



TEATRO
REGIO
TORINO

2023–2024 OPERA AND BALLET SEASON

IL TRITTICO

Il Tabarro – Suor Angelica – Gianni Schicchi

Passion, redemption, greed. Puccini probes the human soul.

A triptych of operatic treats.

Pinchas Steinberg takes the podium for this new staging by Tobias Kratzer

Teatro Regio, 21 June–4 July 2024

Il Trittico is the last production billed for the 2023–2024 Season, running from **Friday, 21 June to Thursday 4 July**. For this major work by Giacomo Puccini, we have chosen to stage the opera as the composer originally conceived it: as a three-part journey from darkness to light, the final effect of which is much more powerful than the mere sum of its parts. **General Manager Mathieu Jouvin** explains: «It is life in all its sweeping breadth. There is love, there is drama, there is even a funny side. Three different dimensions and essences of love come together in a *triptych* that powerfully captures not only love, but all the nuances of emotions and sentiments». We are greatly pleased to have back on the podium to conduct the Teatro Regio **Orchestra, Chorus, and Treble Choir Pinchas Steinberg**, the ideal conductor to take on the formidable challenges posed by the triptych and interpret best the unitary power of the three scores. Maestro **Ulisse Trabacchin** will be leading the Chorus, and **Claudio Fenoglio** the Treble Choir. The **new staging**—a co-production with Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie—is directed by **Tobias Kratzer**, whose modern interpretation of the three operas exalts their differences, while at the same time weaving connections through them. **Roberto Frontali** stars in *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, while **Elena Stikhina** and **Anna Maria Chiuri** give compelling voice to the intense characters of *Suor Angelica* and *zia principessa*.

This new production is brought to you by the **Friends of the Regio**, whom we thank for the constant support shown for the theatre, with the contribution of the Foundation's new sponsor, **Fineco Private Banking**.

«When we were presented the proposal to support the new production of *Il Trittico*, as part of the centenary celebrations for Puccini - says **Elsa Teresa Begnis, Chairwoman of the Friends of the Regio** - we were enthusiastic to accept for the exceptional importance of staging, in a single night, the three one-act operas. For over twelve years, the association has warmly and unwaveringly supported major projects and initiatives, including, in 2016, 120 years after its world premiere, *La bohème*, an emblematic title for the Teatro Regio and one of Puccini's most staged works».

Paolo Di Grazia, Deputy General Manager of Fineco Global Business, says: «We are proud to support this closing event for the Teatro Regio season, featuring a modern and innovative interpretation of Puccini's *Il Trittico*, in an approach that closely reflects the philosophy of Fineco. This partnership is part of our broader work in supporting culture throughout all of Italy, expressing the value of Fineco's approach to sustainability, based on the promotion of the cultural heritage of our nation, while at the same time offering people the opportunity to take part in events and experiences of great prestige».

After studying art history and philosophy in Munich and Bern, German-born director **Tobias Kratzer** trained in theatre and opera direction at Bavaria's August Everding Theatre Academy. In 2008 he submitted two projects under two pseudonyms for the Ring Award in Graz, an international competition for young directors, winning both first prize and special prizes under both names. Since then, he has built an acclaimed international reputation for himself. Key productions in his award-winning career include *Tannhäuser* at the Bayreuth Festival, *Fidelio* at the Royal Opera

House in Covent Garden, and *William Tell* at the Opéra de Lyon, which earned him the title of “Best Director of the Year” in 2020 from *Opernwelt*.

«There are fixed laws of theatre: to captivate, to surprise, and to move, or make people laugh». Puccini honoured this aesthetic code of his perfectly in his penultimate work, *Il Trittico*, bringing together into a single opera tragedy, spirituality, and comedy and demonstrating all his unique masterly skill in capturing such a variety of themes in music. The one-act opera was a popular feature of *fin-de-siècle* musical theatre, where the genre was considered very modern and adaptable to a multitude of contents and styles. By that time an acclaimed composer, Puccini was anxious to inject fresh life into his musical theatre, attentive as he was to contemporary artistic trends and eager to explore different aspects of life and the human condition. *Il Trittico* premiered on 14 December 1918 at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, presenting the brutal tragedy *Il Tabarro*, the intimate and lyrical *Suor Angelica*, and the comic *Gianni Schicchi*. Three different eras, three different settings, three different “colours”—contrasts that for Puccini underpinned the unity of the work.

