

Premiere

BORIS GODUNOV

Opera in 4 acts and a prologue by Modest P. Mussorgsky

Libretto by the composer

Based on Alexander S. Pushkin and Nikolai M. Karamsim

Orchestrated by Dmitri D. Shostakovich (1939/40)

Sung in Russian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Thomas Guggeis

Director: Keith Warner

Co-Director: Katharina Kastening

Set and Costume Designer: Kaspar Glarner

Video: Jorge Cousineau

Lighting Designer: John Bishop

Chorus and Children's Chorus Master: Álvaro Corral Matute

Dramaturge: Mareike Wink

Boris Godunov: Alexander Tsymbalyuk

Feodor: Karolina Makula

Xenia: Anna Nekhames

Xenia's Nurse: Judita Nagyová

Shuisky / Khrushchov: AJ Glueckert

Andrei Shchelkalov: Mikołaj Trąbka

Pimen: Andreas Bauer Kanabas

Grigori Otrepiev: Dmitry Golovnin

Marina Mnishek: Sofija Petrović

Rangoni: Thomas Faulkner

Warlaam: Inho Jeong

Missail: Peter Marsh

Innkeeper: Claudia Mahnke

Holy Fool / Bodyguard: Michael McCown

Mikititsch / Tchernikovskiy: Morgan-Andrew King

Mitjucha / Lawitzki: Frederic Jost

Countrywomen:

Magdalena Tomczuk, Chloe Robbins,

Grace Eunchoong Choi, Tiina Lönmark

Oper Frankfurt's Chorus, Children's Chorus and Extras; Frankfurt Opera and Museumsorchester

With generous support from the Frankfurt Patronatsverein – Sektion Oper

In 1825 **Alexander Pushkin**, regarded as Russia's national bard, wrote *Boris Godunov*, a political play about internal unrest in early 17th century Russia. **Modest Mussorgsky** (1839-1881), told about it by a friend, shortened Pushkin's drama and gave the loosely linked crowd and intimate scenes a national flavour with Russian folk and church music. When the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg's board rejected Mussorgsky's work (for reasons including a lack of female roles), the composer feverishly set about modifying it, changing the sequence of events and adding the crucial roles of Marina and Rangoni in the „Polish act“. But in 1882 censorship officials prevented this version, first performed in 1874, from becoming established too. After Mussorgsky's death **Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov** and **Dmitri Shostakovich** made their own orchestrations. The „original“ version was used for the last staging of the work in Frankfurt in 1996, conducted by Sylvain Cambreling and directed by Lluís Pasqual. Shostakovich's version is being used for Frankfurt's 2025 New Production.

The plot: Boris Godunov is crowned Tsar after the legitimate heir to the throne was apparently murdered. The monk Pimen names the ruler as Dimitri's murderer in his chronicles of Russian history. Pimen's remarks prompt the novice Grigori to lay claim to the throne as Dimitri, who survived the assassination attempt. Marina Mnishek, a power-hungry Polish Governor's daughter fuels his ambitions. While Boris struggles with shadows of the past the Bojars discuss how to stop the pretender in his tracks. But Boris' feelings of guilt get the better of him, and the „fake Dimitri“ is crowned Tsar.

General Music Director **Thomas Guggeis** tackles a very different work with *Boris Godunov*, after opening the season with a new *Così fan tutte*. Director **Keith Warner** has worked at Oper Frankfurt for many years, staging operas including *Peter Grimes* and a Weill / Orff *The Tsar has his Photograph Taken / Clever Woman* double bill, which returns later this season. Ukrainian bass **Alexander Tsymbalyuk** sings the title role, which he has sung at the Munich and Hamburg (his former home house) state operas. Other guests join **Members of the Ensemble, Opera Studio and Oper Frankfurt's Chorus**.

Premiere: Sunday November 2nd 2025, at 17hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: November 6th, 8th, 14th, 21st, 23rd, 26th 2025

All these performances begin at 17hrs.

Tickets cost: € 16 to € 155 (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.