



# Best of British

BBC PROMS • GLYNDEBOURNE • RSC • EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

with Stuart Maunder

19 August – 02 September 2012 (15 days)





## Tour leader Stuart Maunder

For the last twenty seven years Stuart has been directing musical theatre and opera in Australia. His has directed for all the state opera companies and was Executive Producer of Opera Australia until 2009. Stuart's productions for Opera Australia include 'Tales of Hoffmann', 'Manon', 'My Fair Lady', 'A Little Night Music'. Stuart also directed the Australian tours of 'Dusty', 'Shout!' and 'Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber'. His Opera Australia productions of 'Pirates of Penzance', 'HMS Pinafore' and 'Trial by Jury' have been televised and broadcast internationally.

"My love affair with the 'Old Country' began in 1975 when I arrived in London straight from high school wide-eyed and stage stuck. And the United Kingdom is even more thrilling and awe-inspiring for me after all this time. I look forward to sharing with you our very own 'Season'; Glyndebourne, Edinburgh, Shakespeare's Stratford and the Proms together with some 'off the beaten track' experiences. There really is nothing like an English Summer, especially when the country is basking in the post-Olympic glow. It will be a unique and exciting time to experience the Best of British."

Stuart Maunder

## Best of British

Amongst the many highlights of the British summer are the BBC Proms, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Edinburgh International Festival. And a multitude of further cultural event surrounding the London 2012 Olympics will only add to the richness already on offer.

This tour has been carefully timed to begin in London 'post-Olympics' and 'pre-Paralympics'. First, enjoy a week with the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, the world's largest classical music festival, where you will enjoy four superb concerts by the cream of British orchestras. See and hear the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra perform a kaleidoscope of music from Beethoven to Shostakovich and a new work Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. The highlight of the week may well be the English National Opera's concert performance of Britten's *Peter Grimes* starting Stuart Skelton in the title role.

Then it is off to the English countryside, for a Ravel Double Bill and Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, followed by *Richard III* and *The Tempest* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Finish with musical fireworks in Edinburgh, with the Philharmonia Orchestra (Bruckner), Scottish Chamber Orchestra (Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich) and the Mariinsky Ballet.

### At a glance ...

- Concerts by the [BBC Symphony](#), [City of Birmingham Symphony](#) and [Royal Liverpool Philharmonic](#) orchestras, and the [English National Opera](#) at the BBC Proms
- A [Ravel Double Bill](#) and [Purcell's \*The Fairy Queen\*](#) at Glyndebourne
- Shakespeare's [Richard III](#) and [The Tempest](#) at Royal Shakespeare Theatre
- Leisurely stays in London, Sussex, Warwickshire and Edinburgh
- Philharmonia Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Mariinsky Ballet at the [Edinburgh International Festival](#)

## ITINERARY

**Sat 18 August 2012**

**Depart Australia**

Suggested departure from Australia on Qantas/British Airways. Overnight in flight.

**Sun 19 August**

**Arrive London**

Arrive London in the morning. Check-in to your hotel located in the heart of Mayfair, with Piccadilly, Bond Street, Knightsbridge, Green Park and Buckingham Palace close by.

Tonight join Stuart Maunder and fellow opera lovers for a welcome briefing and dinner. (D)

**Mon 20 August**

**London**

This morning join Stuart Maunder for 'A Day in the West End'. Start with a backstage tour of the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden. Receive an introduction to the colourful history of the theatre, an insight into the redevelopment of the Royal Opera House and a look at aspects of current productions (subject to confirmation).

Continue to the nearby Savoy Hotel for a traditional afternoon tea which is an enduring custom where guests can choose from a range of teas served with finger sandwiches, homemade scones with clotted cream & jam and a mouthwatering selection of cakes and pastries.

Tonight attend the first of your BBC Proms concerts, featuring the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Osmo Vänskä, with Michael Collins (basset clarinet). (B/afternoon tea)

*Programme*

Beethoven – Egmont overture

Mozart – Clarinet Concerto in A major

Delius – Eventyr (*Once Upon a Time*)

Nielsen – Symphony No. 5

**Tue 21 August**

**London**

Today join Stuart Maunder for an exploration of the area 'South of the Thames'. Start with a guided tour of the iconic Globe Theatre and auditorium, bringing the space to life with colourful stories of the 1599 Globe, of the reconstruction process in the 1990s, and of how the 'wooden O' works today as an imaginative and experimental theatrical space.



*The Fairy Queen*

After lunch at a local restaurant explore the Dulwich Picture Gallery, England's first public art gallery, home to masterpieces by the likes of Rembrandt, Rubens, Poussin and Gainsborough amongst others. Tonight attend your second BBC Proms concert, with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andris Nelsons. (BL)

*Programme*

Glinka – *Ruslan and Lyudmila* overture

Emily Howard – *Calculus of the Nervous System*

Shostakovich – Symphony No. 7 in C major ('Leningrad')

**Wed 22 August**

**London**

Morning visit to the theatre and performance collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum. The collections were founded in the 1920s when a private collector, Gabrielle Enthoven, donated her extensive collection of theatrical designs, memorabilia, books and photographs to the Museum. Since then the collection has continued to grow and has provided a home for many other significant objects and archives. Remainder of the day at leisure to remain at the museum. (B)

**Thu 23 August**

**London**

Enjoy a full day at leisure in London.

