



Opera by Leoš Janáček

Libretto by Vincenc Červinka based on the play *The Storm* by Alexandre Ostrovski

First performed in 1921 at the National Theatre Brno

Last performed at the Grand Théâtre de Genève in 2002-2003

21, 25, 28 October and 1 November 2022 – 8pm

23 and 30 October 2022 – 3pm

CAST

Musical Director **Tomáš Netopil**

Stage Director **Tatjana Gürbaca**

Set Designer **Henrik Ahr**

Costume Designer **Barbara Drosihn**

Lighting Designer **Stefan Bolliger**

Movement **Bettina Auer**

Choir Director **Alan Woodbridge**

Katia Kabanova **Corinne Winters**

Boris Grigorjevič **Aleš Briscein**

Marfa Ignatěvna (Kabanicha) **Elena Zhidkova**

Tichon Ivanyč Kabanov **Magnus Vigilius**

Savěl Prokofjevič Dikój **Tómas Tómasson**

Váňa Kudrjaš **Sam Furness**

Varvara **Ena Pongrac**

Grand Théâtre de Genève choir

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

Coproduction with Deutsche Oper am Rhein Düsseldorf Duisburg

Sponsored by



Stage director Tatjana Gürbaca and soprano Corinne Winters are reunited once more on the stage of the Grand Théâtre for a production of *Katia Kabanova*, one of Janáček's most powerful pieces. The Russian soul, trapped between despair and dreams of freedom, conveyed through a musical score of stupefying beauty.

The Grand Théâtre's exploration of Leoš Janáček's operas continues this season with his searing tragedy *Katia Kabanova*, one of Janáček's most powerful pieces. Highly acclaimed German stage director Tatjana Gürbaca and soprano Corinne in the lead role, are re-united once more after *Jenůfa* last season. They are joined by conductor and principal guest conductor of the Czech Philharmonic, Tomáš Netopil, conducting the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

First performed in Brno in 1921, this opera is based on Alexandre Ostrovski's play *The Storm* and is proof of Janáček's enduring obsession with Russian literature. It opens a window onto the composer's soul, written in the white heat of his passion for Kamila Stösslová, the woman who became his muse during a final decade of untamed creativity. Unhappily married, living in Moravia, Janáček felt an empathetic bond with his heroine. Dreams of freedom and sultry nights on the River Volga direct Janáček's pen to write music of staggering beauty that swells like a wave through the orchestra – in stark contrast to the brutal world that drives Katia to drown herself.

Tatiana Gürbaca is fully invested in depicting this desperate quest for ecstasy and freedom, bringing together Aleš Briscein, returning to Geneva after his success in *War and Peace* last season, in the role of Boris, the impressive Russian mezzo-soprano Elena Zhidkova as the tremulous mother-in-law, and the Croatian mezzo Ena Pongrac, member of the Jeune Ensemble du Grand Théâtre and Welsh tenor Sam Furness, who play the young lovers, perfect for realising this dream of new beginnings.

This production will be performed again on 13 November as part of the Janáček Brno Festival, in his home town, the biggest festival dedicated to the composer.

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