which he worked as Assistant Director, Max Hoehn has directed seven opera productions and assisted on a further 11 in the past four years. His directorial work has taken him to the Tête à Tête and Grimeborn Festivals, including presenting a new devised piece called *Handel Furioso* by his own opera company *Isle of Noise*. As an Assistant Director, Max has worked at Opernhaus Zürich and Theater an der Wien, as well as at Grange Park Opera, Glyndebourne and the Edinburgh International Festival. Of his recent collaboration with the Birmingham Opera Company on *Khovanskygate*, The Times commented: *The nation named in Max Hoehn's demotic translation is still Russia... but we could be anywhere – even here... crude politics, vivid performances, magnificent orchestral playing combine to exhausting, unsettling effect.*

The search to identify the recipient of IO's most prestigious award began early this year when 30 opera directors were asked to submit names of potential candidates. 26 nominees were asked to submit a concept for *Biedermann und die Brandstifter*, from which 10 finalists were selected to take part in workshop auditions with David Pountney (Chief Executive and Artistic Director, Welsh National Opera), Martin Duncan (Director) and Annilese Miskimmon (General Manager and Artistic Director, Danish National Opera).

IO's first steps as an opera company in 2005 convinced it of the need for more formalised support for opera practitioners. Two years later, it announced a comprehensive programme of scholarships, fellowships, partnerships and patronage now totalling over £2,000,000. In conjunction with its productions at the Lilian Baylis Theatre at Sadler's Wells, IO Artist Support gives practical advice as well as stage experience to artists at the start of very promising professional careers.