

Premiere

## DON PASQUALE

Opera buffa in three acts by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Giovanni Domenico Ruffini and Gaetano Donizetti

Sung in Italian with German surtitles

Conductor: James Hendry / Simone Di Felice (November 7th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 21st, 24th 2020)

Director: Caterina Panti Liberovici

Set Designer: Sergio Mariotti

Costume Designer: Raphaela Rose

Choreography: Tommaso Rotella

Lighting Designer: Joachim Klein

Dramaturge: Deborah Einspieler

Don Pasquale: Donato Di Stefano / Simon Bailey (November 7th, 13th, 15th, 17th, 21st, 25th 2020)

Doctor Malatesta: Mikolaj Trąbka / Danylo Matviienko (November 7th, 11th, 13th, 15th, 18th, 24th 2020)

Ernesto: Francisco Brito / Michael Porter (November 7th, 11th, 13th, 15th, 18th, 24th 2020)

Norina: Florina Ilie / Simone Osborne (November 7th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 21st, 24th 2020)

A Notary: Pilgoo Kang

Oper Frankfurt's Extras

Frankfurt Opern- und Museumsorchester

A little more than half a month after the premiere of Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* (*The Maid-Mistress*; 1733), scheduled by Oper Frankfurt at short notice because of the corona situation, the house on Willy-Brandt-Platz now presents *Don Pasquale*, an opera with some similarities in content to the earlier work. **Gaetano Donizetti** (1797-1848) was living in France when he was commissioned to write an opera for the Théâtre Italien in Paris. He finished it in a matter of weeks. The premiere on January 3rd 1843 was an enormous success, which the operas that followed, written by this Bergamo born composer, could not live up to. There are four protagonists, whose characterisations – as with Pergolesi or in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) – are based on figures from Commedia dell'arte. The fast moving action is joined by Donizetti's music, whose melodic, colourful style – unusual for those days – was „spiced up“ with brass instruments.

The action: Wealthy Don Pasquale, despite his age, decides to get married at last, forbidding his nephew Ernesto to wed the penniless young widow Norina and threatening to disinherit him. Ernesto's friend Doctor Malatesta hatches a plan to bring Don Pasquale back to his senses: the doctor introduces the old man to his virtuous sister Sofronia, whose veil hides none other than Norina. Pasquale is delighted with the young woman and wants to marry her immediately. No sooner are the rings exchanged than Norina reveals her true nature, and makes the old man's life hell. In order to get rid of her as soon as possible he allows Ernesto to marry the woman he loves, even promising him a monthly allowance in the hope that the other woman might drive Sofronia out of the house. When Pasquale eventually finds out about the trick, he takes it in his stride. He gives the couple his blessing and promises to behave himself.

The young British conductor and coach **James Hendry** has been working as 1st Kapellmeister at the Staatstheater in Hannover since June 2020. He will conduct this Frankfurt production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* again when it goes to the Tirol Festival in Erl this winter. **Caterina Panti Liberovici**, a directors' assistant at Oper Frankfurt since 2009, directed her first opera, Fioravanti's *Le cantatrici villane* in the Bockenheimer Depot, for the company in 2016, which was followed by Rossini's *La gazetta* in 2020, in the same venue. She has directed often at the Festival Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte in Montepulciano and Teatro Regio in Turin. The title role in Donizetti's Opera was made for the Italian bass **Donato Di Stefano**, who has performed it on many international stages. He thrilled audiences in Frankfurt in 2019 as Geronte de Rivoir in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. The other roles – including the other cast under Kapellmeister **Simone Di Felice** – are being performed by current and former **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble and Opera Studio**. The only exception is the Canadian soprano **Simone Osborne**, who shares the role of Norina with the new Ensemble Member **Florina Ilie**. Simone Osborne sings Serpina in Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* for the company in October and will perform Norina again in Erl.

**Premiere:** Friday November 6th 2020, at 19.30hrs in the Bockenheimer Depot

**Further performances:** November 7th, 8th (18.00hrs), 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th (15.30hrs), 17th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 25th 2020

Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19.30hrs

**Tickets cost:** € 20 to € 80 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Tickets go on sale on the 7th of the month before the performance and can be obtained from the usual outlets, by telephone +49 (0)69 – 212 49 49 4 or online [www.oper-frankfurt.de](http://www.oper-frankfurt.de).

We hope you might be able to publish these dates. 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: [holger.engelhardt@buehnen-frankfurt.de](mailto:holger.engelhardt@buehnen-frankfurt.de).