

William Kerley

Director



William Kerley is a freelance director of opera, theatre and film, writer and broadcaster. His extensive work in theatre includes award-winning world-premieres of new plays *Jump to Cow Heaven* by Gill Adams, starring Martin Freeman, and *The God Botherers* by Richard Bean, starring David Oyelowo and Sunetra Sarker at the Edinburgh Festival, Bush Theatre and Riverside Studios. In January 2020 his first feature film *The Krays – Mad Axeman* was released in UK and then in the USA "The London Mob". His new book "Driving Mr. C." was published in September 2021 and is available from the Amazon bookstore both as eBook and paperback.

He has worked as assistant and associate director at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre and the Almeida Theatre, and in opera at Glyndebourne Festival, Birmingham Opera Company, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Opera North, Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera. A renowned Britten specialist, he directed the 50th anniversary Aldeburgh Festival production of *Gloriana* at Snape Maltings. He also directed a new production of Britten's "Let's Make an Opera" at the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall, where the piece was premiered.

Between 2007 and 2012 he was Resident Stage Director at Maestro Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival Virginia, USA where he directed new productions of *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Beggar's Opera*, *Albert Herring* and *Turn of the Screw*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Carmen*, *Il Trittico*, *La Boheme* and double bills of *A Soldier's Tale/ Master Peter's Puppet Show* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges/Seven Deadly Sins* - all conducted by Maestro Maazel. His Castleton Festival productions have transferred to the Opera Company of Philadelphia to CAL Performances in Berkeley, California and to the Royal Opera House in Muscat, Oman. In 2009 his *Rape of Lucretia* played at Opera Philadelphia.

In 2011 he directed the Chinese premiere of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. In 2012 he directed a new production of *Carmen* at the Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari, Italy. Other productions include the world-premiere of Giorgio Battistelli's *The Embalmer* (Almeida Opera) and a new production of *La Fille du Regiment* (Opera Holland Park). His Guildhall double-bill of Hindemith's *Long Christmas Dinner* and Berkeley's *The Dinner Engagement* was nominated for a Royal Philharmonic Society Award. In 2013 he directed a new production of Thomas Ades' *Powder Her Face* at Opera Philadelphia and a new Britten Centenary production of *Paul Bunyan*

for British Youth Opera at the Peacock Theatre in London. In 2018 he returned to Opera Philadelphia to direct the first new US production of George Benjamin's *Written on Skin*.

He is deeply committed to working with young artists and has directed many productions for British Youth Opera and for the National Youth Theatre – where he was an associate director – and many productions at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland – and has done extensive work in drama schools Rose Bruford, Arts Ed, Oxford School of Drama and been a guest lecturer at Middlesex University. He is co-founder of Actiontrack Performance Company, an educational music-theatre registered charity. He has directed five productions for Cromarty Youth Opera, including the world-premiere of a new opera based on Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Mr Tod*. Plans include a new German production of Britten's *Noahs Flut* for Leipzig Youth Opera.

He has written for *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Telegraph* and the *Independent on Sunday* and was a regular contributor to John Peel's *Home Truths* programme for BBC Radio Four. He has worked in the literary departments of the National Theatre, Bush Theatre, Hampstead Theatre and Sonia Friedman Productions.