Passion, tragedy, and social criticism mark *Il Tabarro*, a grim affair of jealousy and murder set on the banks of the Seine, a river laden with the sorrows and troubles of the vanquished, washing away their hopes and dreams. Michele and Giorgetta’s love has faded, and since the death of their son, they have drifted apart. As he grows older, Michele increasingly observes, in the exhausting work on his barge, the distress and desperation that surrounds him. To forget the sufferings of the past, Giorgetta clutches onto her dream of happiness, pursuing an adulterous affair with Luigi, a stevedore in her husband’s pay. Disaster strikes when Michele discovers their secret and kills his rival, to then show Giorgetta the dead body of her lover, hidden under the cloak that in happier times warmed their hearts. Starring baritone **Roberto Fontali** as Michele, soprano **Elena Stikhina** as Giorgetta, and tenor **Samuele Simoncini** as Luigi. Completing the cast are **Annunziata Vestri** (Frugola), **Roberto Covatta** (Tinca), **Gianfranco Montresor** (Talpa), **Lucrezia Drei** and **Matteo Mezzaro** (the young lovers), and resident Regio Ensemble soloist **Enrico Maria Piazza** (Song Seller).

Suor Angelica is the central opera of Puccini’s trilogy of works. A “monastic work,” as Puccini himself described it, it is a story of repressed passions, unfulfilled desires, and atonement. Set in a convent in the late 1600s, the composition is a tribute to female vocality, featuring a cast of only women. The libretto tells the sorry tale of Sister Angelica, a nun by punishment, after her banishment to a convent to atone for her sin of having given birth to an illegitimate child. When during a furious and dramatic confrontation with her aunt, the princess, Angelica learns of the death of her son, she determines to kill herself, trusting in a divine sign and finding sonorous comfort in a celestial chorus. Performing the title role of Sister Angelica is the soprano **Elena Stikhina**, with contralto **Anna Maria Chiuri** in the role of the Princess, her aunt. Alongside them, **Tineke Van Ingelgem** (the Nursing Sister and Mistress of the Novices), **Annunziata Vestri** (the Monitress), **Lucrezia Drei** (Sister Genovieffa), and **Monica Bacelli** (the Abbess). Completing the cast are **Annelies Kerstens** (Sister Osmina), **Emma Posman** (a Novice and First Lay Sister), and resident Regio Ensemble soloists **Ksenia Chubunova** (Sister Dolcina and Second Lay Sister) and **Irina Bogdanova** (First Alms Sister). Alternating in the role of Second Lay Sister and Second Sister will be **Daniela Valdenassi** (18) and **Lyudmyla Porvatova** (30, 2, 4); in the role of First Sister, **Caterina Borruso** (18) and **Jang Eun Young** (30, 2, 4); and in the role of Third Sister, **M. Lourdes R. Martins** (18) and **Laura Lanfranchi** (30, 2, 4).

The most popular of the three operas making up *Il Trittico* has always been *Gianni Schicchi*, a comedy inspired by an episode from the *Inferno* in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. Before composing the work, Puccini had never scored a comic opera, though his previous operas had featured several characters portrayed with humoristic malice. Puccini would use the same humour in *Gianni Schicchi* to portray a whole series of characters. A feature of the opera is the almost constant presence of a sort of chamber chorus, made up of the family members of the late Buoso Donati, who have come together to mourn the deceased. Their hypocritical weeping over the old man’s death abruptly ceases when they learn that he has left his fortune to charity. Buoso’s nephew, Rinuccio, suggests they ask advice from the shrewd Gianni Schicchi, the father of his fiancé, Lauretta. When he arrives, Schicchi immediately orders the body to be moved to another room and then takes his place on the death bed, disguised as Buoso, and sends for a notary to dictate a new will. One by one, Donati’s relatives seek to bribe Schicchi to obtain the most treasured of the deceased’s possessions, but in the end they realize his ruse when he bequeaths those possessions to himself. Fearing punishment if found to have been accomplices to the trick, Buoso’s relatives withdraw without protest. Ultimately, Schicchi’s deceit was for a good cause, as all the possessions will go to his daughter and Rinuccio when they marry. **Roberto Fontali** performs the title role of Gianni Schicchi, with **Lucrezia Drei** as Lauretta, **Elena Zilio** as Zita, and **Matteo Mezzaro** as Rinuccio. Completing the cast are: **Roberto Covatta** (Gherardo), **Irina Bogdanova** (Nella), **Tyler Zimmerman** (Betto), **Gianfranco Montresor** (Simone), **Andres Cascante** (Marco) **Tineke Van Ingelgem**