This evening, return to the Royal Albert Hall for your third BBC Proms concert, with Tasmin Little (violin) and Vasily Petrenko conducting the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. (B)

*Programme*

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies – Symphony No.9

Delius – Violin Concerto

Shostakovich – Symphony No. 10 in E minor

**Fri 24 August**

**London**

Excursion to Richmond. Visit Ham House which has remained virtually unchanged for 400 years and is internationally recognised for its superb collection of textiles, furniture and art. Largely the vision of Elizabeth Murray, Countess of Dysart, who was deeply embroiled in the politics of the English Civil War and subsequent restoration of the monarchy, Ham House and Garden is an unusually complete survival of the 17th century.



*Andris Nelsons and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra*

Enjoy lunch at Petersham Nurseries where Australian head chef Skye Gyngell works almost exclusively with seasonal produce, creating simple food inspired by what she sees growing and flowering around her in the heated, plant filled Victorian greenhouse.

Tonight return to the Royal Albert Hall for your fourth concert of the BBC Proms, a concert performance of Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*, starring Australian tenor Stuart Skelton leading a superb cast with the English National Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Edward Gardner. (BL)

### Sat 25 August London – Ashdown Park

Mid-morning departure by coach for Ashdown Park Hotel and Country Club (approx 2.5 hrs).

On arrival, a light lunch will be served. Your rooms will be available for check-in at 2 pm (or earlier, subject to availability).

Mid-afternoon, depart Ashdown Park for the drive (16 miles, 30 mins) to Glyndebourne Festival Opera, near Lewes.

#### Glyndebourne Festival Opera

The curtain rose on the first performance of the Opera Festival at Glyndebourne on 28th May, 1934. It was the culmination of one man's obsession with the idea of presenting 'not the best we can do, but the best that can be done anywhere'. Since then, John Christie's vision, shared by his opera singer wife Audrey Mildmay, has developed into one of the world's most revered opera houses. For a comprehensive history of Glyndebourne Festival Opera, visit [www.glyndebourne.com/archive/history](http://www.glyndebourne.com/archive/history).

Tonight attend a new production of Ravel's *L'heure espagnole* and *L'enfant et les sortilèges*.

Ravel's two one-act operas will reunite director Laurent Pelly and conductor Kazushi Ono, who made their Glyndebourne debuts in 2008 with Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. While *L'enfant et les sortilèges* shares with that opera a child's-eye view of a sometimes threatening world, *L'heure espagnole* is a thoroughly adult confection.

During the 'long interval' dinner will be served in one of Glyndebourne's several restaurants. Following the performance, return transfer to Ashdown Park. (BLD)



BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall

### Sun 26 August

### Ashdown Park

Morning at leisure.

Early afternoon departure for Glyndebourne for this afternoon's performance (3.25 pm) of *The Fairy Queen*, a *masque* or 'semi-opera' by Henry Purcell. The libretto is an anonymous adaptation of William Shakespeare's wedding comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. First performed in 1692, *The Fairy-Queen* was composed three years before Purcell's death at the age of 35. Following his death, the score was lost and only rediscovered early in the twentieth century. This much-loved Glyndebourne production is directed by Jonathan Kent in collaboration with designer Paul Brown. Baroque specialist Laurence Cummings will lead the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment from the harpsichord.

During the 'long interval' enjoy a picnic in the grounds, a Glyndebourne tradition. Following the performance, return transfer to Ashdown Park. (BD)

### Mon 27 August Ashdown Park – Stratford upon Avon

After breakfast depart Ashdown Park and travel to Stratford upon Avon (approx. 210 kms, 3–4 hrs ).

The birthplace of William Shakespeare, set in the beautiful rural Warwickshire countryside, on the banks of the river Avon, is steeped in culture and history.

In the afternoon explore the public and private areas of the Royal Shakespeare Company theatre complex. Learn about origins of the RSC and its theatres in Stratford, as well as exploring a production in more depth to learn about the theatre making process. Continue with a visit to the Tower, rising 36 metres above the River Avon, it offers an iconic anchor for the theatres while providing fantastic views of Shakespeare's home town.

After a pre-theatre dinner in the Rooftop Restaurant see Shakespeare's *Richard III* in the Swan Theatre. (BD)

### Tue 28 August

### Stratford upon Avon

Excursion to the medieval Warwick Castle, built by William the Conqueror in 1068 and rebuilt and updated a number of times. Today it combines castle ruins, largely of the fourteenth century with one of the finest great houses in England.



Warwick Castle

In the eighteenth century Capability Brown, was commissioned to redesign the gardens of Warwick and in 1750 brought a new fashion of landscaping using classical influences and artistic talent to the grounds of Warwick. Return to Stratford upon Avon mid-afternoon.

