



MODEST MUSSORGSKY
BORIS GODUNOV

1869 version



TSYMBALYUK PASTER KARES SKOROKHODOV
GOTHENBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
KENT NAGANO

MUSSORGSKY, Modest (1839–81)

Boris Godunov (1869 version)

Opera in seven scenes

Libretto by the composer, based on the drama by Alexander Pushkin

Boris Godunov	Alexander Tsymbalyuk <i>bass</i>
Prince Vasily Ivanovich Shuisky	Maxim Paster <i>tenor</i>
Pimen, a monk and chronicler	Mika Kares <i>bass</i>
Grigory, a novice [later 'The False Dimitry']	Sergei Skorokhodov <i>tenor</i>
and in order of appearance:	
Police officer; Border guard	Oleg Budaratskiy <i>bass</i>
Mityukha, a peasant	Anton Ljungqvist <i>bass-baritone</i>
Andrei Shchelkalov, secretary of the Boyars' council	Vasily Ladyuk <i>baritone</i>
Innkeeper	Okka von der Damerau <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Varlaam, a vagabond monk	Alexey Tikhomirov <i>bass</i>
Missail, a vagabond monk; A Boyar; Holy Fool	Boris Stepanov <i>tenor</i>
Xenia, daughter of Boris	Hanna Husáhr <i>soprano</i>
Fyodor, son of Boris	Johanna Rudström <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Nurse	Margarita Nekrasova <i>mezzo-soprano</i>

POPULACE, BOYARS, PILGRIMS:

Göteborg Opera Chorus (GöteborgsOperans Kör)

Tecwyn Evans *chorus-master*

Childrens Choir: **Brunnsbo Music Classes** (Brunnsbo Musikklasser)

Kicki Rosén Bejstam & Patrik Wirefeldt *chorus-masters*

Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra *Sara Trobäck leader*

Kent Nagano *conductor*

Scene 1: Boris is called to the throne	16'11
(The courtyard of the Novodevichy Monastery)	
1 What's up with you?	5'35
Nikitich (police officer), The Crowd, Mityukha	
2 For whom do you desert us?	1'24
The Crowd, Nikitich	
3 True-believers! The boyar is steadfast	2'35
Shchelkalov	
4 Glory to thee, Almighty Creator	6'37
Blind Pilgrims, The Crowd, Mityukha, Nikitich	
 Scene 2: The Coronation Scene	8'03
(A square in the Kremlin)	
5 Long live Tsar Boris Feodorovich!	4'20
Shuisky, The Crowd	
6 My soul is grieving	2'15
Boris	
7 Glory! Glory! Glory!	1'28
The Crowd	
 Scene 3: In Pimen's Cell	21'20
(A cell in the Chudov Monastery)	
8 One more, one final tale	4'24
Pimen	
9 That dream once more!	1'44
Grigory, Pimen	

Disc 1 (continued)

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| 10 | You have been awake and writing all night
Grigory, Pimen | 6'58 |
| 11 | Good father, I have often wanted
Grigory, Pimen | 5'16 |
| 12 | It's ringing for matins
Pimen, Monks and Novices, Grigory | 2'56 |
| | Scene 4: At the Inn
(An inn on the Lithuanian Border) | 16'04 |
| 13 | What can I offer you, reverend fathers?
Innkeeper, Missail, Varlaam, Grigory | 2'13 |
| 14 | Once upon a time in the city of Kazan
Varlaam | 2'01 |
| 15 | Why aren't you singing?
Varlaam, Grigory, Missail, Innkeeper | 4'37 |
| 16 | He rides on...
Vaarlam, Border Guard, Missail, Grigory, Innkeeper | 3'42 |
| 17 | I can read
Grigory, Border Guard, Varlaam, Missail | 3'29 |

Scene 5: Kremlin Scene

(The Tsar's private apartment)

24'34

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|----------|---|------|
| 1 | My beloved bridegroom
Xenia, Fyodor | 2'38 |
| 2 | Enough, my Tsarevna
The Nurse, Xenia, Boris, Fyodor | 5'28 |
| 3 | I've achieved the highest power
Boris | 4'17 |
| 4 | What do you want?
Boris, A Boyar, Shuisky, Fyodor | 4'31 |
| 5 | But no! Wait, wait a moment
Boris, Shuisky | 3'02 |
| 6 | Death does not frighten me
Shuisky, Boris | 4'35 |

Scene 6: In front of the Cathedral of St Basil the Blessed

11'10

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|----------|---|------|
| 7 | Is the mass over?
The Crowd, Mityukha | 3'44 |
| 8 | Trrrr... Tin hat
Street Urchins, The Holy Fool, The Crowd | 4'10 |
| 9 | Why is he crying?
Boris, The Holy Fool, Shuisky | 3'16 |

	Scene 7: The Death of Boris	26'12
	(The Granovitaya Palace in the Kremlin)	
10	Noble Boyars! Shchelkalov	2'47
11	Well then, let us now vote The Boyars	2'26
12	A pity that Prince Shuisky is not here The Boyars, Shuisky	3'27
13	Begone! Begone! Shuisky, Boris, Shchelkalov, The Boyars	2'53
14	A humble monk Pimen, Boris	2'51
15	Once, deep in sleep Pimen, Boris	2'24
16	Leave us... go away, everyone! Boris	4'04
17	O Lord! Lord! Look down Boris, Fyodor, Monks and Crowd	5'19

This is a recording of the original 1869 score, as published by Verlagsgruppe Hermann.

Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*

After Mikhail Glinka had composed the first Russian operas during the 1830s and 1840s, not much happened in the field of Russian opera until the next generation of composers reached maturity. They formed the group known as the 'Mighty Handful' or the 'new Russian school', which aimed to take Russian folk music as a starting point and wanted to bring song closer to spoken intonation. The undisputed class prefect for this group was Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov who had to support the other members, to orchestrate for them, and to complete their operas.

The most daring and progressive of the five composers was Modest Mussorgsky. He wrote the libretto to *Boris Godunov* himself based on Pushkin's drama. He completed the opera in 1869 but it was refused by the imperial theatre in St Petersburg. There was surely a great deal that would have astounded the direction at the theatre: Mussorgsky's unadorned style in combination with the realistic intonation from spoken Russian in the vocal parts were stylistically far in advance of their time. From a dramaturgical point of view there were also aspects that might be criticized. For example, the false Dimitry disappears entirely from the action just as soon as he has escaped from the inn on the Lithuanian border in scene 4, in spite of the fact that his actions provide a driving force for what happens in the remaining three scenes.

One of the most important reasons for the refusal lay in the fact that there was no love interest and no female principal. This caused Mussorgsky to add the so-called Polish scene between the fifth and sixth scenes. In the new scene, the false Dimitry falls in love with the Polish princess Marina Mniszek who helps him to gain power. Instead of the original seven scenes, the work was now divided between a prologue and four acts in which the Polish scene now became the third act. Mussorgsky also spiced the action with folk songs and children's songs for the two

children of the Tsar and their nurse, together with a randy ballad for the innkeeper's wife in the previous scene. A scene was also added after Boris's death in which the false Dimitry rides into Moscow and takes over the government. This version, too, was rejected but was ultimately performed in St Petersburg in 1874.

In spite of a degree of success, also when the work was performed at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow in 1888, the opera was sparingly performed elsewhere. After Mussorgsky's death, Rimsky-Korsakov undertook to revise and orchestrate the work. In places he transposed Boris's lines to a brighter register and he made the orchestration more traditional and colourful. He also mellowed a number of abrasive harmonies. The Rimsky-Korsakov version was performed for the first time in St Petersburg in 1896 and it was this version that took the opera out of Russia. Nowadays the Rimsky-Korsakov version has been consigned to the storerooms of the opera world. This is entirely justified, though one should remember that, had it not been for Rimsky Korsakov's rewrite, Mussorgsky's magnificent opera would not be as widely known and as frequently performed as it is today. Since the 1970s it is Mussorgsky's version from 1874 that is performed, with or without the Polish scene. In recent times, however, several opera houses have begun performing the more abrasive and most original version. It is the 'Ur-Boris', rejected in 1869, that forms the basis of this recording.

In *Boris Godunov*, Mussorgsky paints a remarkably raw portrait of a man in a position of power who is destroyed mentally during the course of the action. Boris appears in three grand scenes. First there is the coronation scene in which he hesitates in assuming the crown. Then he is shown in his study where Prince Shuisky tells him about the sudden appearance of Dimitry the Pretender which causes Boris to hallucinate. And, finally, there is the death scene in which Pimen, the monk, tells him about a miracle that took place on the little Dimitry's grave. Boris reacts with a gasping recitative that shifts from pure song to speech and to screams while

throughout, the orchestra illustrates the scene with ghostlike propinquity, as though drilling deep down into Boris's soul.

Mussorgsky himself suffered from mental illness and alcohol dependency and must reasonably have taken material for his portrayal of Boris from deep within his own soul. *Boris Godunov* is also a major Russian choral opera with a sustained folk-like idiom in which the Russian people and their historic sufferings provide the principal character. The work is like a giant fresco in which all classes of society and all types of character make themselves felt: from the suffering poor and the hypocritical mendicant friars to the conspiratorial Boyars at the very peak of society. All of them have their own way of adapting to the rapid political shifts, which ensures that the opera never loses its topicality.

In a mere three decades Mussorgsky moved a long way from Glinka's glossy historical narrative. Yet *Boris Godunov* remains a grand and magnificent work, though the grandiosity is darkened by corruption and mental suffering in a fashion that never ceases to fascinate.

