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THIS SEASON'S HIGHLIGHT: STRAUSS' ELEKTRA AT THE STATE OPERA IN PRAGUE

Prague, 11 May 2016

The State Opera presents a new production of Richard Strauss' opera Elektra – under the baton of maestro Roland Boer and directed by the renowned British director Keith Warner. The main character is created by famous British soprano Susan Bullock who made her debut in this role with a great success at the Metropolitan Opera.

Extraordinary aspect of this production is highlighted by international cast: the role of Clytemnestra will be sung by prominent English singer Rosalind Plowright, Chrysothemis is sung by soprano Anna Gabler, Aigistha by tenor Richard Berkeley-Steele and Orestes by Miguelangelo Cavalcanti. The author of the set design is the notable Slovak stage designer Boris Kudlíčka who presented artistic conception of Strauss' Salome in the State Opera a year ago. The gala premiere is scheduled for June 10, 2016.

"The story is set in a contemporary museum of ancient history in which a young girl is acquainted with the life of the mythical Elektra. Tragedy of Agamemnon's daughter raises gradually long-suppressed memories and demons in her, now shown through the works of Sophocles. The audience becomes a witness to a personal and sincere attempt at self-knowledge, initiated by a very strong, albeit fictional sequence of events. The key question for us was whether we can face the truth if we decide not to hide from lies," explains director Keith Warner the conception of the work. *"The reason we set the story in the place of the contemporary minimalist museum is that it is full of the various historical artifacts that may serve very well as mechanisms enabling introspection,"* says set designer Boris Kudlíčka.

Musical arrangement was entrusted to the renowned German conductor Roland Boer. *"Elektra represents the pinnacle of Strauss's expressionist art. Its successful staging does not require only a mechanical knowledge of the score; it is also important to understand why the composer created the work and what he really meant to say. From a purely musical point of view, therefore, I believe that Elektra does not require much of personal interpretation. I will try my best to respect the composer's original intentions,"* says Roland Boer.

The leading singer Susan Bullock, winner of the British national award for contribution to opera, is famous thanks to her great rendition of Elektra. Roland Boer himself said about her: *"I have heard Susan in many roles, and I remember her singing in the opera Elektra in Frankfurt. She was wonderful, perfect, simply Elektra!"* The performance Elektra as the highlight of the season will be performed only five times – on 10, 14, 18, 22 and 25 June, 2016. The opera is co-produced with the San Francisco Opera (USA).

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