

Premiere

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

A Japanese Tragedy in two acts by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Antonello Manacorda

Director: R.B. Schlather

Set Designer: Johannes Leiacker

Costume Designer: Doey Lüthi

Lighting Designer: Olaf Winter

Choreography: Sonoko Kamimura

Chorus Master: Álvaro Corral Matute

Dramaturge: Konrad Kuhn

Cio-Cio-San, called Butterfly: Heather Engebretson / Marjukka Tepponen (June 30th, July 3rd 2022)

Suzuki: Kelsey Lauritano / Zanda Švėde (July 2022)

Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton: Evan LeRoy Johnson

Consul Sharpless: Domen Križaj / N.N. (July 2022)

Goro, Marriage broker: Hans-Jürgen Lazar / Peter Marsh (June 30th, July 9th 2022) and others

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

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

After the World Premiere of *Tosca* in Rome in 1900 **Giacomo Puccini** (1858-1924) got to know David Belasco's successful play *Madame Butterfly* while spending time in London. Although he couldn't understand a word of English Puccini was gripped by this „Japanese Tragedy“, and the story for his next opera was found. Another reason Puccini was taken with it might have been audience's enthusiasm for exotic subject matters in those days. His trusty librettists Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica wrote the words which he set to music with his usual wealth of melodies, combined with some original Japanese sounds, including the national anthem. The World Premiere took place on February 17th 1904 at La Scala Milan, but was poorly received. *Madame Butterfly* only took on the form we know today during the course of three later editions (1904, 1905 and 1906), turning it into one of the best known operas in the world. The last production in Frankfurt was directed by Christof Nel in 2001 in a set designed by Jens Kilian.

American Navy Lieutenant Pinkerton falls in love with young Cio-Cio-San, known as Butterfly, while stationed in Japan. In the knowledge that he's going to marry an American woman when he goes home, he ties the knot with the young Japanese girl. He ignores his friend Consul Sharpless's warnings that Butterfly is taking their vows seriously. Pinkerton returns from the USA three years later and Butterfly – now mother of his son – is waiting for him full of longing. When Pinkerton's ship finally docks in Nagasaki, the young woman thinks her dreams are coming true. When she finds out that her beloveds only come to take her child, she kills herself.

Conductor of this new production is **Antonello Manacorda**, Artistic Director of the Kammerakademie in Potsdam since 2010. This Italian musician made his debut at Oper Frankfurt in 2016/17 with Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, followed by Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine – Vasco da Gama* in 2017/18. Plans this season include Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Vienna State Opera and he conducts *Madama Butterfly* at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich after this production in Frankfurt. The Chinese-American soprano **Heather Engebretson** (Butterfly) appeared at Oper Frankfurt for the first time in 2020/21 as Sophie in Massenet's *Werther* and Countess Almaviva (role debut) in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, returning in 2021/22 for the Goose Girl in Humperdinck's *Königskinder*. **Evan LeRoy Johnson** (Pinkerton) made his debut at Oper Frankfurt in 2018/19, as Don José in Bizet's *Carmen*. This American tenor's roles this season include Macduff in Verdi's *Macbeth* and an Italian Singer in Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich. Led by **Kelsey Lauritano** (Suzuki), **Domen Križaj** (Sharpless) and **Hans-Jürgen Lazar** (Goro) nearly all the other roles are sung by **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble, Opera Studio and Chorus**. The Finnish soprano **Marjukka Tepponen** sings the title role (and makes her house debut) on July 30th and July 3rd instead of Heather Engebretson.

Premiere: Sunday May 22nd 2022, at 18.00hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: May 26th, (18.00hrs), June 4th, 6th (18.00hrs), 10th, 16th (18.00hrs), 30th, July 3rd (15.30hrs), 9th, 16th 2022

Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19.00hrs

Tickets cost: € 15 to € 182 (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.