Göran Gademan, dramaturge at the Göteborg Opera

Synopsis

Background:

In 1584, on his deathbed, Ivan the Terrible appoints a group of men – among them the boyars Boris Godunov and Vasily Shuisky – to guide his son and successor Fyodor Ivanovich. Weak and uninterested in politics, the new Tsar leaves the field open for Boris – who is also his brother-in-law – and he becomes the *de facto* ruler of Russia. The Tsar's young half-brother, Dimitry Ivanovich, is exiled with his mother shortly after Ivan's death, and sent to live in Uglich, north of Moscow. He

dies there in 1591 in suspicious circumstances. Seven years later Fyodor I dies in his turn, leaving no heir to the crown.

Scene 1

A crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the Novodevichy Monastery in Moscow, where Boris has gone into retreat following the death of the Tsar. A police officer is prompting the people to call for Boris to accept the crown and become the new Tsar. The crowd plays along, but when the officer turns his back they mock him and the proceedings. Shchelkalov, the secretary of the boyars' council, appears and tells the people of Boris's reluctance to become Tsar. At the same time a procession of blind pilgrims approaches from afar. As they pass on their way to the monastery they exhort the people to go and meet the Tsar, carrying icons. The police officer now transmits an order from the boyars to the crowd: they are to gather in the Kremlin the following morning.

Scene 2

A courtyard in the Kremlin, between the Cathedral of the Assumption and the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael. Boris has accepted the crown and a large crowd waits for the coronation to take place. Bells are pealing and Prince Shuisky and other boyars are calling on the crowd to praise the new Tsar. Boris appears on the cathedral porch. As he addresses the crowd he can't hide his anxiety and doubts, but collects himself as he invites those present to a great banquet.

Scene 3

Five years have passed. At night, in his cell in the Chudov monastery in Moscow, the monk Pimen is finishing his great chronicle of Russian history. In the cell is also Grigory, a young novice. He sleeps, but wakes up abruptly from a nightmare.

Calmed by Pimen, Grigory asks him to the story of the death of the young Dimitry twelve years earlier. Pimen, who was in Uglich at the time, states that Boris instigated the murder of the prince, and adds that had he not died, the prince would now have been the same age as Grigory. This plants an idea in Grigory's head, and as Pimen leaves the cell, he denounces Boris and predicts that he'll be punished.

Scene 4

Having stirred up unrest among his fellow monks, Grigory is now on the run from the monastery heading towards safety in Lithuania. On his way he has taken up with two vagabond monks, Varlaam and Missail. Arriving at an inn close to the border, he talks to the hostess while his companions are drinking. She tells him that the nearby border crossing is guarded following orders from Moscow, but mentions that there is an alternative route. Suddenly a patrol of border guards appears. They have a warrant for a runaway monk, and Grigory tricks them into believing that Vaarlam is the one they are looking for. When the truth is revealed, he manages to escape by jumping through the window.

Scene 5

In the Tsar's palace in the Kremlin. Boris's daughter Xenia is mourning the death of her intended bridegroom, and her nurse is trying to comforting her. Meanwhile, her brother Fyodor is studying a map of Russia. Boris enters, and also attempts to comfort Xenia. She leaves the chamber, and Boris encourages Fyodor to continue his studies in preparation for the day when he himself becomes Tsar. As he sits lost in thoughts about the misfortunes that have beset the country during his reign, Shuisky enters, bringing the news that a pretender to the crown has appeared in Lithuania. When Boris hears that the pretender goes under the name of Dimitry he is alarmed and orders the Western border to be closed. Shuisky, who twelve years earlier investigated

Prince Dimitry's death, vows to Boris that the dead boy really was the prince. He is dismissed by Boris, who remains alone, beset by visions of the dead child.

Scene 6

In the square before St Basil's Cathedral. Inside the cathedral a mass is held in remembrance of the dead Dimitry, and Grigory is publicly denounced. But the people gathered in the square are not convinced, and share rumours about the Pretender and his military successes as he marches on Moscow. In the meantime, some boys are bothering a holy fool and steal a coin from him. As Boris comes out into the square from the cathedral the crowd, which has just been damning him, asks him for alms and bread. Following their example, the holy fool asks him to kill the thieving boys, just like he once had Dimitry killed. Instead of having him arrested, Boris asks the fool to pray for him. The fool replies that he cannot pray for 'Tsar Herod'...

Scene 7

In the Kremlin the boyars' duma is holding an extraordinary session. The boyars are requested by Boris to pass their judgement on the Pretender, and they do so condemning him to torture followed by execution. Shuisky now enters the hall, and tells the assembly that Boris is being driven out of his mind by terrifying visions of the murdered Dimitry. He is followed by Boris, whose unbalanced behaviour seems to confirm Shuisky's story. As Boris regains a measure of control over himself, Shuisky now brings Pimen into the assembly. With Boris's permission, Pimen recounts how a blind old shepherd has had his eyesight restored after visiting the grave of Dimitry in Uglich. Hearing this, Boris collapses. He asks for his son to be brought to him, and appoints him the new Tsar. After giving Fyodor final advice about how to be a good and strong ruler, Boris dies.

Alexander Tsymbalyuk (Boris Godunov) is one of the youngest basses to have performed the title role in *Boris Godunov* on a major international stage (Bayerische Staatsoper). Prestigious opera houses at which he has appeared include the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Opéra National de Paris, Deutsche Staatsoper, Royal Opera House Covent Garden and Bolshoi Theatre. Tsymbalyuk has worked with conductors including Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Daniel Barenboim, Sir Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano and Gustavo Dudamel. In concert he has performed at venues such as the Vienna Konzertverein, Hollywood Bowl and the Barbican Centre in London.

Maxim Paster (Shuisky) made his début at the Bolshoi Theatre in 2003, and a year later joined the ensemble where he has performed leading roles in productions of *Macbeth*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème* and *Wozzeck*. He has appeared at a number of international opera houses, and has created the role of Shuisky with companies including the Teatro Comunale in Bologna, Bayerische Staatsoper, Opéra National de Paris Bastille, Teatro Municipal de Santiago and Semperoper Dresden, as well as at the Bolshoi.

Mika Kares (Pimen), one of today's most sought-after basses, appears in a repertoire spanning from Handel and Mozart to Verdi, Puccini and Wagner, with companies including the Bayerische and Wiener Staatsoper, Opéra Bastille, Teatro alla Scala and Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Riccardo Muti, Teodor Currentzis, Marc Minkowski, Zubin Mehta and Nikolaus Harnoncourt are some of the eminent conductors with whom he has worked. In addition, Kares has a broad concert repertoire including works by Beethoven, Mahler and Shostakovich, which he performs with ensembles such as the Wiener Philharmoniker and Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Sergei Skorokhodov (Grigory) began his operatic career in 2007, when he joined the Mariinsky Theatre. Under the baton of Valery Gergiev he has performed in prestigious venues such as the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Metropolitan Opera and Washington National Opera. Other conductors with whom he has worked include Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanov, Vladimir Jurowski, Edo de Waart, Kirill Petrenko, Michael Tilson Thomas and Plácido Domingo. Skorokhodov appears regularly at the Mariinsky and the Bolshoi Theatres and with companies such as the Bayerische Staatsoper, Chicago Lyric Opera and Teatro alla Scala.

Oleg Budaratskiy (Police Officer; Border Guard) is a member of the ensemble of the Ural Opera in Yekaterinburg where he has performed in a wide repertoire ranging from *Boris Godunov* and *Turandot* to *Three Sisters* by Péter Eötvös. Internationally he has appeared at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Opéra de Lyon, Greek National Opera, Salzburg Festival and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Anton Ljungqvist (Mityukha) graduated from the University College of Opera in Stockholm in 2011 and has since appeared in a wide range of roles with Swedish companies including the Wermland Opera, Göteborg Opera, Folkoperan and Malmö Opera, as well as Bergen National Opera in Norway. On the concert platform he has sung in works such as Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Bach's *St John Passion* and Mozart's Requiem.

Vasily Ladyuk (Schchelkalov) started his career as a soloist of the Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow in 2004 and since 2007 has been a guest soloist at the Bolshoi Theatre. His present day repertoire including over 20 operatic roles from bel canto to verismo, in which he has appeared on prestigious stages including the Mariinsky

Theatre, the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and Opéra National de Paris.

Okka von der Damerau (Innkeeper) graduated from the University of Music in Freiburg. A member of the ensemble of the Bayerische Staatsoper since 2010, she is invited to perform at prestigious opera houses including the Wiener Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin and Lyric Opera of Chicago. She has performed under conductors including Zubin Mehta, Kirill Petrenko, Antonio Pappano and Daniel Barenboim, and has appeared as soloist with orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra and Staatskapelle Berlin.

Alexey Tikhomirov (Varlaam) has been a principal soloist of the Helikon Opera in Moscow since 2006, but appears with companies including the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Opéra Marseille, Teatro Real Madrid and La Monnaie Brussels. A wide-ranging repertoire includes the roles of Boris, Pimen and Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*), Fasolt and Hunding (*The Ring*) and the Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*). Tikhomirov has appeared in opera and concert with conductors including Mikhail Pletnev, Vladimir Spivakov, Michail and Vladimir Jurowski and Riccardo Muti.

