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THE ARTS

OPERA Factory Zurich pays its first visit to Britain this month to present its highly acclaimed production of "Acis and Galatea".

The Handel pastoral has an English libretto by John Gay and will be presented at the Riverside Studios, Hammersmith, on August 13, 15, 16 and 17.

Opera Factory was formed by actor/singer/director David Freeman in Sydney in 1973 and subsequently transferred to Zurich in collaboration with Zurich-residing conductor/violinist Brenton Langbein.

The company aims to bring opera to a wider public and help to establish young singers in the formative stages of their careers.

Operas are presented in simple and inexpensive stagings, using a minimum of scenery and using improvisation and mime to elucidate and deepen the narrative.

"Acis and Galatea" combines elements of the stylised shepherd play with commedia dell'arte methods of improvisation and subtle realism.

Also being staged in London



Opera Factory Zurich present "Acis and Galatea" for British audiences

this month is Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale" with libretto by renowned Swiss writer Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz.

The origins of the work, which is narrated, acted and danced, lie in Stravinsky's enforced stay in Switzerland during the First World War.

Based on a folk tale, it tells of a young soldier and his violin

which is coveted by the devil.

The Michael Kustow production is being staged at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, on August 15, 16 and 17.

Incidentally the sets and costumes for the first performance of the piece were designed by Swiss painter Rene Auberjonois, father of journalist Ferdinand Auberjonois, a

prominent member of the Swiss community in London.

Swiss ballerina Manola Asensio makes a welcome return to London this month too.

Fresh from her recent tour of the Soviet Union, she will perform leading roles in the London Festival Ballet's season at the Royal Festival Hall (August 12 to September 4).

Coming events

Until Saturday, September 27: Works by Max Bill, Le Corbusier and Sophie Täuber-Arp are presented in an exhibition "Abstraction 1910-1940" at Annelly Juda Fine Art, London. Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 1pm.

Wednesday, August 13 (and 15, 16 and 17): The Opera Factory Zurich present Hänel's opera "Acis and Galatea". Riverside Studios, 7.30pm.

Tuesday, August 12 to Thursday, September 4: Manola Asensio performs leading roles in London Festival Ballet's season at the Royal Festival Hall. 7.30pm (also Saturdays at 3pm).

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 15, 16 and 17: Michael Kustow's production of the "Soldier's Tale" by Igor Stravinsky with libretto by Swiss writer C.-F. Ramuz and new English version by Michael Kustow. Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. Friday at 7.45pm, Saturday at 7.15pm

and Sunday at 3pm.

Thursday, August 15: Tamas Vasary, piano, plays Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in. Prom 28 with London Philharmonic Orchestra. Royal Albert Hall, 7.30pm.

Sunday, August 17: Martha Argerich, piano, is the soloist in a concert given by the Philharmonia Orchestra (works by Beethoven). Edinburgh Festival — Usher Hall, 8pm.

Tuesday, August 19: Martha Argerich plays works by Brahms, Shostakovich, Scriabin and Chopin. Edinburgh Festival — Freemason's Hall, 11am.

Thursday and Friday, August 21 and 22: Maximilian Schell is the narrator in the first performance of Marc Neikrug's "Through Roses". Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, 7.45pm.

Monday, September 8: The Choristers of Westminster Cathedral and the BBC Singers sing the Mass for double choir by Swiss composer F. Martin in Prom 52. Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, 9.30pm.

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