(La Ciesca), and **Roberto Accurso** (Maestro Spinelloccio and Ser Amantio di Nicolao). Alternating in the role of Pinellino will be **Lorenzo Battagion** (18) and **Marco Sportelli** (30, 2, 4); in the role of Guccio, **Alessandro Agostinacchio** (18) and **Roberto Calamo** (30, 2, 4). **Riccardo Mattiotta** plays Buoso Donati. Soloists Irina Bogdanova, Tyler Zimmerman, and Andres Cascante are resident artists from the Regio Ensemble.

Tobias Kratzer preserves the original order of the three pieces, while weaving them together to form a narrative whole, like a circle with no end. The forty-four-year-old German director takes his inspiration from comic strips, using them in different ways for each of the operas, with elements of the other two pieces emerging in each. In *Il Tabarro*, the set is divided into four vignettes, like the page of a comic book, where black and white dominate against a blood-red sky. The title of the comic book, written in crimson letters, gives us the key: Paris is Sin City, the noir film by Franck Miller and Robert Rodriguez. In *Suor Angelica*, the set is emptied and cold, dominated by shades of blue. Comics become symbols of desire and sin when avidly leafed through by the nuns, as they read the graphic story of *Il Tabarro*. In the background, a huge screen shows the black and white images of a monastery. For *Gianni Schicchi*, Kratzer brings the audience into the scene, creating a backdrop of terraces from which the audience watches the story of the family, as though in a television studio where a reality show is being filmed—the same show Michele watches on his television screen. Buoso Donati hides away his will in the sleeve of the Sister Angelica album he is listening to before he dies.

Ludivine Petit recreates the production by Tobias Kratzer, with the sets and costumes designed by **Rainer Sellmaier** recreated by **Clara Hertel**. **Bern Purkrabek**'s lighting design for the show is recreated for the theatre by **Gianni Bertoli**. Featuring videos by **Manuel Braun**, assisted by editors **Jonas Dahl** and **Janic Bebi**, and by **Matthias Piro** as assistant video director.

The Under30 Preview will be staged on **Tuesday, 18 June at 7:30p.m.** All evening shows will commence at **7:30p.m. instead of 8p.m.**

The opera will be presented on **Wednesday, 12 June** at the **Piccolo Regio Puccini** at **6p.m.**, with free admission to the conference-concert led by **Susanna Franchi**.

BOX OFFICE AND INFORMATION

Tickets for *Il Trittico* are on sale at the Teatro Regio Box Office and online at www.teatroregio.torino.it

Teatro Regio Box Office

Piazza Castello 215, Turin | Tel. +39 011 8815241 / +39 011 8815242 | biglietteria@teatroregio.torino.it
Opening hours: Monday–Saturday, **11a.m. to 7p.m.**; Sunday, **10:30a.m. to 3:30p.m.**;
one hour before show times

For full information and updates: www.teatroregio.torino.it

Follow Teatro Regio on our social media channels.

Turin, 24 May 2024

FONDAZIONE TEATRO REGIO DI TORINO



Fondazione
Compagnia
di San Paolo



PRESS OFFICE

Teatro Regio, Media and Communications Dept. – Paola Giunti (Director), Sara Zago (Press Office)

Tel. +39 011.8815.239/730 – ufficiostampa@teatroregio.torino.it – giunti@teatroregio.torino.it – zago@teatroregio.torino.it – www.teatroregio.torino.it