Boris Stepanov (Missail, A Boyar, Holy Fool) has been a member of the ensemble of the Mikhailovsky Theatre in St Petersburg since 2015, where he has appeared in roles such as Beppo (*I Pagliacci*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Young Gipsy (*Aleko*) and Tsar Berendey (*The Snow Maiden*). Other companies with which he has performed include the Bolshoi Theatre, Mariinsky Theatre, Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse, Grand Théâtre de Genève and Teatro Municipal de Santiago.

Hanna Husáhr (Xenia) made her operatic début in 2009 and has since appeared with companies such as the Royal Swedish Opera, Malmö Opera, Latvian National Opera and at the Drottningholm Court Theatre and the Royal Opera of Versailles. Sought-after as a concert singer, she has worked with conductors including Marc Minkowski, Leif Segerstam, Herbert Blomstedt and Daniel Harding. She studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Gothenburg Academy of Music and Drama and Stockholm Opera Studio.

Johanna Rudström (Fyodor) has appeared in a number of roles at the Royal Swedish Opera, including the title role in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Olga (*Eugene Onegin*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*) and Mercedes (*Carmen*). Internationally she had appeared at the Grand Théâtre de Genève as La Styliste in a production of Cherubini's *Medea*. She graduated in 2014 from the University College of Opera in Stockholm, and has also studied at the Malmö Academy of Music.

Margarita Nekrasova (Nurse) is a soloist of the Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow. She appears regularly with prestigious international companies, including the Opéra National de Lyon, Opernhaus Zürich, Staatsoper Berlin, Bayerische Staatsoper and Teatro alla Scala. Margarita Nekrasova has also performed at the festivals in Salzburg and Aix-en-Provence and at the BBC Proms, and works with renowned conductors including Vladimir Jurowski, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Muti, Eri Klas, Mariss Jansons, and Daniel Barenboim.

Brunnsbo Music Classes (BMC) is a choir school established in 1985. BMC enjoys close collaborations with institutions such as the Göteborg Opera, the Göteborg Wind Orchestra and Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and has taken part in several

TV broadcasts. Brunnsbo Music Classes perform on *Favoritsånger från Pippi, Emil och Madicken*, songs from the books by Astrid Lindgren, which is one of the most popular recordings for children in Sweden.

The **Göteborg Opera Chorus** consists of 46 singers and is one of three professional opera choirs in Sweden. It appears in opera, in concert, with smaller ensembles and sometimes also in musicals. It maintains a high artistic standard and commands a repertoire ranging from baroque and classical opera to romantic and contemporary works. As many operas are sung in the original language, language training is an essential part of the day-to-day work. All members of the Göteborg Opera Chorus have studied at either music colleges or opera colleges.

<https://en.opera.se/>

Founded in 1905, the **Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra** (Göteborgs Symfoniker) currently numbers 109 players. Chief conductor is Santtu-Matias Rouvali who took up the post in 2017. Rouvali and the orchestra have already made an impression both on local audiences and in Nordic capitals during a tour in 2018. The great Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar was appointed principal conductor in 1907 and subsequent holders of the post include Sergiu Comissiona, Sixten Ehrling and Charles Dutoit. During Neeme Järvi's tenure (1982–2004), the orchestra became a major international force; it has toured in the USA, Japan and the Far East, and in 1997 was appointed National Orchestra of Sweden. Gustavo Dudamel (music director 2007–12) took the orchestra to major music centres and festivals, including the BBC Proms and Vienna Musikverein. Since 2013 Kent Nagano has been principal guest conductor, making tours with the orchestra in China and Germany. The Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra is a company owned by the Region Västra Götaland.

www.gso.se

Kent Nagano is renowned for interpretations of clarity, elegance and intelligence. He is equally at home in music of the classical, romantic and contemporary eras, introducing concert and opera audiences throughout the world to new and rediscovered music and offering fresh insights into established repertoire. He has been music director of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal since September 2006. In September 2015, he took up the position of general music director of the Hamburg State Opera and Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra. In September 2013 he became principal guest conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra.

Previous seasons highlights in Hamburg include the world première of Jörg Widmann's oratorio *ARCHE* – composed for the inauguration of the Elbphilharmonie in January 2017.

A milestone in Kent Nagano's collaboration with the OSM was the inauguration of the orchestra's new concert hall, La Maison Symphonique, in September 2011.

From 2000 to 2006 Kent Nagano was artistic director and chief conductor of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, and he has been its honorary conductor ever since. From 2006 to 2013 general music director of the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich.

As a much-sought after guest conductor, he has worked with many of the world's finest orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, Tonhalle Orchestra Zürich and Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia.

<http://kentnagano.com/>



Alexander Tsymbalyuk
Boris Godunov



Maxim Paster
Prince Shuisky



Mika Kares
Pimen



Sergei Skorokhodov
Grigory

Mussorgskys *Boris Godunow*

Nachdem Michail Glinka in den 1830er und 1840er Jahren die ersten russischen Opern komponiert hatte, geschah auf diesem Gebiet nicht viel, bis die nächste Generation von Komponisten herangereift war. Sie bildeten jene als „Mächtiges Häuflein“ oder „Novatoren“ bekannte Gruppe, die die russische Volksmusik zum Ausgangspunkt nehmen und das Lied der Sprechintonation näherbringen wollte. Der unumstrittene Anführer dieser Gruppe war Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakow, der die anderen Mitglieder unterstützen, für sie orchestrieren und ihre Opern vollenden musste.

Der kühnste und fortschrittlichste dieser fünf Komponisten war Modest Mussorgsky. Das Libretto zu seiner Oper *Boris Godunow*, die auf Puschkins Drama basiert, verfasste er selber. Er vollendete die Oper 1869, aber das Kaiserliche Theater in St. Petersburg lehnte sie ab. Und sicher gab es Etliches, was die Theaterleitung irritiert haben mochte: Mussorgskys unverblümter Stil und die realistische Intonation der russischen Sprache in den Vokalpartien waren ihrer Zeit stilistisch weit voraus. Auch in dramaturgischer Hinsicht gab es denkbare Kritikpunkte. So verschwindet beispielsweise der falsche Dimitri nach seiner Flucht aus der Schenke an der litauischen Grenze in Szene 4 ganz aus dem Geschehen, obwohl er eine treibende Kraft für den Verlauf der restlichen drei Szenen darstellt.

Zu den wichtigsten Gründen für die Ablehnung aber dürfte zählen, dass weder eine Liebesgeschichte noch eine weibliche Hauptrolle vorgesehen waren. Dies veranlasste Mussorgsky, zwischen Szene 5 und 6 eine neue, in Polen angesiedelte Szene einzufügen, in der sich Dimitri in die polnische Prinzessin Marina Mnischek verliebt, die ihm beim Ausbau seiner Macht zur Seite steht. Anstelle der ursprünglich sieben Szenen wurde das Werk nun in einen Prolog und vier Akte aufgeteilt; der Einschub bildet den dritten, den sogenannten „Polen-Akt“. Mussorgsky würzte

die Handlung zudem mit Volksliedern und Kinderliedern für die beiden Zarenkinder und ihre Amme sowie einer deftigen Ballade für die Wirtin in der vorherigen Szene. Außerdem wurde nach Boris' Tod eine Szene hinzugefügt, in der der falsche Dimitri in Moskau einfällt und die Regierung übernimmt. Auch diese Fassung wurde zunächst abgelehnt, im Jahr 1874 aber schließlich doch in St. Petersburg aufgeführt.

Trotz eines Achtungserfolgs hier wie auch 1888 am Moskauer Bolschoi-Theater wurde die Oper andernorts selten aufgeführt. Nach Mussorgskys Tod unternahm Rimsky-Korsakow es, das Werk zu überarbeiten und zu orchestrieren. An manchen Stellen transponierte er die Partie des Boris in ein helleres Register, darüber hinaus gestaltete er die Instrumentation traditioneller und farbenreicher. Außerdem milderte er eine Reihe harmonischer Reibungen. Rimsky-Korsakows Fassung wurde 1896 in St. Petersburg erstaufgeführt und sie führte die Oper über die Grenzen Russlands hinaus. Heute liegt Rimsky-Korsakows Version aus gutem Grund in den Lagerräumen des Opernbetriebs, doch sollte nicht vergessen werden, dass Mussorgskys großartige Oper ohne Rimsky-Korsakows Bearbeitung heute nicht so bekannt und verbreitet wäre. Seit den 1970er Jahren wird Mussorgskys Fassung von 1874 favorisiert, sei es mit oder ohne „Polen-Akt“. In jüngerer Zeit jedoch haben sich mehrere Opernhäuser der raueren Originalfassung zugewandt. Dieser 1869 abgelehnte „Ur-Boris“ bildet die Grundlage für diese Aufnahme.

In *Boris Godunow* zeichnet Mussorgsky ein bemerkenswert ungeschminktes Portrait eines Menschen an der Macht, der unter der Last der Geschehnisse mental zerrüttet wird. Boris erscheint in drei großen Szenen. Da ist zunächst die Krönungsszene, in der er zögert, die Zarenkrone anzunehmen. Dann sieht man ihn in seinem Arbeitszimmer, wo Fürst Schuiski ihm von dem plötzlichen Erscheinen des falschen Dimitri berichtet, worauf Boris von Halluzinationen heimgesucht wird. Und schließlich gibt es die Todesszene, in der der Mönch Pimen ihm von einem Wunder erzählt, das sich auf dem Grab des kleinen Dimitri ereignete. Boris reagiert

mit einem atemlosen Rezitativ, das vom Liedgesang ins Sprechen und ins Schreien umschlägt, während das ihm geistergleich verbundene Orchester die Szene illustriert, als würde es sich tief in Boris' Seele graben.

