

Premiere / First ever performance in Germany

FRANCESCA DA RIMINI

Dramma per musica in two acts by Saverio Mercadante

Libretto by Felice Romani

Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Ramón Tebar

Director: Hans Walter Richter

Set Designer: Johannes Leiacker

Costume Designer: Raphaela Rose

Lighting Designer: Jan Hartmann

Choreographer: Gabriel Wanka

Chorus Master: Tilman Michael

Dramaturge: Mareike Wink

Francesca: Jessica Pratt / Anna Nekhames (April 2nd, 8th 2023)

Paolo: Kelsey Lauritano

Lanciotto: Theo Lebow

Guido: Erik van Heyningen

Isaura: Karolina Bengtsson

Guelfo: Brian Michael Moore / Hyunjung Kim (April 2nd, 8th 2023)

Dancers: Gabriel Wanka, Annalisa Piccolo, Bernardo Ribeiro

Oper Frankfurt's Chorus; Frankfurt Opern- und Museumsorchester

A cooperation with the Tirol Festival Erl

The first performance in Germany of *Francesca da Rimini* by **Saverio Mercadante** (1795-1870) – a cooperation with the Tirol Festival in Erl – is taking place at Oper Frankfurt. After it was seen in Austria for the first time on December 28th 2022 the specialist magazine concerti wrote: „This rendition of Mercadante's gothic tale in Tirol was just sensational, thanks to **Hans Walter Richter's** poetic, powerful direction (...). Richter's production captures the panic-stricken, exaltation and epic breadth of the music with poetic force.“ The World Premiere of the work, completed in 1831 with a libretto by Felice Romani, took place 185 years later: at the 2016 Festival della Valle d'Itria in Martina Franca.

Francesca and Lanciotto were married for political reasons, but because Lanciotto was malformed his brother Paolo stood in for him during the ceremony, and he and Francesca fell in love. On her wedding night Francesca realises that Lanciotto is her husband, not Paolo. Later on Lanciotto returns from war victorious and finds Francesca and Paolo ensconced together reading a book. He threatens to kill them but Francesca's father Guido manages to thwart Lanciotto's plans for revenge, and Francesca enters a convent. Lanciotto takes them unawares again when they meet for the last time and threatens his rival with his sword. What Lanciotto in his fury had so mercilessly striven for now comes to pass ...

The Spanish conductor **Ramón Tebar** is working at Oper Frankfurt for the first time. In tandem to a busy concert career this Artistic Director of Opera Naples in Florida conducted Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires in the autumn of 2022. Hans Walter Richter's most recent production at Oper Frankfurt, where he has been working as a director's assistant since 2008, was Menotti's *The Medium*. Recent engagements have included Adam's *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau* in Erl and Lange's *Krieg. Stell dir vor, er wäre hier / War. Just imagine if it were here* at the Stadttheater in Gießen. The Australian soprano **Jessica Pratt**, in the title role, is making her debut at the house on Willy-Brandt-Platz, where she also can be heard in recital in May 2023. She started the season with Elvira (*I puritani*) in Bilbao, a role she sings at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, in concert. Other engagements have included Amina (*La sonnambula*) at the Teatro Real in Madrid and Opéra Royal de Wallonie in Liège and her signature role Lucia di Lammermoor in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Her Moscow born colleague **Anna Nekhames** sings the role here in April. A new Member of the Ensemble at Oper Frankfurt she recently sang the Queen of the Night and, as with some of the cast, took part in this production in Erl. New to the cast is the Japanese / American mezzo-soprano **Kelsey Lauritano** (Paolo), who left the Opera Studio to join the Ensemble in 2020/21 and **Brian Michael Moore** (Member of the Ensemble) and **Hyunjung Kim** (Member of the Opera Studio), who sing **Guelfo**. Repeating their roles in this production are Ensemble Members **Theo Lebow** (Lanciotto) and **Erik van Heyningen** (Guido) as well as **Karolina Bengtsson** (Isaura) from the Opera Studio.

Premiere: Sunday February 26th 2023, at 18hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: March 5th (18hrs), 11th, 15th, 18th, 25th, April 2nd (18hrs), 8th 2023

Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19 hrs

Tickets cost: € 16 to € 190 (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.