

PER BOYE HANSEN

Artistic Director of the National Theatre Opera and the State Opera

opera

***Verlobung im Traum* back at the “crime scene” and return of *Flammen* shortlisted for an opera Oscar**

This November of Musica non grata series offers an interesting confrontation of two opera titles, both composed in the same period and by composers with a similar fate. The National Moravian-Silesian Theatre will showcase Hans Krása's *Verlobung im Traum* at the State Opera on November 20 and Erwin Schulhoff's *Flammen*, a production newly nominated for the prestigious International Opera Awards will take the same stage for the two last reruns on November 17 and 26.

The opera *Verlobung im Traum* based on Dostoevsky's short story *Uncle's Dream* dates from 1928 to 1930. “It is not a realistic drama but its editing style, collage technique and its musical storytelling turns the opera into a surrealistic dream. Every character of this opera dreams, aims high but never arrives anywhere,” describes **Jiří Nekvasil**, the director of the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre and the stage director of this production. The drama deals with love, craftiness, intrigue and human envy and combines brilliantly music with the drama plot under constant supervision of F. M. Dostoevsky who actually watches the story unfold with clear interest.

The title was co-produced by the National Theatre and the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre as part of the Musica non grata series dedicated to the music of composers persecuted by National Socialists (NSDAP) in the 1930s and 1940s. The opera belongs to the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre's multi-year project entitled “Operas by Terežín Composers” which plans to present Viktor Ullmann's *Broken Jug (Der zerbrochene Krug)* and *The Emperor of Atlantis (Der Kaiser von Atlantis)* as well as Pavel Haas's *Charlatan* by 2024. “I enjoyed the performance immensely, it was playful and had a coherent directorial and musical concept,” commented **Jan Burian**, the General Director of the National Theatre on the *Verlobung im Traum* premiere in Ostrava in February. “This opera has numerous artistic meta-allusions that turn it into an entertaining piece both for connoisseurs of the artistic context as well as for wider audiences as it deals with morals of love, always topical regardless of the time period. The direction and general artistic concept refer to the modern and trendy nature of drama, dance, visual and performing arts from the 1930s and attempt at adapting those trends to the current audiences' language,” adds Jan Burian. *Verlobung im Traum* returns to the State opera, to the “crime scene” so to speak, because it was world

premiered at the then New German Theatre in May 1933. Hans Krása even won the Czechoslovak State Prize for his first operatic work and one of the reruns was broadcast by Czechoslovak Radio. The opera will be performed once in Prague at 7 pm on 20 November. Whereas Ostrava scheduled its last rerun of this season at the Antonín Dvořák's Theatre on 16 November. In the leading roles Lucie Hilscherová, Veronika Ravná, Pavol Kubáň, Jorge Garza and others. The orchestra of the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre is conducted by its Music Director **Marek Šedivý**. The opera is in German with Czech and English subtitles.

The return of Schulhoff's Flammen

Prague audiences will have a chance to enjoy this season's last two reruns of Erwin Schulhoff's *Flammen*, directed by Calixto Bieito and conducted by Jiří Rožeň. The staging is actually a 1932's reconstructed Czech version of the opera and has been greatly received by both Czech and international critics and was shortlisted for the International Opera Awards 2022 in the "Rediscovered Work" category this October. The State Opera stages *Flammen* on November 17 and 26 and on November 20 this extraordinary title is showcased at the Janáček – Brno 2022 festival hosted by the Janáček's Theatre in Brno. Starring in leading roles are Denys Pivnickiy, Tone Kummervold, Victoria Khoroshunova and Tamara Morozová. The opera is performed in Czech with German and English subtitles.

"These works came into being in a period characterized by curiosity of both audiences and composers. Let's get inspired by the spirit of our predecessors whose thoughts and ideas were clearly aimed towards the future", concludes **Per Boye Hansen**, the Artistic Director of the National Theatre Opera and the State Opera and the initiator of the *Musica non grata* project. More information on both titles and tickets are available on narodni-divadlo.cz and musicanongrata.cz. The *Musica non grata* project is carried out with the financial support of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Czech Republic.

Verlobung im Traum

Music: Hans Krása (1899–1944)

Libretto: Rudolf Fuchs (1890–1942) and Rudolf Thomas

Based on the novella *Uncle's Dream* by Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821–1881)

Czech translation Vlasta Reittererová

Production information: <https://bit.ly/3AcOSrq>

Premieres: 17 and 19 February 2022 at the Antonín Dvořák Theatre in Ostrava

Performance in Prague: 20 November 2022 at 7 p.m. at the State Opera

Photo gallery: <https://www.ndm.cz/cz/opera/predstaveni/5822-zasnuby-ve-snu-verlobung-im-traum/2022-11-16/72780/>

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Trailer: https://youtu.be/G6NkwC_TJ0

Creative Team

Conductor: Marek Šedivý

Direction: Jiří Nekvasil

Sets: Daniel Dvořák

Costumes: Marta Roszkopfová

Choreography: Jana Tomsová / Yago Catalinas Heredia

Chorus Master: Jurij Galatenko

Dramaturgy: Juraj Bajús

Cast

Marja Alexandrowna: Lucie Hilscherová

Zina, her daughter: Veronika Rovná

Nastassja, Maria's sister-in-law: Irena Parlov

Prince: Pavol Kubáň

Paul, a relative of the Prince: Jorge Garza

Barbara, bearer of news: Anita Jirovská

Sofja Petrowna: Hana Dobešová

Archivist of Mordasov: Roman Vlkovič

Theophil: Jiří Blažek / Jiří Dvořák

National Moravian-Silesian Theatre Chorus

National Moravian-Silesian Theatre Orchestra

Flammen

Music: Erwin Schulhoff (1894–1942)

Libretto: Karel Josef Beneš (1896–1969)

Reconstruction of the Czech libretto: Jitka Slavíková

Production information: <https://bit.ly/3UVcIA4>

Premiere on 12 June 2022 at the State Opera

November performance: 17 and 26 November 2022 at 7 p.m. at the State Opera, 20

November 2022 at 7 p.m. at the Janáček Theatre in Brně within Janáček – Brno 2022 Festival

Photo gallery

<https://datosr-images.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/11302/1656069957-plameny-flammen.zip>

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Trailer: <https://youtu.be/y2ln0c1iRZ8>

Production team

Conductor: Jiří Rožeň

Director: Calixto Bieito

Stage designer: Calixto Bieito, Anna-Sofia Kirsch

Costume designer: Barbora Maleninská

Lighting designer: Jan Dörner

Chorus master: Adolf Melichar

Dramaturge: Jitka Slavíková

Cast

Don Juan: Denys Pivnitskyi

La Morte (Death): Tone Kummervold

Donna Anna / Nun / Woman: Victoria Khoroshunova

Marguerite: Tamara Morozová

Commendatore: Jan Hnyk

Arlecchino: Michal Marhold

Pulcinella: Vít Šantora

Pantalone: Jaroslav Patočka

Don Juan's Father: Josef Palán

Shadows: Magdalena Heboussová / Tamara Morozová / Yukiko Kinjo / Stanislava Jirků /

Veronika Hajnová / Kateřina Jalovcová

State Opera Chorus

State Opera Chorus

With the National Theatre Opera Ballet under Jiří Hejna

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