Mussorgsky litt selber unter psychischen Erkrankungen und Alkoholabhängigkeit, und so dürfte einiges Material für sein Boris-Portrait aus der Tiefe seiner eigenen Seele geschöpft sein. *Boris Godunow* ist auch eine große russische Choroper mit betont folkloristischem Idiom, in der das russische Volk und seine historischen Leiden die Hauptrolle spielen. Das Werk ist wie ein riesiges Fresko, in dem alle Gesellschaftsschichten und alle Charaktertypen vertreten sind: von den leidenden Armen und den scheinheiligen Bettelmönchen bis hin zu den verschwörerischen Bojaren an der Spitze der Gesellschaft. Sie alle haben ihre eigene Art, sich an die rasanten politischen Veränderungen anzupassen, so dass die Oper ihre Aktualität nie verliert.

In nur drei Jahrzehnten hat sich Mussorgsky erheblich von Glinkas strahlender historischer Erzählung entfernt. Doch *Boris Godunow* bleibt ein großes und prachtvolles Werk, auch wenn seine Großartigkeit von Verderbtheit und seelischen Leiden in einer Weise verfinstert wird, die nie aufhört zu faszinieren.

Göran Gademan, Dramaturg an der Göteborger Oper

Synopse

Hintergrund:

1584 trägt Iwan der Schreckliche an seinem Sterbebett einer Gruppe von Männern – darunter die Bojaren Boris Godunow und Wassili Schuiski – auf, sich seines Sohnes und Thronerben Fjodor Iwanowitsch anzunehmen. Schwach und politisch desinteressiert, lässt der neue Zar das Feld für Boris, seinen Schwager, offen,

welcher *de facto* zum Herrscher über Russland wird: Der junge Halbbruder des Zaren, Dimitri Ivanowitsch, wird kurz nach Ivans Tod mit seiner Mutter ins Exil geschickt und nach Uglich, nördlich von Moskau, verbracht. Dort stirbt er 1591 unter mysteriösen Umständen. Sieben Jahre später stirbt Fjodor I. ohne Kronerben.

1. Szene

Im Innenhof des Nowodewitschi-Klosters in Moskau, in das sich Boris nach dem Tod des Zaren zurückgezogen hat, hat sich eine Menschenmenge versammelt. Ein Vogt fordert die Menschen auf, Boris zu bitten, die Krone anzunehmen und neuer Zar zu werden. Die Menge gehorcht, doch als der Vogt sich abwendet, verspotten sie ihn und sein Vorgehen. Schtschelkalow, der Schreiber der Bojarenduma, erscheint und berichtet dem Volk von Boris' Widerwillen, Zar zu werden. Gleichzeitig nähert sich aus der Ferne eine Prozession blinder Pilger. Auf dem Weg zum Kloster halten sie, Ikonen tragend, die Menschen dazu an, den Zaren aufzusuchen. Alsdann übermittelt der Vogt einen Befehl der Bojaren an die Menge: Am nächsten Morgen solle sie im Kreml zusammenkommen.

2. Szene

Ein Innenhof im Kreml, zwischen der Kathedrale Maria Himmelfahrt und der Erzengel-Michael-Kathedrale. Boris hat die Krone angenommen, und eine große Menge wartet auf die Krönung. Die Glocken läuten, und Fürst Schuiski und andere Bojaren fordern die Menge auf, den neuen Zaren zu preisen. Boris erscheint auf dem Balkon der Kathedrale. Als er sich an die Menge wendet, kann er seine Ängste und Zweifel nicht verbergen, sammelt sich aber und lädt zu einem großen Bankett.

3. Szene

Fünf Jahre sind vergangen. In seiner Zelle im Moskauer Tschudow-Kloster stellt der Mönch Pimen des Nachts seine große Chronik der russischen Geschichte fertig. Mit ihm in der Zelle befindet sich auch Grigori, ein junger Novize. Er schläft, wacht aber abrupt aus einem Alptraum auf. Von Pimen beruhigt, befragt Grigori ihn nach den Umständen des Todes des jungen Dimitri vor zwölf Jahren. Pimen, der damals in Uglich war, berichtet, dass Boris den Mord an dem Prinzen veranlasst habe, und fügt hinzu, dass der Prinz, wenn er nicht gestorben wäre, jetzt im selben Alter wäre wie Grigori. Das bringt Grigori auf eine Idee, und als Pimen die Zelle verlässt, verurteilt er Boris und gelobt seine Bestrafung.

4. Szene

Nachdem er Unruhe unter seinen Mönchsbrüdern gestiftet hat, ist Grigori aus dem Kloster geflohen, um in Litauen Unterschlupf zu finden. Auf seinem Weg hat er sich zwei Wandermönchen, Varlaam und Missail, angeschlossen. In einer Schenke nahe der Grenze unterhält er sich mit der Wirtin, während seine Begleiter trinken. Sie erzählt ihm, dass der nahe gelegene Grenzübergang auf Befehl von Moskau bewacht werde, erwähnt aber, dass es eine andere Route gebe. Plötzlich taucht eine Grenzpatrouille auf. Mit Steckbrief suchen die Soldaten einen entlaufenen Mönch, Grigori aber kann den Verdacht auf Vaarlam lenken. Als die Wahrheit ans Licht kommt, gelingt es ihm, mit einem Sprung durch das Fenster zu entkommen.

5. Szene

Im Zarenpalast im Kreml. Boris' Tochter Xenia trauert um ihren verstorbenen Verlobten; ihre Amme versucht, sie aufzuheitern. Ihr Bruder Fjodor studiert derweil eine Landkarte des russischen Reiches. Boris tritt ein und versucht ebenfalls, Xenia zu trösten. Sie verlässt das Zimmer, und Boris ermuntert Fjodor, sich weiter auf

jenen Tag vorzubereiten, an dem er Zar werden wird. Er selber versinkt in Gedanken über das Unheil, das das Land während seiner Regentschaft heimgesucht hat. Da tritt Schuiski ein und überbringt die Nachricht, in Litauen mache ein Anwärter auf den Zarenthron von sich reden. Dass dieser sich Dimitri nenne, versetzt Boris in Schrecken, und er befiehlt, die Westgrenze zu schließen. Schuiski, der zwölf Jahre zuvor Prinz Dimitris Tod untersucht hatte, schwört Boris, dass es sich bei dem toten Jungen tatsächlich um den Prinzen gehandelt habe. Boris schickt ihn fort und bleibt allein zurück, von Visionen des toten Kindes gemartert.

6. Szene

Auf dem Platz vor der Basilius-Kathedrale. In der Kathedrale findet eine Gedenkmesse für den toten Dimitri statt, und Grigori wird öffentlich verunglimpft. Doch die Menschen, die sich auf dem Platz versammelt haben, sind nicht überzeugt und tauschen Gerüchte über den Prätendenten und seine militärischen Erfolge auf dem Weg nach Moskau aus. Unterdessen hänseln einige Jungen einen heiligen Narren und stehlen ihm eine Münze. Als Boris aus der Kathedrale auf den Platz hinausgeht, bittet ihn dieselbe Menge, die ihn eben noch verleumdet hat, um Almosen und Brot. Ihrem Beispiel folgend, bittet der heilige Narr ihn, die jungen Diebe zu töten, so wie er, Boris, einst Dimitri töten ließ. Anstatt ihn verhaften zu lassen, bittet Boris den Narren, für ihn zu beten. Der Narr erwidert, er könne nicht für Zar Herodes beten ...

7. Szene

Im Kreml hält die Bojarenduma eine außerordentliche Versammlung ab. Boris hat die Bojaren aufgefordert, über den falschen Zarewitsch zu befinden, und sie verurteilen ihn zu Folter mit anschließender Hinrichtung. Schuiski betritt den Saal und berichtet der Versammlung, schreckliche Visionen des ermordeten Dimitri brächten

Boris um den Verstand. Es folgt Boris, dessen wirres Verhalten Schuiskis Bericht zu bestätigen scheint. Als Boris wieder etwas Kontrolle über sich gewonnen hat, holt Schuiski Pimen in die Versammlung. Mit Boris' Erlaubnis erzählt Pimen, wie ein blinder alter Hirte an Dimitris Grab in Uglich sein Augenlicht wiedererlangte. Als Boris das hört, bricht er zusammen. Er bittet darum, seinen Sohn Fjodor zu sehen, ernennt ihn zum neuen Zaren und gibt ihm im Sterben letzte Ratschläge, auf dass er ein guter und starker Herrscher werde.

Alexander Tsymbalyuk (Boris Godunow) ist einer der jüngsten Bässe, der die Titelrolle in *Boris Godunow* auf einer großen internationalen Bühne (Bayerische Staatsoper) verkörpert hat. Zu den renommierten Opernhäusern, an denen er aufgetreten ist, zählen die Metropolitan Opera, das Teatro alla Scala, die Opéra National de Paris, die Deutsche Staatsoper, das Royal Opera House, Covent Garden und das Bolschoi-Theater. Tsymbalyuk hat mit Dirigenten wie Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Daniel Barenboim, Sir Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano und Gustavo Dudamel zusammengearbeitet. Als Konzertsolist trat er unter anderem im Wiener Konzertverein, in der Hollywood Bowl und im Barbican Centre in London auf.

