

Premiere

LA FORZA DEL DESTINO (THE FORCE OF DESTINY)

Opera in four acts by Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

based on the play *Don Álvaro o La fuerza del sino* (1835) by Ángel de Saaverda

Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Jader Bignamini / Gaetano Soliman (May 2019)

Director: Tobias Kratzer

Set and Costume Designer: Rainer Sellmaier

Video: Manuel Braun

Lighting Designer: Joachim Klein

Chorus Master: Tilman Michael

Dramaturge: Konrad Kuhn

Marchese di Calatrava / Padre Guardiano: Franz Josef Selig / Andreas Bauer Kanabas (May 2019)

Donna Leonora: Michelle Bradley

Don Carlo di Vargas: Christopher Maltman / Evez Abdulla (May 2019)

Don Alvaro: Hovhannes Ayvazyan / Arsen Soghomonyan (May 2019)

Preziosa: Tanja Ariane Baumgartner / Judita Nagyová (February 7th, 9th, 15th, May 2019)

Frau Melitone: Craig Colclough amongst others

Oper Frankfurt's Chorus and Extras; Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester

With generous support from the DZ Bank and the Frankfurt Patronatsverein – Sektion Oper

The World Premiere of the 1st edition of *La forza del destino* (*The Force of Destiny*) by **Giuseppe Verdi** (1813-1901) took place on November 10th 1862, a year later than planned, at the Bolshoi Theatre in St. Petersburg. The libretto for this four act opera, based on the play *Don Álvaro o La fuerza del sino* (1835) by Ángel de Saavedra, was written by Francesco Maria Piave. Apart from two concert performances at the Alte Oper in 2005, this is the first New Production in Frankfurt since 1974, now in the rarely performed unabridged Petersburg edition.

Leonora, Marchese di Calatrava's daughter, loves the mestizo Don Alvaro, against her father's will. They plan an elopement, during which the Marchese is killed by accident. Leonora's brother Don Carlo swears to find them and avenge his father's death. Alvaro, who became separated from Leonora while escaping, enlists, as does Carlo, under an assumed name as a captain in the army. He is wounded and asks his supposed friend to destroy a secret document if he dies. When Carlos, suspicious, establishes his comrade's true identity he challenges him to a duel, which is interrupted by a patrol who arrest Carlo. Alvaro, on the run again, enters a monastery, which Leonora had sought out before him. Fate strikes again: Carlo tracks Alvaro down and they fight near Leonora's hermitage. Carlo, fatally wounded, stabs his sister before he dies. Alvaro follows his beloved in death.

The opera is led by the Italian **Jader Bignamini**, who conducted Verdi's *Il trovatore* in Frankfurt in 2017/18. The director is Tobias Kratzer, back in Frankfurt after his extraordinary production of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine - Vasco da Gama* last season, who recently won the Faus Theatre Prize for his production of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* at the Staatstheater in Karlsruhe. The cast includes two international stars: the German bass **Franz-Josef Selig** (Marchese di Calatrava / Padre Guardiano) has made a name for himself predominantly in Wagner roles, which have included Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* in Frankfurt (2014/15), and English baritone **Christopher Maltman** (Don Carlo di Vargas), whose roles in Frankfurt have included Verdi's Simon Boccanegra (2014/15) and Montfort in *Les Vêpres siciliennes* (2017/18). **Michelle Bradley** (Leonora), on the brink of a very promising career, is singing in Frankfurt for the first time. This American soprano, who started off singing smaller roles at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, recently sang Verdi's Aida in Nancy. The Armenian tenor **Hovhannes Ayvazyan** (Don Alvaro), who performs regularly at places including the Mariinski Theatre in St. Petersburg, is making his debut in Frankfurt, as is the American bass-baritone **Craig Colclough** (Fra Melitone); He sang Verdi's Falstaff in Antwerp in 2017/18. Led by **Tanja Ariane Baumgartner** (Preziosa), the other roles are sung by **Members of the Ensemble and Opera Studio**. There are changes in the cast for the performances in May 2019.

Premiere: Sunday January 27th 2019, at 18.00hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: January 31st, February 3rd (18.00hrs), 7th, 9th, 15th, 17th (15.30hrs; with free child minding for those aged between 3 and 9), 23rd, 28th, May 18th, 24th, 26th (15.30hrs; with free child minding for those aged between 3 and 9) 2019
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.

I 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