



ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE

THE ROYAL OPERA

Music Director

SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO *cvo*

Director of Opera

OLIVER MEARS

CARMEN

OPÉRA COMIQUE IN FOUR ACTS

Music **GEORGES BIZET**

Libretto **HENRI MEILHAC** and **LUDOVIC HALÉVY** after Prosper Mérimée's 1845 novella *Carmen*

Spoken text after **MEILHAC, HALÉVY** and **MÉRIMÉE**

Conductor **ANTONELLO MANACORDA**

Director **DAMIANO MICHIELETTO**

Set Designer **PAOLO FANTIN**

Costume Designer **CARLA TETI**

Lighting Designer **ALESSANDRO CARLETTI**

Dramaturg **ELISA ZANINOTTO**

ROYAL OPERA CHORUS

Chorus Director **WILLIAM SPAULDING**

ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Concert Master **MAGNUS JOHNSTON**

A co-production with

TEATRO REAL, MADRID and **LA SCALA, MILAN**

Exceptional philanthropic support from
Royal Opera House Principals

JULIA AND HANS RAUSING

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The Youth Opera Company is generously supported by **YVONNE AND BJARNE RIEBER** and **THE PETERS FAMILY FOUNDATION CIO**

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TUESDAY 2 APRIL 2024 AT 7PM

General rehearsal

APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

This performance will last about 3 hours and 10 minutes, including one interval.

ACT I 55 minutes

ACT II 45 minutes

INTERVAL 25 minutes

ACT III 40 minutes

ACT IV 20 minutes

LANGUAGE

Sung in French with English surtitles

GUIDANCE

Suitable for ages 8+

This production contains themes of a sexual nature and moderate violence.

CAST

Moralès **GRISHA MARTIROSYAN***

Micaëla **OLGA KULCHYNSKA**

Don José **PIOTR BECZALA**

Zuniga **BLAISE MALABA**

Carmen **AIGUL AKHMETSHINA**

Frasquita **SARAH DUFRESNE***

Mercédès **GABRIELÉ KUPŠYTĚ***

Escamillo **KOSTAS SMORIGINAS**

Dancaïro **PIERRE DOYEN**

Remendado **VINCENT ORDONNEAU**

Bohemian **DAWID KIMBERG**

Marchande d'oranges **LOUISE ARMIT**

Mother of Don José (Voiceover) **CAROLINE LENA OLSSON**

Soldiers, children, cigarette girls, smugglers

*Jette Parker Artist

Extra Chorus

Sopranos **JENNIFER COLEMAN, KATHRYN JENKIN,**

NATASHA PAGE, ELEANOR PENNELL-BRIGGS,

ALISON RAYNER, ELIZABETH ROBERTS,

VANESSA WOODFINE

Mezzo-sopranos **JEANETTE AGER, HYACINTH NICHOLLS,**

JENNIFER WESTWOOD

Tenors **PHILLIP BELL, JAMES GEER, RICHARD MONK**

Basses **GAVIN HORSLEY, JAMES QUILLIGAN**

Actors **RUTH ALFIE ADAMS, MARIKA DE SILVA,**

ANNA GUZAK, JAMIE FRANCIS, SULEIMAN SULEIMAN,

JOHN CRAGGS

Acting Children **ANASTASIYA HRISTOVA,**

EVELYN ROSE RATA, ALFIE SHARP

The Singing Children are members of the
YOUTH OPERA COMPANY

SYNOPSIS

ACT I THE SQUARE OF A SMALL TOWN

Groups of children are playing, while men and soldiers and women gather in the town square. Carmen enters. Only one man, the soldier Don José, seems not to notice her.

In fact, José is disturbed by Carmen, but the arrival of Micaëla, who brings greetings from his distant mother, diverts his thoughts. After Micaëla departs, a quarrel erupts among the women over Carmen's behaviour. She is arrested, but once left alone with Don José, she seduces him, persuading him to help her escape. Following mild resistance from José, Carmen has her handcuffs removed and she flees.

ACT II ABOUT A MONTH LATER IN A NIGHTCLUB

Carmen awaits José's release from prison, where he has been imprisoned for aiding her escape. The smugglers accompanying Carmen want her to join them in the illegal trade of weapons, but she, aware of José's release and grateful for the freedom he provided, decides to wait for him.

Amid general acclaim, the wealthy and famous bullfighter Escamillo enters. He flaunts his prowess, and after seeing Carmen, seeks to overcome her resistance.

José arrives, and Carmen tries to entice him to leave the army, spurred on by her accomplices. Despite José declaring his love for Carmen, at the sound of the soldiers' retreat he prepares to return to the barracks. Carmen is greatly disappointed, and when Captain Zuniga arrives, a brawl ensues between him and José, both men desiring to possess Carmen. The smugglers deal with the captain, and José is forced to permanently abandon his uniform and join them.

INTERVAL

ACT III THE SAME NIGHT

Don José reflects, with guilt and nostalgia, on his mother and the life he has abandoned. Carmen does a tarot card reading. She reveals the card representing death.

Don José violently clashes with Escamillo, who wishes to see Carmen again. But upon hearing about his mother's imminent death from Micaëla, José decides to go with her, threatening Carmen who challenges him.

ACT IV A FEW DAYS LATER

After dressing for his bullfight, Escamillo, accompanied by Carmen, is celebrated by the gathering crowd. Friends warn Carmen that Don José is lurking nearby. Carmen is unafraid and asserts her freedom. José kills her.

– Elisa Zaninotto

PRODUCTION

Music preparation **RICHARD HETHERINGTON, CHRISTOPHER WILLIS, ANDRÉ CALLEGARO*, PATRICK MILNE, MARK PACKWOOD, LEANNE SINGH-LEVETT**

Assistant Directors **DAN DOONER, ELEONORA GRAVAGNOLA, MATHILDA DU TILLIEUL MCNICOL**

Language Coaches **SONJA NERDRUM, HERVÉ GOFFINGS**

Set Design Assistant **GIANLUCA CATALDO**

Costume Design Assistant **GIULIA GIANNINO**

Movement Consultant **DENNI SAYERS**

Fight Arranger **LOCKHART OGILVIE**

*Jette Parker Artist

THE ROYAL OPERA

Patron **THE FORMER PRINCE OF WALES**

Music Director **SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO CVO**

Director of Opera **OLIVER MEARS**

Director of Casting **PETER MARIO KATONA**

Administrative Director **CORMAC SIMMS**

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