

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt

BIANCA E FALLIERO

Melodramma in two acts by Gioachino Rossini

Libretto by Felice Romani, based on Antoine Vincent Arnault

Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Giuliano Carella

Director: Tilmann Köhler

Set Designer: Karoly Risz

Costume Designer: Susanne Uhl

Lighting Designer: Joachim Klein

Video: Marlene Blumert

Chorus Master: Tilman Michael

Dramaturge: Zsolt Horpácsy

Bianca: Heather Phillips

Falliero: Maria Ostroukhova / Beth Taylor (May 9th, 15th 2020)

Contareno: Bruce Sledge

Capellio: Kihwan Sim

Doge of Venice: Attila Mokus

A Chancellor / Officer / Court Attendant: Michael Petruccelli

Oper Frankfurt's Chorus and Extras

Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester

Bianca e Falliero, following on from *Otello* and *La gazzetta*, rounds off Oper Frankfurt's trio of **Gioachino Rossini** (1792-1868) operas this season. After his very successful *La gazza ladra* was performed for the first time at La Scala Milan in 1817 Rossini was commissioned to write another opera, for a princely sum. The hoped for success of *Bianca e Falliero* on December 26th 1819 failed to materialise, the reason why the work, in which Rossini again used melodies from other operas, was seldom performed afterwards and soon forgotten. The demands made on the singers was probably another contributing factor. His use of virtuoso colouratura this time was for dramatic effect, not purely vocal acrobatics. It was sometimes performed after the 1970s – with singers including Katia Ricciarelli and Marilyn Horne in Pesaro (1986) –, but never really found its footing, and is being staged in Frankfurt for the first time.

The story: The families of the two Venetian senators Capellio und Contareno have quarrelled for years. Capellio's marriage to Contareno's daughter Bianca should put an stop to this. Although the young woman loves General Falliero, she bends to her father's will. When Falliero finds out, he persuades his beloved to run away with him. Their escape is thwarted and the senator brings charges against the young man. Contareno, seeing a chance to get Falliero out of the way, signs his death warrant. Capellio refuses to endorse it. Moved by Bianca's testimony, he wants to make her happy. When Contareno withdraws his objections too, nothing stands in the lovers' way.

Leading the production is Italian conductor **Giuliano Carella**, who has been closely linked to Oper Frankfurt for many years, where he recently conducted concert performances of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* (2017/18). He conducts this production of *Bianca e Falliero* again at the 2020 Tirol Festival in Erl this summer. **Tilmann Köhler**, who started in straight theatre, is another welcome guest in Frankfurt, where he has directed several baroque operas. Five artists are making their debuts at Oper Frankfurt: American soprano **Heather Phillips** (Bianca), singing in Europe for the first time, whose recent engagements have included Konstanze in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at New Orleans Opera; the Russian mezzo-soprano **Maria Ostroukhova** (Falliero) recently sang the title role in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna and Opéra Nomade in Clermont-Ferrand; in the last two performances Falliero will be sung by the Scottish artist **Beth Taylor**, who sings the role again in Erl; American tenor **Bruce Sledge** (Contareno), who recently sang Bacchus in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Met and the Serbian baritone **Attila Mokus** (Doge of Venice). They are joined by Ensemble Members **Kihwan Sim** (Capellio) and **Michael Petruccelli**, a Member of the Opera Studio, in several smaller roles.

Premiere: Sunday April 5th 2020, at 18.00hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: April 9th, 12th (18.00hrs), 18th, 25th, May 3rd (18.00hrs), 9th, 15th 2020
Unless otherwise stated all performances begin at 19.00hrs

Tickets cost: € 15 to € 165 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Tickets can be obtained from the usual outlets, by telephone +49 (0)69 – 212 49 49 4 or online www.oper-frankfurt.de.

We do hope you might be able to publish this event. For further information, ordering photographs and reserving press tickets please contact Holger Engelhardt (Leitung Pressereferat) on +49 (0)69 – 212 46 727. His fax number is +49 (0)69 – 212 37 164 or you can email him on holger.engelhardt@buehnen-frankfurt.de