



THE ROYAL OPERA

Music Director
SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO
Director of Opera
OLIVER MEARS

RIGOLETTO

OPERA IN THREE ACTS

Music **GIUSEPPE VERDI**
Libretto **FRANCESCO MARIA PIAVE** after Victor Hugo's play *Le roi s'amuse*

Conductor **JULIA JONES**

Director **OLIVER MEARS**
Revival Director **DANIELLE URBAS**
Set Designer **SIMON LIMA HOLDSWORTH**
Costume Designer **ILONA KARAS**
Lighting Designer **FABIANA PICCIOLI**
Movement Director **ANNA MORRISSEY**

Royal Opera Chorus
Chorus Director **WILLIAM SPAULDING**

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
Principal Guest Concert Master by arrangement with Trittico
VASKO VASSILEV

Exceptional philanthropic support from

Royal Opera House Principals
JULIA AND HANS RAUSING

Season Principal
ALINE FLORIEL-DESTEZET

Generous philanthropic support from
HUO FAMILY FOUNDATION, SIR MICK AND LADY BARBARA DAVIS, SANDRA AND ANTHONY GUTMAN and MELINDA AND DONALD QUINTIN

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

TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.30PM

General rehearsal

APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

The performance lasts about 2 hours and 40 minutes, including one interval.

ACT I 60 minutes

INTERVAL 25 minutes

ACT II 35 minutes

ACT III 40 minutes

LANGUAGE

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

GUIDANCE

Suitable for ages 12+

This production contains violence and implied sexual assault, and depictions of moderate sexual activity. There are flashing lights in Act III.

CAST

Duke of Mantua **STEFAN POP**
Rigoletto **AMARTUVSHIN ENKHBAT**
Gilda **PRETTY YENDE**
Sparafucile **GIANLUCA BURATTO**
Maddalena **RAMONA ZAHARIA**
Giovanna **VEENA AKAMA-MAKIA***
Count Monterone **FABRIZIO BEGGI**
Marullo **GRISHA MARTIROSYAN***
Matteo Borsa **MICHAEL GIBSON***
Count Ceprano **JAMIE WOOLLARD***
Countess Ceprano **AMANDA BALDWIN**
Page **LOUISE ARMIT**
Court Usher **NIGEL CLIFFE**

*Jette Parker Artist

Extra Chorus

ANDREW BUSHER, GABRIEL GOTTLIEB, GAVIN HORSLEY, JONATHAN WOOD, OLIVER GIBBS, PHILLIP BROWN, RICHARD MONK, SIMON BIAZECK, SIMON PREECE

Actors **JAMIE FRANCIS, SULEIMAN SULEIMAN, ADDIS WILLIAMS,**
Monterone's Daughter **SARAH EKHUHO-SHARMAN**

Dancers **EMILY ADAMS, CRISTINA CHINCHILLA, SOLEDAD DE LA HOZ, CHLOE DOWELL, AIMEE DULAKE, KEIKO HEWITT-TEALE, JESSIE JING,**

PRODUCTION

Music preparation **CHRISTOPHER WILLIS, SUSANNA STRANDERS, ANDRÉ CALLEGARO*, LADA VALESOVA, THOMAS PAYNE**

Assistant Director **SIMON IORIO**

Fight Director **KEV MCCURDY**

Assistant to the Movement Director **AIMEE DULAKE**

Language Coach **ALESSANDRA FASOLO**

*Jette Parker Artist



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

SCENE 1

The Duke of Mantua is hosting a party. He has seen a young woman in church and tells his associate Borsa that he intends to seduce her.

Count Ceprano is at the party with his wife Countess Ceprano. The Duke turns his attention to her in front of her jealous husband. Rigoletto mocks the Count. Another associate of the Duke, Marullo, announces that Rigoletto is keeping a mistress. The Duke and Rigoletto discuss how to deal with Ceprano. Should he be banished or beheaded? Ceprano, Marullo, Borsa and the other guests want to take revenge on Rigoletto.