Tonight see *The Tempest* in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. (BL)

### Wed 29 August Stratford upon Avon – Edinburgh

Today's journey takes you from Stratford upon Avon to Edinburgh (approx. 525KM, 6hrs).

Dinner and overnight in Edinburgh. (BD)

### Thu 30 August Edinburgh

After breakfast begin your exploration of Edinburgh with a walking tour of the Royal Mile ending at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the official residence in Scotland of The Queen.

On a guided tour see the Royal Apartments which reflect the changing tastes of successive monarchs and are renowned for their fine plasterwork ceilings and magnificent furnishings, particularly the unrivalled collection of Brussels tapestries.

Afternoon at leisure to stay at Holyroodhouse and visit the magnificent gardens and Queen's Gallery.

Tonight attend the first of two included Edinburgh International Festival performances, a concert by the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen, with Viviane Hagner (violin). (B)

#### Programme

Unsuk Chin – Violin Concerto

Bruckner – Symphony No 4 in E flat 'Romantic'

### Fri 31 August Edinburgh

Day at leisure to explore Edinburgh's Old Town.

This evening return to Usher Hall for the second of your included performances, featuring the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Robin Ticciati, with Alina Pogostkina (violin), Anja Kampe (soprano) and Sir Willard White (bass baritone). (B)

#### Programme

Mahler – *What the Wild Flowers Tell Me* (arr. Britten)

Tchaikovsky – Violin Concerto

Shostakovich – Symphony No 14

### Sat 01 September Edinburgh

Begin with a drive through the New Town, built in stages between 1765 and around 1850. Retaining much of the original Georgian neo-classical architecture, the UNESCO-listed New Town is often considered to be a masterpiece of city planning.

Continue past the Royal Botanic Gardens to the Ocean Terminal and the port of Leith where you visit to the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. One of the world's most famous ships, the Royal Yacht was launched in 1953 and proudly served Queen and country for 44 years. During that time *Britannia* carried The Queen and the Royal Family on 968 official voyages, until being decommissioned in 1997. After intense competition from cities around the UK, the British Government announced that *Britannia* would be permanently moored in Edinburgh's historic port of Leith and visitors can discover what life was like on board the ship for the Royal Family and crew.

Continue to a special venue outside Edinburgh for a farewell lunch with Stuart Maunder and fellow Music Lovers'.

The tour concludes with an optional evening performance by the Mariinsky Ballet of the classic fairytale *Cinderella* with choreography by Alexei Ratmansky. The performance will be conducted by Valery Gergiev. (Not included in tour cost, AUD 77). (BL)

### Sun 02 September Depart Edinburgh

Transfer to the airport for evening departure on British Airways via London to Australia. (B)

### Mon 03 September In Flight

### Tue 04 September Arrive Australia

Evening arrival in Australia.



Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford upon Avon



Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Philharmonia Orchestra



Tasmin Little



Musical entertainment in the city during the Edinburgh Festival. Copyright Britainonview. Photo Grant Pritchard.



Scottish Chamber Orchestra

## TOUR PRICES ...

Per person, twin-share	AUD 8,950
Single supplement*	AUD1,750
Deposit (per person)	AUD1,000
Final Payment	20 June 2012

\*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

**TOUR CODE** MLT Best of British

## SUGGESTED AIRLINE

Qantas/British Airways

Please contact Renaissance Tours for assistance and airfare quotes.

## TOUR PRICES INCLUDE

- Accommodation in centrally located 4-star hotels with private facilities and daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L= Lunch, D=Dinner) including a special Welcome Dinner and Farewell Lunch
- A-reserve (or best available) tickets to 10 concerts, operas and performances
- Departure transfer if travelling on suggested flight
- Comprehensive sightseeing including local guides and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Lectures and talks with your tour leader throughout
- Comprehensive tour notes
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Portorage (1 piece per person) where available. Airport portorage NOT included.

## DO NOT INCLUDE

- Transfer on arrival in London
- Drinks with meals, except Welcome and Farewell Meals
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, taxis etc.
- Airport portorage
- Travel insurance

## YOUR HOTELS ...



May Fair Hotel  
London  
★★★★★



Ashdown Park  
Near Glyndebourne  
★★★★★



The Arden Hotel  
Stratford upon Avon  
★★★★★



Barcelo Carlton Hotel  
Edinburgh  
★★★★★

NB: Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted.

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

### How to Book

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit.

### Deposit/Final Payments

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payments are accepted in cash and by cheque, bank transfer, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

### Cancellation & Refunds

a) Cancellation by You - Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us - We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

### Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

### Fitness and Participation

For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 2-3 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark/disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

If you (or we) have any doubts about your ability to participate in your chosen tour, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require a doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour and provide you with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

### Terms & Conditions

You can find the full terms & conditions on the Renaissance Tours booking form. They can also be found at [www.renaissance-tours.com.au](http://www.renaissance-tours.com.au) or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.



Edinburgh Castle from Princes Castle



Royal Yacht Britannia



*Front image: BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall  
Back image: Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford upon Avon*



**TOUR ARRANGEMENTS BY –  
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Your travel agent is –