Maxim Paster (Schuiski) debütierte 2003 am Bolschoi-Theater und trat im Jahr darauf dem Ensemble bei, wo er Hauptrollen in *Macbeth*, *Der feurige Engel*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Lady Macbeth von Mzensk*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème* und *Wozzeck* verkörpert hat. Er ist an einer Reihe internationaler Opernhäuser aufgetreten und hat die Rolle des Schuiski am Teatro Comunale in Bologna, an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, der Opéra National de Paris Bastille, dem Teatro Municipal de Santiago und der Semperoper Dresden sowie dem Bolschoi gestaltet.

Mika Kares (Pimen), einer der gefragtesten Bässe unserer Zeit, verfügt über ein Repertoire, das von Händel und Mozart bis zu Verdi, Puccini und Wagner reicht und ihn an die Bayerische Staatsoper, die Wiener Staatsoper, die Opéra Bastille, das Teatro alla Scala und die Royal Opera Covent Garden führt. Zu den herausragenden Dirigenten, mit denen er zusammengearbeitet hat, gehören Riccardo Muti, Teodor Currentzis, Marc Minkowski, Zubin Mehta und Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Darüber hinaus kann er auf ein breites Konzertrepertoire mit Werken von Beethoven, Mahler und Schostakowitsch blicken, das er mit Ensembles wie den Wiener Philharmonikern und dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra aufführt.

Sergey Skorokhodov (Grigori) begann seine Opernlaufbahn 2007, als er Ensemblemitglied des Mariinsky-Theaters wurde. Unter der Leitung von Valery Gergiev trat er an bedeutenden Bühnen wie dem Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, der Metropolitan Opera und der Washington National Opera auf. Darüber hinaus hat er mit Dirigenten wie Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanov, Vladimir Jurowski, Edo de Waart, Kirill Petrenko, Michael Tilson Thomas und Plácido Domingo zusammengearbeitet. Skorokhodov tritt regelmäßig am Mariinsky- und Bolschoi-Theater sowie an Häusern wie der Bayerischen Staatsoper, der Chicago Lyric Opera und dem Teatro alla Scala auf.

Oleg Budaratskiy (Hauptmann, Grenzwache) ist Mitglied des Ensembles der Ural-Oper in Jekaterinburg, wo er in einem breit gefächerten Repertoire von *Boris Godunow* und *Turandot* bis hin zu *Drei Schwestern* von Péter Eötvös aufgetreten ist. International gastierte er an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera, der Deutschen Oper Berlin, dem Grand Théâtre de Genève, der Opéra de Lyon, der Griechischen Nationaloper, dem Amsterdam Concertgebouw und bei den Salzburger Festspielen.

Anton Ljungqvist (Mityukha) schloss sein Studium an der Opernhochschule Stockholm 2011 ab und verkörperte seitdem zahlreiche Rollen an schwedischen Opernhäusern – Wermland Oper, Oper Göteborg, Folkoperan und Oper Malmö – sowie an der Staatsoper Bergen in Norwegen. Auf der Konzertbühne sang er in Werken wie Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Bachs *Johannes-Passion* und Mozarts *Requiem*.

Wassily Ladyuk (Schtschelkalow) begann seine Karriere 2004 als Solist am Novaya Operntheater in Moskau und ist seit 2007 Gastsolist am Bolschoi-Theater. Sein heutiges Repertoire umfasst über 20 Opernrollen vom Belcanto bis zum Verismo, die ihn auf renommierte Bühnen wie das Mariinsky-Theater, die Metropolitan Opera, das Teatro alla Scala, das Royal Opera House, Covent Garden und die Opéra National de Paris führen.

Okka von der Damerau (Schenkwirtin) studierte an der Musikhochschule Freiburg. Sie ist seit 2010 Mitglied des Ensembles der Bayerischen Staatsoper und gastiert an renommierten Opernhäusern wie der Wiener Staatsoper, der Deutschen Oper Berlin und der Lyric Opera of Chicago. Sie arbeitete mit Dirigenten wie Zubin Mehta, Kirill Petrenko, Antonio Pappano und Daniel Barenboim zusammen und ist als Solistin mit Orchestern wie dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra, dem Cleveland Orchestra und der Staatskapelle Berlin aufgetreten.

Alexey Tikhomirov (Varlaam) ist seit 2006 Solist der Helikon-Oper in Moskau, tritt aber unter anderem auch am Bolschoi-Theater in Moskau, am Grand Théâtre de Genève, der Opéra Marseille, dem Teatro Real Madrid und La Monnaie in Brüssel auf. Sein breit gefächertes Repertoire umfasst Rollen wie Boris, Pimen und Varlaam (*Boris Godunow*), Fasolt und Hunding (*Ring des Nibelungen*) sowie den

Komtur (*Don Giovanni*). Zu den Dirigenten, mit denen er in Oper und Konzert aufgetreten ist, gehören Mikhail Pletnev, Vladimir Spivakov, Michail und Vladimir Jurowski sowie Riccardo Muti.

Boris Stepanov (Missail, Ein Bojar, Heiliger Narr) ist seit 2015 Mitglied des Ensembles des Michailowsky-Theaters in St. Petersburg, wo er in Rollen wie Beppo (*I Pagliacci*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Junger Zigeuner (*Aleko*) und Zar Barendej (*Schneeflöckchen*) aufgetreten ist. Weitere Ensembles, mit denen er zusammenarbeitete, sind das Bolschoi-Theater, das Mariinsky-Theater, das Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse, das Grand Théâtre de Genève und das Teatro Municipal de Santiago.

Hanna Husáhr (Xenia) gab 2009 ihr Operndebüt und ist seitdem an Häusern wie der Royal Swedish Opera, der Malmö Opera, der Lettischen Nationaloper, dem Hoftheater Drottningholm und der Königlichen Oper Versailles aufgetreten. Als gefragte Konzertsängerin arbeitete sie mit Dirigenten wie Marc Minkowski, Leif Segerstam, Herbert Blomstedt und Daniel Harding zusammen. Sie studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, der Akademie für Musik und Theater in Göteborg und dem Stockholmer Opernstudio.

Johanna Rudström (Fjodor) hat an der Königlich Schwedischen Oper zahlreiche Rollen verkörpert, darunter die Titelrolle in Rossinis *La Cenerentola*, Olga (*Eugene Onegin*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold* und *Götterdämmerung*) und Mercedes (*Carmen*). Im Ausland ist sie als La Styliste in Cherubinis *Medea* am Grand Théâtre de Genève aufgetreten. Sie absolvierte die Opernhochschule Stockholm im Jahr 2014 und studierte zudem an der Musikakademie Malmö.

Margarita Nekrasova (Amme) ist Solistin des Novaya Operntheaters in Moskau. Regelmäßig tritt sie an renommierten internationalen Häusern auf, darunter die Opéra National de Lyon, das Opernhaus Zürich, die Staatsoper Berlin, die Bayerische Staatsoper und das Teatro alla Scala. Außerdem war Margarita Nekrasova bei den Festspielen in Salzburg und Aix-en-Provence sowie bei den BBC Proms zu Gast und arbeitet mit renommierten Dirigenten wie Vladimir Jurowski, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Muti, Eri Klas, Mariss Jansons und Daniel Barenboim zusammen.

Der **Chor der GöteborgsOperan** (Oper Göteborg) besteht aus 46 Sängern und ist einer von drei professionellen Opernchören in Schweden. Er tritt in der Oper, im Konzert, in kleineren Ensembles und manchmal auch in Musicals auf. Er pflegt einen hohen künstlerischen Standard und verfügt über ein Repertoire, das von der Barock- und der klassischen Oper bis hin zu romantischen und zeitgenössischen Werken reicht. Da viele Opern in der Originalsprache gesungen werden, ist Sprachunterricht ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der täglichen Arbeit. Alle Mitglieder des Chores der GöteborgsOperan haben entweder an Musik- oder Opernhochschulen studiert.

<https://en.opera.se/>

Die **Göteborger Symphoniker** (Göteborgs Symfoniker) wurden 1905 gegründet und zählen heute 109 Mitglieder. Ihr Chefdirigent ist Santtu-Matias Rouvali, der sein Amt 2017 antrat; bereits 2018 haben Rouvali und die Göteborger Symphoniker auf einer Tournee sowohl beim heimischen Publikum als auch in den nordischen Hauptstädten großen Eindruck hinterlassen. 1907 wurde der große schwedische Komponist Wilhelm Stenhammar zum Chefdirigenten ernannt; zu seinen Nachfolgern gehören Sergiu Comissiona, Sixten Ehrling und Charles Dutoit. In der

Amtszeit von Neeme Järvi (1982–2004) entwickelte sich das Orchester zu einem international vielbeachteten Klangkörper; es tourte durch die USA, Japan und den Fernen Osten und wurde 1997 zum Schwedischen Staatsorchester ernannt. Gustavo Dudamel, der Musikalische Leiter von 2007–2012, führte das Orchester in bedeutende Musikzentren (u.a. Wiener Musikverein) und zu wichtigen Festivals (u.a. BBC Proms). Seit 2013 ist Kent Nagano Erster Gastdirigent und unternimmt mit dem Orchestertourneen in China und Deutschland. Die Göteborger Symphoniker sind ein Ensemble der Region Västra Götaland.

www.gso.se

Kent Nagano ist bekannt für Interpretationen voll Klarheit, Eleganz und Intelligenz. Er ist gleichermaßen in der Musik der Klassik, der Romantik und der Gegenwart zu Hause, stellt dem Konzert- und Opernpublikum auf der ganzen Welt neue und neu entdeckte Musik vor und bietet unverbrauchte Einblicke in das etablierte Repertoire. Seit September 2006 ist er Musikalischer Leiter des Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM). Im September 2015 übernahm er die Position des Generalmusikdirektors der Hamburgischen Staatsoper und des Philharmonischen Staatsorchesters Hamburg. Im September 2013 wurde er Erster Gastdirigent der Göteborger Symphoniker; seit 2006 ist er Ehrendirigent des Deutschen Symphonieorchesters Berlin.

