

SILVIA HRONCOVÁ

Director of the National Theatre Opera and State Opera

The National Theatre in Prague commemorates the 80th anniversary of the world premiere of Bohuslav Martinů's Juliette (The Key to Dreams) whose current production is now streamed on OperaVision

Prague, 2 March 2018

Juliette (The Key to Dreams) is one of Bohuslav Martinů's major operas. The composer wrote it in Paris in 1936 and 1937, to his own libretto, based on Georges Neveux's play. The masterpiece received its world premiere in Prague on 16 March 1938, with the production conducted by Václav Talich and directed by Jindřich Honzl, two distinguished Czech artistic figures of the first half of the 20th century. The anniversary is being commemorated with an exhibition on Václav Havel Square, which will last until 21 March. It features photos from the first night and the current production of Juliette, as well as fragments of the autograph score.

This week, on Saturday 3 March, the National Theatre in Prague joined the OperaVision project, which at 7pm will offer live streaming of a performance of Juliette (The Key to Dreams), thus affording opera lovers all over the world the opportunity to watch the production in comfort of their homes.

The National Theatre Opera will commemorate the anniversary with a gala performance of the opera on 16 March. What is more, for three months, from **3 March to 2 June 2018, the OperaVision website will stream the National Theatre production**, whose performance was recorded by Czech Television at the National Theatre within the Golden Prague international TV festival on 29 October 2017. With the National Theatre Orchestra conducted by Jaroslav Kyzlink, the music director of the National Theatre Opera, the lead roles are portrayed by Alžběta Poláčková (Juliette) and Peter Berger (Michel). The performance also features other Czech and Slovak soloists. The National Theatre Chorus is led by its chief choir master Pavel Vaněk. The sets have been designed by Zuzana Gilhuus and the costumes by Tomáš Kypta. The television production was directed by Blažena Hončarivová.

The internationally renowned TV director Brian Large, who to date has created more than 700 music and dance recordings, including of the productions staged at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Covent Garden in London, as well as the performances of the "Three Tenors" and television broadcasts of the New Year's concerts given by the Wiener Philharmoniker, saw a performance of Juliette in Prague. He said: "*... when Martinů's Juliette was played at the National Theatre, it was a bonus beyond belief. And it was actually here where Martinů's masterpiece, premiered in 1938, moved me beyond words. The performance was extraordinary, the orchestra played like gods. The conducting was great, the singing. I loved the production.*"

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I thought it was one of the most moving evenings I've had in many years. And if I am back in October ... I will be in the first row."

The OperaVision platform is co-ordinated by Opera Europa, the European association of opera companies and festivals, headed by Nicholas Payne: *"We are delighted to share this important piece of Czech culture with a wider audience via OperaVision. Thanks to the National Theatre Prague and its partnership with Czech Television, Juliette will gain new admirers across the world. OperaVision is about promoting the best of European opera internationally."*

OperaVision brings together 30 partners from 18 countries and invites audiences to travel and discover the diversity of opera wherever and whenever they want. The National Theatre in Prague joined the project this year.

Silvia Hroncová, the director of the National Theatre Opera and State Opera said: *"OperaVision is a truly extraordinary project. It affords music lovers the opportunity to watch opera productions from the current repertoire of numerous opera houses, and thus acquaint themselves with that which is being performed all over the world. Accordingly, the platform has responded to the rapid changes in the media environment. Juliette is the very first opera whose production the National Theatre has presented within OperaVision."*

With the performance of Juliette, the National Theatre Opera has launched a series of streaming of Czech operas on the prestigious internet platform. The next to be broadcast will be the gala performance of Bedřich Smetana's Libuše in October 2018.

OperaVision is one of the projects within the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

The performance of Juliette is available for streaming on demand from 3 March to 2 June 2018 here: <https://operavision.eu/en/library/performances/operas/juliette>

Or via youtube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzWFvRS2710&t=4075s>

Photographs from the production of Juliette (The Key to Dream) by Hana Smejkalová: <http://www.uschovna.cz/zasilka/WEPJV4W84BUTTA3W-JCA/8ZETS7C8RT>



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