The nobleman Monterone arrives at the palace. He is angry because the Duke seduced and abandoned his daughter. Rigoletto taunts him mercilessly, and the Duke orders Monterone's arrest. Monterone curses them both.

SCENE 2

Rigoletto is on his way home, disturbed by Monterone's curse. He meets Sparafucile, an assassin. Sparafucile has been watching the house and knows that Rigoletto keeps a woman there. Sparafucile surmises that Rigoletto must have a love rival, and so offers his services. Rigoletto sends him away. Full of self-hatred, Rigoletto ponders his similarities to Sparafucile.

It is not Rigoletto's mistress but his daughter, Gilda, who lives in the house. She greets him warmly but Rigoletto will answer none of her questions about her dead mother, or even tell her his own name. When she begs to go out into the city, he forbids her. He orders Giovanna, his servant, to watch over his daughter. They are overheard by the Duke, who is hiding in the shadows.

When Rigoletto leaves, Gilda feels guilty: she has not told her father about the man she saw in church (who is actually the Duke in disguise). The Duke pays Giovanna to leave him alone with Gilda. He declares his love for her and she reciprocates. He tells her he is only a poor student. Giovanna hears footsteps outside. She thinks it is Rigoletto coming home, and warns the Duke – he leaves and Gilda reflects on their meeting.

The footsteps belong to Marullo, Borsa, Ceprano and the other courtiers. They have come to capture the girl they believe to be Rigoletto's mistress.

Rigoletto appears. Marullo tells the others to be quiet. He tells Rigoletto they have come to kidnap Countess Ceprano from the palace across the street. They trick him into wearing a blindfold and holding a ladder. They break into Rigoletto's house and capture Gilda. Realizing he has been tricked, Rigoletto discovers the empty house. In anguish, he remembers Monterone's curse.

INTERVAL

ACT II

The Duke returned to see Gilda but the house was empty. Now back in his palace, he curses whoever has robbed him of his prize. His courtiers rush in to tell him about their exploits of the previous night. The Duke guesses that Rigoletto's 'mistress' and daughter are the same person. He goes to find Gilda.

Rigoletto arrives, searching for Gilda and soon realises that the Duke is already with his daughter. Rigoletto reveals that Gilda is his daughter. He attacks the courtiers in his efforts to reach her. When they stop him, he pleads with them to have pity on

him. Gilda appears and tells him everything that has happened between her and the man she now knows is the Duke.

Monterone is sent to prison. He despairs that his curse on the Duke failed. Rigoletto swears he will have revenge on the Duke.

ACT III

A month has passed, and Rigoletto has planned his revenge: he has hired Sparafucile to murder the Duke. He waits with Gilda outside Sparafucile's home. Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena, has lured the Duke there for the night. The Duke enters, again disguised (this time as a soldier), and asks Sparafucile for wine and for Maddalena.

Rigoletto forces Gilda to witness the Duke seducing Maddalena. Gilda is heartbroken. Rigoletto tells her to go home and, dressed in boy's clothes, to flee to Verona where he will join her the next day.

Sparafucile, unaware of the Duke's identity, asks the name of his victim. 'He is Crime,' answers Rigoletto, 'I am Punishment.'

Sparafucile shows the Duke to an upper room to wait for Maddalena. The Duke drifts off to sleep. A storm gathers. Maddalena has fallen for the Duke, and tries to persuade her brother to let him live. He refuses.

Gilda listens outside. Maddalena proposes a plan to kill Rigoletto when he returns with the money, and so spare the Duke's life. Sparafucile at last agrees to kill any traveller who comes to their door by midnight and present their body to Rigoletto instead.

Torn between her father and the man she loves, Gilda chooses to die herself, and knocks on the door. Sparafucile stabs Gilda. At midnight, Rigoletto returns to claim his prize. Sparafucile drags out a heavy sack and urges him to throw it into the river. Rigoletto gloats over the body and begins to pull it towards the river when he hears the Duke singing in the distance. He opens the sack to discover the dying Gilda, who begs him to forgive her. She dies, and Rigoletto recalls the curse of Monterone for the final time.

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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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