Previous seasons highlights in Hamburg include the world première of Jörg Widmann's oratorio *ARCHE* – composed on the occasion of the inauguration of the Elbphilharmonie in January 2017.

Ein Meilenstein in der Zusammenarbeit von Kent Nagano mit dem OSM war die Einweihung des neuen Konzertsaals des Orchesters, La Maison Symphonique, im September 2011.

Von 2000 bis 2006 war Kent Nagano Künstlerischer Leiter und Chefdirigent

des Deutschen Symphonie-Orchesters Berlin und von 2006 bis 2013 Generalmusikdirektor der Bayerischen Staatsoper in München.

Als vielgefragter Gastdirigent hat er mit etlichen der weltbesten Orchester zusammengearbeitet, u.a. mit dem London Symphony Orchestra, dem Tonhalle Orchester Zürich und dem Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia.

<http://kentrnagano.com/>



Oleg Budaratskiy
Police Officer; Border Guard



Anton Ljungqvist
Mityukha



Vasily Ladyuk
Shchelkalov



Okka von der Damerau
Innkeeper



Alexey Tikhomirov
Varlaam



Boris Stepanov
Missail



Hanna Husáhr
Xenia



Johanna Rudström
Fyodor



Margarita Nekrasova
Nurse

Boris Godounov de Modeste Moussorgski

Après que Mikhaïl Glinka eut composé les premiers opéras russes dans les années 1830 et 1840, il ne se passa plus grand-chose dans ce domaine jusqu'à ce que la prochaine génération de compositeurs n'ait atteint sa maturité. Ils formèrent le groupe connu sous le nom de « puissant petit groupe » ou de « Groupe des cinq », qui visait à prendre la musique folklorique russe comme point de départ et qui voulait rapprocher le chant de l'intonation parlée. Le leader incontesté de ce groupe était Nikolaï Rimski-Korsakov qui dut soutenir les autres membres, réaliser des orchestrations pour eux et terminer leurs opéras.

Le plus audacieux et progressif des cinq compositeurs fut Modeste Moussorgski. Il écrivit lui-même le livret de *Boris Godounov* en se basant sur le drame de Pouchkine. Il acheva l'opéra en 1869 mais celui-ci fut refusé par le théâtre impérial de Saint-Petersbourg. Plusieurs aspects de l'œuvre ont surpris la direction du théâtre : le style sans fioritures de Moussorgski combiné à l'intonation réaliste du russe parlé dans les parties vocales était stylistiquement en avance sur leur époque. D'un point de vue dramaturgique, il y avait aussi d'autres aspects qui pouvaient être critiqués. Par exemple, le Faux Dimitri disparaît complètement de l'action dès qu'il s'est échappé de l'auberge à la frontière lituanienne dans la scène 4, malgré le fait que ses actions constituent un moteur pour ce qui se passera au cours des trois scènes suivantes.

L'une des raisons principales derrière le refus résidait dans l'absence d'intrigue amoureuse et de premier rôle féminin. Cela amena Moussorgski à ajouter la scène dite polonaise entre les cinquième et sixième scènes. Dans cette nouvelle scène, Dimitri tombe amoureux de la princesse polonaise Marina Mniszek qui l'aide à prendre le pouvoir. Au lieu des sept scènes originales, l'œuvre a été divisée en un prologue et quatre actes, la scène polonaise devenant le troisième acte. Moussorgski

a également pimenté l'action avec des chants folkloriques et des chants d'enfants pour les deux enfants du Tsar et leur nourrice ainsi qu'une ballade endiablée pour la femme de l'aubergiste dans la scène précédente. Une scène a également été ajoutée après la mort de Boris dans laquelle le faux Dimitri monte à Moscou et prend le pouvoir. Cette version fut aussi rejetée mais sera finalement jouée à Saint-Petersbourg en 1874.

Malgré un certain succès, même lorsque l'œuvre fut jouée au Théâtre Bolchoï de Moscou en 1888, l'opéra ne fut que rarement joué ailleurs. Après la mort de Moussorgski, Rimski-Korsakov entreprit de réviser et de réorchestrer l'œuvre. Par endroits, il transpose les lignes de Boris vers un registre plus brillant et rend l'orchestration plus traditionnelle et colorée. Il a également adouci un certain nombre de passages à l'harmonie audacieuse. La version de Rimski-Korsakov a été jouée pour la première fois à Saint-Petersbourg en 1896 et c'est cette version qui popularisera l'œuvre à l'extérieur de la Russie. De nos jours, la version de Rimski-Korsakov a été reléguée aux oubliettes du monde de l'opéra. Bien que cette situation soit tout à fait justifiée, il ne faut tout de même pas oublier que sans la réécriture de Rimski Korsakov, le magnifique opéra de Moussorgski ne serait pas aussi connu et joué aussi fréquemment qu'il ne l'est aujourd'hui. Depuis les années 1970, c'est la version de Moussorgski de 1874 qui a été jouée, avec ou sans la scène polonaise. Ces dernières années cependant, plusieurs maisons d'opéra ont commencé à présenter la version moins polie et plus originale. C'est l'«Ur-Boris», la version originale, rejeté en 1869, qui constitue la base de cet enregistrement.

Dans *Boris Godounov*, Moussorgski brosse un portrait remarquablement brut d'un homme en position de pouvoir qui est détruit mentalement au cours de l'action. Boris apparaît dans trois grandes scènes. Il y a d'abord la scène du couronnement où il hésite à assumer la couronne. Puis il est montré dans son bureau où le prince Chouïski lui raconte l'apparition soudaine de Dimitri le prétendant, provoquant des

visions maléfiques. Enfin, il y a la scène de la mort où Pimène, le moine, lui raconte un miracle qui s'est produit sur la tombe du petit Dimitri. Boris réagit par un récitatif haletant qui passe du chant pur à la voix parlée et aux cris, tandis que l'orchestre illustre la scène dans un climat fantomatique, comme s'il fouillait au tréfonds de l'âme de Boris.

Moussorgski lui-même souffrait de maladie mentale et de dépendance à l'alcool et a donc probablement puisé au plus profond de son âme pour son évocation de Boris. *Boris Godounov* est aussi un grand opéra choral russe avec un idiome populaire omniprésent dans lequel le peuple russe et ses souffrances historiques constituent le personnage principal. L'œuvre est comme une fresque géante dans laquelle toutes les classes de la société et tous les types de personnages font sentir leur présence : des pauvres souffrants et des frères moines hypocrites aux boyards conspirateurs au sommet même de la société. Tous ont leur propre façon de s'adapter aux changements politiques rapides avec pour résultat que jamais cet opéra ne perd de son actualité.

En quelque trente ans, Moussorgski s'est éloigné du récit historique brillant de Glinka. Pourtant, *Boris Godounov* reste une œuvre grandiose et magnifique, bien que la grandeur soit assombrie par la corruption et la souffrance mentale d'une manière qui ne cesse de fasciner.

Göran Gademan, dramaturge à l'Opéra de Göteborg

Résumé de l'action

Contexte :

En 1584, sur son lit de mort, Ivan le Terrible nomme un groupe d'hommes – parmi lesquels les boyards Boris Godounov et Vassili Chouïski – pour guider son fils et successeur Féodor Ivanovitch. Faible et indifférent à la politique, le nouveau tsar laisse le champ libre à Boris – qui est aussi son beau-frère – qui devient le souverain de facto de la Russie : le jeune demi-frère du tsar, Dimitri Ivanovitch, est exilé avec sa mère peu après la mort d'Ivan, et les deux sont envoyés à Ouglitch, au nord de Moscou. Dimitri y meurt en 1591 dans des circonstances suspectes. Sept ans plus tard, Féodor 1^{er} meurt à son tour, ne laissant aucun héritier à la couronne.

Scène 1

Une foule s'est rassemblée dans la cour du couvent de Novodievitchi à Moscou où Boris est parti en retraite après la mort du tsar. Un policier incite le peuple à demander à Boris d'accepter la couronne et de devenir le nouveau tsar. La foule joue le jeu, mais quand l'officier tourne le dos, ils se moquent de lui et de la procédure. Le secrétaire du conseil des boyards apparaît et raconte aux gens la réticence de Boris à devenir tsar. En même temps, une procession de pèlerins aveugles s'approche au loin. En route vers le monastère, ils exhortent le peuple à aller à la rencontre du tsar en portant des icônes. Le policier transmet maintenant un ordre des boyards à la foule : ils doivent se rassembler au Kremlin le lendemain matin.

Scène 2

Une cour au Kremlin, entre la cathédrale de l'Assomption et la cathédrale de l'Archange Michel. Boris a accepté la couronne et une grande foule attend le couronnement. Les cloches sonnent et le prince Chouïski et d'autres boyards appellent

la foule à louer le nouveau tsar. Boris apparaît sur le porche de la cathédrale. En s'adressant à la foule, il ne peut cacher son anxiété et ses doutes, mais il se ressaisit et en invite les personnes présentes à un grand banquet.

