



For immediate release:

BYO appoints soprano and alumna Anna Patalong as Chief Executive



- **Consultant and acclaimed international soprano Anna Patalong to take over the running of British Youth Opera from April**
- **Anna Patalong will be the first Chief Executive to also have benefited from BYO's training, and brings the unique perspective of having a successful performing career**

British Youth Opera (BYO) are pleased to announce **Anna Patalong** as the organisation's new **Chief Executive**. Anna will take up her appointment from April on the departure of current Chief Executive **Nicola Candlish**. As Chief Executive, Anna will be lead on planning and delivering BYO's training programmes, including its flagship summer season. She'll also work on new initiatives to help young professionals build careers in opera and improve access routes into the industry.

Anna took part in BYO multiple times as a young singer between 2007 and 2010 before going on to a successful career as an international soprano. She has previously described her experiences with BYO as being like 'an apprenticeship to the opera world' and credits it for both building her career in opera and securing the funding that made her further training possible. In 2019 Anna returned to BYO as a development consultant, joining the organisation's senior management team and shaping its fundraising strategy.

Anna Patalong says:

'BYO is an organisation that I owe so much to and I can't wait to take over as Chief Executive. When I first took part in BYO it was well before I knew much about opera as an industry, let alone a career, and without BYO I suspect my career in opera may not have taken off in the way it did. It's that life-changing, career-focussing boost that I want to build on and expand at BYO, making a career in opera – as a singer, stage manager, costume assistant, designer or administrator – an accessible option for anyone who wants it.'

Anna graduated from Guildhall School of Music and Drama and soon garnered critical acclaim across Europe for what Opera Magazine described as her 'powerful and dark-hued soprano'. She made her debut at the Royal Opera in 2013 as a Blumenmädchen and has since appeared in major productions across Europe. In 2018 she co-founded SWAP'ra, an independent organisation that supports and advocates for change for women and parents in opera.

Anna will take over from Nicola Candlish, who has led BYO since 2019 and is to become Senior Manager of Performing Arts at Durham University.

BYO Chairman, **Richard Greenhalgh**, says:

'We're incredibly grateful to Nicola for her work with BYO. The last two years in particular have been difficult for everyone in the Arts, and we've been lucky to have her to navigate BYO's way through it.'

'Anna is already a familiar face around BYO and I've found her to have excellent and ambitious ideas for the organisation's future. That creative spark, coupled with her direct experience of working in the industry, will be an incredible asset to BYO. I am delighted by her appointment and, along with the whole BYO team, I am looking forward to working with her more.'

— Ends

Notes:

British Youth Opera is the UK's training opera company, offering opportunities to young professionals as they bridge the gap between education and careers in the opera industry. Every year BYO provides singers, directors, designers, conductors, répétiteurs, stage managers, costume assistants, hair and makeup technicians and administrators with the tools, experience and showcase opportunities they need to build their career in opera.

Photos

[Download here](#), credit Clara Molden

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