

Scandinavian premiere of Nadia Boulanger's *La ville morte*
given by the Göteborg Opera on International Women's Day



Sunday 8 March, 18:00

International Women's Day

Göteborg Opera House, Gothenburg, Sweden

Boulanger *La ville morte* **SCANDINAVIAN PREMIERE**

Anna-Maria Helsing conductor

Katarina Karnéus Hébé

Matilda Paulsson Anne

Natallia Salavei Amman

Markus Pettersson Léonard

Anton Ljungqvist Alexandre

Göteborg Opera presents **Nadia Boulanger's** only opera *La ville morte* on **International Women's Day**, Sunday 8 March, in the **second ever performance** of the great educator's work.

The Göteborg Opera Orchestra is conducted by **Anna-Maria Helsing** in a **concert performance** of the four-act *La ville morte*, Boulanger's most significant work, which was written in collaboration with pianist and mentor Raoul Pugno to a libretto by Gabriele D'Annunzio. The cast including **Katarina Karnéus** as Hébé, **Matilda Paulsson** as Anne, **Markus Pettersson** as Léonard and **Anton Ljungqvist** as Alexandre.

Boulanger's impressionistic work is a tragic tale of decadence and a weakness for antiquity. Archaeologists in Mycenae are searching for the royal tombs, including that of King Agamemnon, the motivator of Strauss' *Elektra* of the same year. A complex chain of events unravels into a tale of obsession, forbidden desire and irrationality with Léonard and his sister Hébé, his friend Alexandre and his friend's blind wife, Anne.

Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979) was one of the most influential teachers of the twentieth century: her students included Stravinsky, Britten, Poulenc, Copeland, Barenboim, Piazzolla and Glass. An accomplished composer herself, she won the Premier Second Grand Prix de Rome in 1908, taking a deliberate step back as a composer in favour of her prodigious younger sister, Lili Boulanger.

The first public performance of *La ville morte* was not given until 2005, with the work falling casualty to a series of misfortunes. Boulanger's opera was to have been staged at the Opéra-Comique in 1914, but was postponed due to the outbreak of World War I. The warehouse containing the orchestral parts was bombed in 1917, and promised performances under Albert Carré and Leonard Bernstein fell through in 1923 and 1946.

Göteborg Opera's performance is both the **Scandinavian premiere** and the **second ever performance** of the work. *La ville morte* is performed in the completed re-orchestration by **Mauro Bonifacio**, created for the premiere in 2005 in Siena, Italy.

Göteborg Opera

Gothenburg Opera House, a modern venue designed by Jan Izikowitz of Lund and Valentin, was opened in October 1994. Seating 1,300, it boasts a state-of-the-art acoustic enhanced by special egg-tempera acoustic paint (which used 6,000 eggs). There is even space for a hidden chorus in the circular lighting rig in the middle of the auditorium.



The building houses all the carpentry, metal and wood workshops for mounting full productions from the creation of the sets and props, to costumes, wigs and prosthetics with the latest environmentally-aware technology, including an ozone cabinet to clean delicate costumes. The orchestra, soloists, chorus and contemporary dance company perform opera, dance, and musicals, with a diverse programme allowing for audiences to experiment with all three art forms.

Gothenburg Opera strives to be efficient in all its operations when working with finite and renewable resources. It provides its employees with good environmental knowledge and works to actively reduce its impact on the environment in the following key areas:

- The Nordic Ecolabel restaurant endeavours wherever possible to use organic Fair Trade produce, and meat-free lunches are provided at least once a week to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Electricity consumption is taken from 100% renewable sources.
- Laundry providers and printers are Nordic Ecolabelled.
- Most of the lighting is LED, if not energy class B or better.
- Beehives on the roof of the Opera House – where there is a flower plantation – produce honey sold within the shop.
- 600 square meters of the roof (nearly 3 tennis courts) are covered in solar panels – supplying 107,000 kW per year.
- Sets and scenery are conceived as modular systems where the constituent parts can be reused multiple times.
- All waste is strictly sorted and all supplies are delivered in returnable crates, bottles and packaging.
- Genuine hair is used in wigs

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