Scène 3

Cinq ans se sont écoulés. La nuit, dans sa cellule du monastère Tchoudov à Moscou, le moine Pimène termine sa grande chronique de l'histoire russe. Dans la cellule se trouve aussi Grigori, un jeune novice. Il dort, mais se réveille abruptement à cause d'un cauchemar. Calmé par Pimène, Grigori lui demande l'histoire de la mort du jeune Dimitri survenue douze ans plus tôt. Pimène, qui était à Ouglitch à l'époque, affirme que Boris est l'instigateur du meurtre du prince et ajoute que s'il n'était pas mort, le prince aurait maintenant le même âge que Grigori. Cela plante une idée dans la tête de Grigori et alors que Pimène quitte la cellule, il dénonce Boris et prédit qu'il sera puni.

Scène 4

Après avoir provoqué des troubles parmi ses compagnons moines, Grigori est maintenant en fuite vers la sécurité en Lituanie. En chemin, il a rencontré deux moines vagabonds, Varlaam et Missaïl. Arrivé dans une auberge près de la frontière, il parle à l'hôtesse pendant que ses compagnons boivent. Elle lui dit que le poste frontalier voisin est surveillé selon les ordres de Moscou mais elle mentionne qu'il existe une autre route. Soudain, une patrouille de gardes-frontières apparaît. Ils ont un mandat d'arrêt contre un moine fugitif et Grigori leur fait croire que Vaarlam est celui qu'ils recherchent. Quand la vérité est révélée, il parvient à s'échapper en sautant par la fenêtre.

Scène 5

Dans le palais du tsar au Kremlin. La fille de Boris, Xenia, pleure la mort de son futur époux, et sa nourrice essaie de la réconforter. Pendant ce temps, son frère Fiodor étudie une carte de la Russie. Boris entre et tente aussi de réconforter Xenia. Elle quitte la chambre et Boris encourage Fiodor à poursuivre ses études en vue du jour où il deviendra lui-même tsar. Alors qu'il est assis, perdu dans ses pensées sur les malheurs qui ont assailli le pays pendant son règne, Chouïski entre, apportant la nouvelle qu'un prétendant à la couronne a fait son apparition en Lituanie. Quand Boris apprend que le prétendant se fait appeler Dimitri, il s'alarme et ordonne la fermeture de la frontière ouest. Chouïski, qui avait enquêté douze ans plus tôt sur la mort du prince Dimitri, fait le serment à Boris que le garçon mort était vraiment le prince. Il est renvoyé par Boris, qui reste seul, assailli par les visions de l'enfant mort.

Scène 6

Sur la place devant la cathédrale Saint-Basile. À l'intérieur de la cathédrale, une messe est célébrée en souvenir du défunt Dimitri et Grigori est publiquement dénoncé. Mais les gens rassemblés sur la place ne sont pas convaincus et lancent des rumeurs au sujet du prétendant et de ses succès militaires alors qu'il marche sur Moscou. Pendant ce temps, des garçons dérangent un fou-saint et lui volent une pièce de monnaie. Lorsque Boris sort de la cathédrale, la foule, qui vient de le damner, lui demande l'aumône et le pain. Suivant leur exemple, le fou-saint lui demande de tuer les voleurs, tout comme il a déjà fait tuer Dimitri. Au lieu de le faire arrêter, Boris demande au fou de prier pour lui. L'insensé répond qu'il ne peut pas prier pour le tsar Hérode...

Scène 7

Au Kremlin, la Douma des boyards tient une session extraordinaire. Les boyards sont priés par Boris de rendre leur jugement sur le Prétendant et ils le condamnent

à la torture suivie d'une exécution. Chouïski entre maintenant dans le hall et dit à l'assemblée que Boris est en train de perdre la raison par des visions terrifiantes du meurtre de Dimitri. Il est suivi de Boris, dont le comportement déséquilibré semble confirmer l'histoire de Chouïski. Alors que Boris reprend un certain contrôle sur lui-même, Chouïski amène maintenant Pimène dans l'assemblée. Avec la permission de Boris, Pimène raconte comment un vieux berger aveugle a retrouvé la vue après avoir visité la tombe de Dimitri à Oublitch. En entendant ces mots, Boris s'effondre, à l'agonie. Il demande qu'on lui amène son fils Fiodor et le nomme nouveau tsar, en lui donnant un dernier conseil sur la manière d'être un dirigeant bon et fort.

Alexander Tsymbalyuk (Boris Godounov) est l'une des plus jeunes basses à avoir interprété le rôle-titre de *Boris Godounov* sur une grande scène internationale (Bayerische Staatsoper). Il s'est produit dans de prestigieuses maisons d'opéra telles que le Metropolitan Opera, le Teatro alla Scala, l'Opéra national de Paris, le Deutsche Staatsoper, le Royal Opera House Covent Garden et le Théâtre Bolchoï. Tsymbalyuk a travaillé avec des chefs d'orchestre tels que Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Daniel Barenboim, Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano et Gustavo Dudamel. En concert, il s'est produit notamment au Musikverein de Vienne, au Hollywood Bowl et au Barbican Centre à Londres.

Maxim Paster (Chouïski) a fait ses débuts au Théâtre Bolchoï à Moscou en 2003. Il intègre l'ensemble un an plus tard et tient des rôles importants dans des productions de *Macbeth* (Verdi), de *L'ange de feu* (Prokofiev), du *Vaisseau fantôme* (Wagner) de *Lady Macbeth du district de Mtsensk* (Chostakovitch), de *Madama*

Butterfly, de *La Bohème* et de *Wozzeck* (Berg). Il s'est produit dans de nombreux opéras internationaux et a tenu le rôle de Chouïski dans des productions au Teatro Comunale de Bologne, au Bayerische Staatsoper, à l'Opéra national de Paris Bastille, au Teatro Municipal de Santiago, au Semperoper Dresde ainsi qu'au Théâtre Bolchoï.

Mika Kares (Pimène), l'une des basses les plus recherchées, se produit dans un répertoire allant de Haendel et Mozart à Verdi, Puccini et Wagner, avec des compagnies telles que le Bayerische et le Wiener Staatsoper, l'Opéra Bastille, le Teatro alla Scala et le Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Riccardo Muti, Teodor Currentzis, Marc Minkowski, Zubin Mehta et Nikolaus Harnoncourt sont quelques-uns des chefs importants avec lesquels il a travaillé. Kares possède également un vaste répertoire au concert qui inclut des œuvres de Beethoven, Mahler et Chostakovitch, qu'il chante en compagnie d'orchestres tels que l'Orchestre philharmonique de Vienne et l'Orchestre symphonique de Chicago.

Sergei Skorokhodov (Grigori) a commencé sa carrière à l'opéra en 2007 quand il a rejoint le Théâtre Mariinsky. Sous la direction de Valery Gergiev, il s'est produit dans des salles aussi prestigieuses que le Festspielhaus Baden Baden, le Metropolitan Opera et le Washington National Opera. Il a également travaillé avec Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanov, Vladimir Jurowski, Edo de Waart, Kirill Petrenko, Michael Tilson Thomas et Placido Domingo. Skorokhodov se produit régulièrement dans les théâtres Mariinsky et Bolchoï et avec des compagnies telles que le Bayerische Staatsoper, le Chicago Lyric Opera et le Teatro alla Scala.

Oleg Budaratskiy (officier de police, garde-frontière) est membre de l'ensemble de l'Opéra de l'Oural à Iekaterinbourg et possède un large répertoire s'étendant de

Boris Godounov et *Turandot à Trois sœurs* de Péter Eötvös. Sur la scène internationale, il s'est produit au Glyndebourne Festival Opera, au Deutsche Oper Berlin, au Grand Théâtre de Genève, à l'Opéra de Lyon, à l'Opéra national grec, au Festival de Salzbourg et au Concertgebouw d' Amsterdam.

Anton Ljungqvist (Mityukha) obtint son diplôme de l'University College of Opera de Stockholm en 2011 et s'est produit depuis dans de nombreux rôles avec des compagnies suédoises telles que le Wermland Opera à Karlstad, l'Opéra de Göteborg, Folkoperan à Stockholm et l'Opéra de Malmö ainsi que l'Opéra national de Bergen en Norvège. Au concert, il a chanté dans des œuvres telles qu'*Un requiem allemand* de Brahms, la *Passion selon saint Jean* de Bach et le Requiem de Mozart.

Vasily Ladyuk (Chtchelkalov) a commencé sa carrière en tant que soliste au Nouvel Opéra de Moscou en 2004 et est depuis 2007 soliste invité au Théâtre Bolchoï. Son répertoire actuel comprend plus de 20 rôles d'opéra, du bel canto au verismo, avec lesquels il s'est produit sur des scènes prestigieuses comme le Théâtre Mariinsky, le Metropolitan Opera, le Teatro alla Scala, le Royal Opera House, Covent Garden et l'Opéra National de Paris.

Okka von der Damerau (aubergiste) est diplômée de la Musikuniversität de Fribourg. Membre de l'ensemble du Bayerische Staatsoper depuis 2010, elle est invitée à se produire dans de prestigieux opéra, dont le Wiener Staatsoper, le Deutsche Oper de Berlin et le Lyric Opera de Chicago. Elle s'est produite sous la direction de chefs tels que Zubin Mehta, Kirill Petrenko, Antonio Pappano et Daniel Barenboim ainsi qu'en tant que soliste avec des orchestres tels que l'Orchestre symphonique de Chicago, l'Orchestre de Cleveland et la Staatskapelle de Berlin.

