



ROYAL  
OPERA

**THE ROYAL OPERA**

Music Director  
**SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO**  
Director of Opera  
**OLIVER MEARS**

# ELEKTRA

**TRAGEDY IN ONE ACT**

Music **RICHARD STRAUSS**  
Libretto **HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL** by permission of  
Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd

Conductor **ANTONIO PAPPANO**

Director **CHRISTOF LOY**  
Designer **JOHANNES LEIACKER**  
Lighting Designer **OLAF WINTER**

**ROYAL OPERA CHORUS**  
Chorus Director **WILLIAM SPAULDING**

**ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE**  
Guest Concert Master **NATALIA LOMEIKO**

Exceptional philanthropic support from

Royal Opera House Principals  
**JULIA AND HANS RAUSING**

Season Principal  
**ALINE FORIEL-DESTETZET**

Generous philanthropic support from  
**MRS SUSAN A. OLDE OBE, AUD JEBSEN, THE FOYLE  
FOUNDATION, CHARLES HOLLOWAY, THE MAESTRO'S  
CIRCLE, THE FRIENDS OF COVENT GARDEN**  
and **THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF COVENT GARDEN**

Position of Music Director Maestro Antonio Pappano  
Generously supported by **MRS SUSAN A. OLDE OBE**

The role of Elektra is generously supported by  
**NICHOLAS AND SUZANNE PETERS**

**MONDAY 15 JANUARY 2024 AT 7.30PM**

The 118th performance by The Royal Opera at the Royal  
Opera House.

## APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

This performance will last for approximately 1 hour and 50  
minutes with no interval

## LANGUAGE

Sung in German with English surtitles

## GUIDANCE

Contains violent scenes, blood and sexual assault

## CAST

First Maid **NOA BEINART**  
Second Maid **VEENA AKAMA-MAKIA\***  
Third Maid **GABRIELÉ KUPŠYTĖ\***  
Fourth Maid **ELLA TAYLOR**  
Fifth Maid **VALENTINA PUSKÁS\***  
Overseer **LEE BISSET**  
Elektra **AUSRINE STUNDYTE** replaces **NINA STEMME**  
Chrysothemis **SARA JAKUBIAK**  
Klytämnestra **KARITA MATTILA**  
Confidante **MARIANNE COTTERILL**  
Trainbearer **AMANDA BALDWIN**  
Young Servant **MICHAEL GIBSON\***  
Old Servant **JEREMY WHITE**  
Orest **ŁUKASZ GOLIŃSKI**  
Orest's Companion **MICHAEL MOFIDIAN**  
Ägisth **CHARLES WORKMAN**  
Servants **AMY CATT, TAMSIN COOMBS, ANDREA HAZELL,  
KIERA LYNES, DEBORAH PEAKE-JONES, CARI SEARLE**

\*Jette Parker Artist

Actors

**ALEXANDER BALLINGER, ROSEANNA BELL,  
KRIS DILLON, RAMIN FARAHANI, NATHANAEL JAMES,  
SIMON JAYMES, BU KUNENE, FABRIZIO LLORIS,  
JAMES MONCKTON, EDUARDO NUNEZ, YASSET ROLDAN,  
JONATHAN SAVAGE, SAORLA WRIGHT**

**NINA STEMME** has withdrawn from tonight's performance  
of *Elektra* due to illness. The role of Elektra will be  
performed by **AUSRINE STUNDYTE**.

## PRODUCTION

Music preparation **CHRISTOPHER WILLIS, EDWARD  
REEVE\*, PATRICK MILNE**  
Assistant Directors **SILVIA AUREA DE STEFANO,  
ELEANOR BURKE\***  
Language Coach **FRANZISKA ROTH**  
Fight Director **RICH GITTINS**  
Costume Assistant **UTA BAATZ**

\*Jette Parker Artist



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

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## SYNOPSIS

Elektra was still a child when she witnessed the treacherous slaughter of her father, King Agamemnon, while he slept. It was her mother Klytämnestra and her mother's lover Ägisth who committed the murder.

Elektra's younger brother Orest was sent out of the country, as their mother feared that he would grow up to avenge what she had done. In the meantime, Klytämnestra has humiliated her daughter Elektra, who openly flaunts her hatred for her, by making her a maidservant. While Elektra's sister Chrysothemis is able to live a privileged life at court, her mother nevertheless keeps her away from men, fearing that she too could give birth to a potential avenger. Elektra herself has now spent countless years waiting for Orest to return and avenge their father's death.

The maids have nothing but contempt for the princess Elektra, who has been reduced to being a servant. When one of the maids speaks up for Elektra, she is immediately set upon.

In her solitude Elektra turns to her murdered father, addressing him, and yearning for him to take her in his arms. As if repeating a ritual, she promises him that the day of vengeance will come, and dreams of a blood bath in honour of Agamemnon.

Her sister Chrysothemis begs her to give up this delusion and abandon the idea of vengeance. Only then will they both be able to lead normal lives, and Chrysothemis can devote herself to love and a husband, and become a mother. Elektra despises her sister for this normative fantasy.

Klytämnestra demands to speak to Elektra: she has had a sleepless night and feels that only by talking to her daughter can she find peace of mind. She believes in rites, and in the need for a sacrificial victim to soothe her conscience. Elektra enjoys hearing how her mother agonises night after night, unable to sleep. Eventually Elektra explains to her that she, Klytämnestra, is the sacrificial victim that must be slaughtered, and gloatingly describes every detail of her mother's imminent murder.

Just as Elektra is exulting, Klytämnestra receives news that Orest has been killed in a horrible accident. A shocked Chrysothemis explains to her sister that he was dragged to death by his own horses. But Elektra allows herself no time to grieve. She tries to persuade – or rather, force – Chrysothemis to murder her own mother and Ägisth that very night. Horrified, Chrysothemis, who desires love, not hatred, runs off.

As Elektra sets about digging up the axe her father was murdered with in order to exact vengeance, she suddenly finds herself facing an unknown man. The two eventually recognise one another: he is her brother Orest, who has had word of his death falsely circulated to ease his path to Klytämnestra. Now he is here, with a Companion, to finally achieve the vengeance that Elektra has so long been waiting for. Orest and his Companion are let into the house and shortly afterwards the panic-stricken screams of the dying Klytämnestra can be heard.

Ägisth, who now spends his evenings away from his wife, then returns home, and Elektra herself leads him to the front door. The same murderous scenario is enacted and Ägisth is heard screaming as he is promptly executed by Orest.

Elektra's mission has been fulfilled.

– Christof Loy (translation: Kenneth Chalmers)

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## THE ROYAL OPERA

Patron **THE FORMER PRINCE OF WALES**

Music Director **SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO**

Director of Opera **OLIVER MEARS**

Director of Casting **PETER MARIO KATONA**

Administrative Director **CORMAC SIMMS**

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