

230<sup>th</sup> season  
Wednesday 24 October 2012

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Modest Musorgsky  
**BORIS GODUNOV**

Opera in seven scenes (1869 version)

Libretto by the composer after the eponymous tragedy by Alexander Pushkin and Nikolai Karamzin's *History of the Russian State*

Conductor: **Pavel Smelkov**

Musical Director: **Valery Gergiev**

Stage Director: **Graham Vick**

Production Designer: **Stuart Nunn**

Lighting Designer: **Giuseppe di Iorio**

Principal Chorus Master: **Andrei Petrenko**

Musical Preparation: **Irina Soboleva**

Chorus Masters: **Pavel Petrenko, Leonid Teplyakov**

Concert Mistresses: **Marina Yevseyeva,**

**Oxana Klevtsova, Larisa Larionova**

Children's Chorus Master: **Dmitry Ralko**

Assistant Stage Directors: **Irina Kosheleva, Mikhail Smirnov**

*Co-production with the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden*



General Sponsor of the production

Partner of the Mariinsky Theatre



Stage Manager: **Irina Arsenieva**

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*Performance running time: 2 hours 30 minutes  
There will be no interval*

CAST:

<i>Boris Godunov</i>	<b>Nikolai Putilin</b>
<i>Fyodor, his son</i>	<b>Ivan Khudyakov</b>
<i>Xenia, his daughter</i>	<b>Elena Zheleznyakova</b> (debut)
<i>Xenia's nurse</i>	<b>Nadezhda Vasilieva</b>
<i>Prince Vasily Shuisky</i>	<b>Alexei Steblyanko</b>
<i>Andrei Shchelkalov, clerk of the Duma</i>	<b>Alexander Gergalov</b>
<i>Pimen, a monk and chronicler</i>	<b>Alexander Morozov</b>
<i>Grigory Otrepiev, a monk</i>	<b>Sergei Skorokhodov</b> (debut)
<i>Vagabonds:</i>	
<i>Varlaam</i>	<b>Alexei Tanovitski</b>
<i>Missail</i>	<b>Andrei Zorin</b>
<i>Hostess of the Inn</i>	<b>Elena Vitman</b>
<i>The Simpleton</i>	<b>Dmitry Voropaev</b>
<i>Nikitich</i>	<b>Grigory Karasev</b>
<i>Bailiff</i>	<b>Grigory Karasev</b>
<i>Mityukha</i>	<b>Nikolai Kamensky</b> (debut)
<i>Boyar in Attendance</i>	<b>Andrei Zorin</b>
<i>Men</i>	<b>Viktor Vikhrov</b> <b>Vyacheslav Lukhanin</b> <b>Anton Perminov</b>
<i>Women</i>	<b>Lyudmila Polulyachshenko</b> <b>Yekaterina Tsenter</b>

Mariinsky Theatre Chorus, Children's Chorus and extras

English supertitles by Catherine Phillips

## SYNOPSIS OF THE OPERA

### Scene I

A courtyard of the Novodevichy Convent outside Moscow. Guards and police officers are goading the people to pray that Boris Godunov will accept the throne. The Duma clerk Shchelkalov comes out and informs the people that Boris refuses to accept it. The police officer announces the Boyar's order: "Be in the Kremlin tomorrow and await orders."

### Scene II

A square in the Moscow Kremlin. Boris' coronation in the Cathedral of the Assumption. Boris appears to the people amid bell-ringing. He appears afraid of the burden of power.

### Scene III

A cell in the Chudov Monastery. The monk Pimen is completing his chronicle of Russian history. The young novice Grigory wakes from a bad dream; for the third time now he has seen himself ascend a steep staircase and look down from a great height over Moscow before falling.

Grigory listens to the story of Pimen's earlier life, asking particularly about the death of Tsarevich Dmitry in Uglich. Pimen recounts the murder of the boy, implicating Boris. "He would have been the same age as you and have ruled," says Pimen. These words have a deep effect on Grigory, resulting in a brave and wild plan.

### Scene IV

An inn on the Lithuanian border. Having run away from the monastery, Grigory, accompanied by the two wandering monks Missail and Varlaam, intends to cross the border. Grigory learns from the hostess how to slip into Lithuania, avoiding the border guards.

Police officers arrive at the inn looking for a fugitive who poses a danger to Muscovy. Only Grigory can read the warrant. He reads that the novice Grigory has run away from the Chudov monastery and the Tsar has ordered his capture. The warrant contains a description. To save himself Grigory reads out a description of Varlaam. Varlaam seizes the warrant and, struggling, slowly reads out the imperial decree. Grigory is recognised. He escapes.

### Scene V

The Tsar's apartments in the Moscow Kremlin. Fyodor, Boris' son, is studying while his sister Xenia mourns the death of her fiancé. The Tsar enters. He tries to console his daughter and takes interest in his son's studies. All is not well with him. Boris knows that the people hate him and that he will be unable to attain their affection by any means.

Boris' reflections are interrupted by the arrival of Shuisky. It is with great schadenfreude that he informs Boris that a Pretender has appeared in Lithuania. The name of the Tsarevich Dmitry unsettles Boris.

Boris orders Shuisky to fortify the Lithuanian border. He asks the Prince to confirm the Tsarevich's death. Shuisky tells of the murder in detail. Surprised and terrified, Boris dismisses Shuisky. Alone with his conscience, he imagines he sees the ghost of the murdered child.

### **Scene VI**

Outside St Basil's Cathedral, Moscow. In poverty and hunger, the people await the end of the service. Inside the cathedral, Grigory is being denounced. Word is being spread that the Pretender's forces are approaching Moscow. Children outside the cathedral steal a kopeck from the Simpleton. He weeps. The Tsar and his entourage leave the cathedral. The people demand bread. The Tsar asks why the Simpleton is crying. "Some boys stole my kopeck, kill them like you had the young Tsarevich killed." Boris asks the Simpleton to pray for him. "I cannot pray for Tsar Herod."

### **Scene VII**

The Chamber of Facets in the Moscow Kremlin. A meeting of the Council of Boyars to debate what action to bring against the Pretender. The others are disturbed that Shuisky is not present. He arrives at last. His tale of Boris' sick visions is not believed. But Boris appears with the cry of "Be gone, be gone child!" He addresses the Boyars. Shuisky interrupts him, suggesting he listen to an old man who wishes to divulge a secret. Pimen enters. He tells the Tsar that in Uglich there has been a miracle: a blind man recovered his sight at the grave of Tsarevich Dmitry. Boris cannot take this shock. Sensing that death is near, he calls his son...  
To the tolling of bells, the dying Boris indicates Fyodor with the words "There is your Tsar..."