

**SILVIA HRONCOVÁ**

Director of the National Theatre Opera and State Opera

## **The twentieth National Theatre production of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* – the very first staged by a woman**

**Prague, 15 January 2018**

**Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* is one of the most popular operas of all time. The piece has been always been much loved in Prague in particular. During Mozart's lifetime, its melodies were so cherished that they were sung not only on stage, but also in the streets of the city. For the first time in the history of the National Theatre, the opera has been undertaken by a woman - the renowned Czech director Magdalena Švecová. The National Theatre Orchestra and Chorus will be conducted by Italy's Enrico Dovico. The role of Figaro will be performed by Miloš Horák, Jan Štáva and František Zahradníček, Susanna will be portrayed by Yukiko Kinjo and Jana Sibera, the Countess by Marie Fajtová, Alžběta Poláčková and Jana Šrejma Kačírková, Count Almaviva by Jiří Hájek, Roman Janál and Adam Plachetka, our exclusive guest. Cherubino will be sung by Kateřina Jalovcová, Alžběta Vomáčková and Michaela Zajmi.**

*Le nozze di Figaro* is a brilliant opera buffa based on Pierre Beaumarchais's comedy *La Folle Journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro*. As the title of the play indicates, it depicts a mad day in the life of the servant Figaro and his beloved Susanna, the philandering Count Almaviva and his spouse. The intricate, entangled story of love in all its forms unfurls to Mozart's splendid music.

Magdalena Švecová will be the very first woman in the history of the National Theatre to direct a production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, thus presenting a female view of the forms and transformations of love, infidelity and jealousy, in what will be the 20th staging of the title by the National Theatre Opera.

She has approached the work with the utmost respect: "I haven't transferred the action to another time or milieu, our production will feature Rococo costumes, the stage will be lit by candles. We will employ all the means of Baroque theatre, yet we will try to imbue it with a sort of dreamy aspect, which will afford us the opportunity to apply a certain stylisation, as opera as a genre directly incites one to depict emotions. We have opted for 'live classic'. One of the major facets of our adaptation is work with space - the story will take place in a symbolical greenhouse, in which the characters are enclosed. That is perhaps why the emotions and passions among them boil more fervently."

The costume designer Kateřina Štefková has drawn inspiration from the Rococo style, and her creations reveal a great sense of detail and originality. The sets, designed by Andrej Ďurík, allow for the space to be amply varied. The mime artist

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and performer Tomsa Legierski has supervised the singers' movement, while the lighting designer Přemysl Janda has been entrusted with illumination, which includes candles and other sources.

In January 2019, the National Theatre Opera company is scheduled to perform the production within a tour of Japan.

The new National Theatre adaptation of *Le nozze di Figaro*, to be premiered on 1 February 2018, is part of the Mozart triptych at the Estates Theatre in the 2017/18 season, with the other two instalments being a performance of *Don Giovanni*, conducted by Plácido Domingo (27 October 2017), and a concert version of *La clemenza di Tito*, under the baton of Marc Minkowski (10 and 11 May 2018).

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's music continues to be a source of endless joy for the Prague audience. On 27 January 2018, the National Theatre Opera will again celebrate the anniversary of the composer's birth with the special annual **Mozart's Birthday concert**, which sold out long in advance. This year, it has been organised in collaboration with the Antonín Dvořák International Vocal Competition in Karlovy Vary and will present exceptionally talented young singers, laureates of the most significant Czech contest of this kind between 2015 and 2017.

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