Alexey Tikhomirov (Varlaam) est soliste principal de l'Opéra Helikon de Moscou depuis 2006 mais il se produit également avec des compagnies telles que le Théâtre Bolchoï, le Grand Théâtre de Genève, l'Opéra de Marseille, le Teatro Real Madrid et La Monnaie à Bruxelles. Son répertoire étendu comprend les rôles de Boris, de Pimène et de Varlaam (*Boris Godounov*), Fasolt et Hunding (*L'anneau des Nibelungen*) et le Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*). Tikhomirov s'est produit à l'opéra et en concert avec des chefs d'orchestre tels que Mikhaïl Pletnev, Vladimir Spivakov, Michaïl et Vladimir Jurowski et Riccardo Muti.

Boris Stepanov (Missail, un boyard, le fou-saint) est membre de l'ensemble du Théâtre Mikhailovsky de Saint-Petersbourg depuis 2015 où il a chanté les rôles de Beppo (*I Pagliacci*), Tamino (*La flûte enchantée*), du jeune gitan (*Aleko* de Rachmaninov) et du tsar Berendeï (*La demoiselle des neiges* de Rimski-Korsakov). Parmi les autres compagnies avec lesquelles il s'est produit, citons les théâtres Bolchoï et Mariinsky, le Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, le Grand Théâtre de Genève et le Teatro Municipal de Santiago.

Hanna Husáhr (Xenia) a fait ses débuts à l'opéra en 2009 et s'est produite depuis avec des compagnies telles que l'Opéra royal suédois, l'Opéra de Malmö, l'Opéra national letton et au Théâtre de la Cour de Drottningholm et à l'Opéra royal de Versailles. Également sollicitée au concert, elle a travaillé avec des chefs d'orchestre tels que Marc Minkowski, Leif Segerstam, Herbert Blomstedt et Daniel Harding. Elle a étudié à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres, à l'Académie de musique et de théâtre de Göteborg et à l'Opera Studio de Stockholm.

Johanna Rudström (Fiodor) a joué plusieurs rôles à l'Opéra royal suédois, dont le rôle-titre de *La Cenerentola* de Rossini ainsi que ceux d'Olga (*Eugène Onéguine*), Cherubino (*Les noces de Figaro*), Flosshilde (*L'or du Rhin* et *Le crépuscule des dieux*) et Mercedes (*Carmen*). Sur la scène internationale, elle s'est produite au Grand Théâtre de Genève dans le rôle de La Styliste dans *Medea* de Cherubini. Diplômée en 2014 de l'École supérieure d'opéra de Stockholm, elle a également étudié à l'Académie de musique de Malmö.

Margarita Nekrasova (nourrice) est soliste au Nouvel Opéra de Moscou. Elle se produit régulièrement dans de prestigieuses compagnies internationales dont l'Opéra National de Lyon, l'Opernhaus Zürich, le Staatsoper Berlin, le Bayerische Staatsoper et le Teatro alla Scala. Margarita Nekrasova s'est également produite dans le cadre des festivals de Salzbourg et d'Aix-en-Provence ainsi qu'aux BBC Proms, et travaille avec des chefs d'orchestre renommés tels que Vladimir Jurowski, Semyon Bychkov, Riccardo Muti, Eri Klas, Mariss Jansons et Daniel Barenboim.

Le **chœur du GöteborgsOperan** (Opéra de Göteborg) est composé de 46 chanteurs et est l'un des trois chœurs d'opéra professionnels en Suède. Il se produit à l'opéra, au concert, avec de petits ensembles et également dans des comédies musicales. Il maintient un haut niveau artistique et maîtrise un répertoire allant de l'opéra baroque et classique à des œuvres romantiques et contemporaines. Parce que de nombreux opéras sont présentés dans la langue originale, la formation linguistique est une partie essentielle du travail quotidien de ses membres qui ont tous étudié dans des écoles de musique ou d'opéra.

<https://en.opera.se/>

Fondé en 1905, l'**Orchestre symphonique de Göteborg** (Göteborgs Symfoniker) comptait en 2019 109 musiciens et son chef principal était Santtu-Matias Rouvali qui a pris ses fonctions en 2017. Rouvali et l'Orchestre symphonique de Göteborg ont déjà fait impression sur le public local et ceux des capitales nordiques lors d'une tournée en 2018. Le grand compositeur suédois Wilhelm Stenhammar fut chef principal de 1907 à 1922 et parmi les titulaires suivants figurent Sergiu Comissiona, Sixten Ehrling et Charles Dutoit. Sous la direction de Neeme Järvi (1982–2004), l'orchestre est devenu une force internationale importante. Il a effectué des tournées aux États-Unis, au Japon et en Extrême-Orient et a été nommé Orchestre national de Suède en 1997. Gustavo Dudamel (directeur musical de 2007 à 2012) a emmené l'orchestre dans les principaux centres musicaux et festivals incluant les BBC Proms et le Musikverein de Vienne. Depuis 2013, Kent Nagano est son chef invité principal et, ensemble, ils ont réalisé des tournées en Chine et en Allemagne. L'Orchestre symphonique de Göteborg est une société appartenant à la Région Västra Götaland.

www.gso.se

Kent Nagano est réputé pour ses interprétations empreintes de clarté, d'élégance et d'intelligence. Il est tout aussi à l'aise avec le répertoire des époques classique, romantique que contemporaine, présentant à des publics du monde entier des musiques nouvelles ou revisitées, et leur offrant une vision nouvelle du répertoire établi. Depuis septembre 2006, il est le directeur musical de l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal. En 2015, il accède au poste de directeur musical général du Staatsoper et de l'Orchestre philharmonique de Hambourg. Il est également devenu le conseiller artistique et le premier chef invité de l'Orchestre symphonique de Göteborg en septembre 2013.

Les dernières saisons à Hambourg ont été marquées par la première mondiale

de l'oratorio *ARCHE* de Jörg Widmann – composé à l'occasion de l'inauguration de l'Elbphilharmonie en janvier 2017.

L'un de ses événements marquants à la barre de l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal fut l'inauguration de la nouvelle résidence de l'Orchestre, la Maison symphonique de Montréal, en septembre 2011.

De 2000 à 2006, Kent Nagano a été directeur artistique et chef d'orchestre principal du Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin et en est le chef honoraire depuis 2006. Enfin, de 2006 à 2013, il a été directeur musical général du Bayerische Staatsoper à Munich.

Chef invité très recherché, Kent Nagano a travaillé avec la plupart des meilleurs orchestres au monde dont l'Orchestre symphonique de Londres, l'Orchestre de la Tonhalle de Zürich et l'Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia à Rome.

<http://kentnagano.com/>



GÖTEBORGS
SYMPONIKER



Photo: Ola Kjelbye

Boris Godunov

Libretto by the Modest Mussorgsky, based on the drama by Alexander Pushkin

Scene 1: Boris is called to the throne

At the Novodevichy Monastery in Moscow. A crowd of people is milling about in the courtyard. Nikitich, a police officer, appears at the gateway.

DISC 1 1 Prstav

Nu, čto ž vy? Čto ž vy idolami stali?
Živo! Na koleni!
Nu že! Da nu!
Èko čèrtovo otrod' e!

Narod

Na kogo ty nas pokidaeš', otec naš!
Ach, na kogo da ty ostavljaeš', kormilec!
My da vse tvoji siroty bezzaščitnyje, ach,
da my tebja-to prosim, molim
so slezami, so gorjučimi,
smilujlja! smilujlja! bojarin batjuška!
Otec naš! Ty kormilec! Bojarin, smilujlja!

Mužčiny

Mitjuch, a Mitjuch, čego orëm?

Mitjuča

Vona! Počem ja znaju!

Mužčiny

Carja na Rusi chotim postavit'!

Police Officer (addressing the crowd)

What's with you? Why are you standing there
like statues? Look alive! Kneel!
Come on! Now! (*raising his cudgel*)
You Devil's spawn!

The Crowd (kneeling)

For whom do you desert us, our father?
Unto whom are you abandoning us, our benefactor!
We are all your defenceless orphans! Ah,
we call out to you, we pray
with burning tears:
Have mercy! Have mercy! Dear Lord Boyar!
Our father! Our benefactor! Boyar, have mercy!
(*The Police Officer leaves.*)

Men (basses II)

Mityukha, hey, Mityukha – why are we yelling?

Mityukha (a peasant)

What do I know?

Men (basses I)

We want to give Russia a tsar.

Tri ženščiny

Oj, lichon'ko!
Sovsem ochripla! Golubka, soseduška,
ne pripasla l' vodicy?

Ženščiny

Viš, bojarynja kakaja!

Ženščiny

Orala puščje vseh,
sama b i pripasala!

Mužčiny

Nu vy, baby, ne gutorit'!

Ženščiny

A ty čto za ukazčik!

Mužčiny

Niškni!

Ženščiny

Viš, pristav navjazalsja!

Mitjucha

Oj vy, ved'my, ne bušujte!

Ženščiny

Ach, postrel ty okajannyj!
Vot-to nechrist' otyskalsja!
Oj, ujděmte lučše, baby,
po dobru da pozdorovu,
ot bedy da ot napasti!

Ženščiny

Ėka d'javol privjazalsja!
Prosti, Gosposdi, besstydnik!
Ot bedy ujtj podal'se
po dobru da pozdorovu.

Three women (sopranos)

Oh, dear me!
I'm already hoarse! Dearest neighbour,
Can you spare a drink of water?

Women (altos)

Look at her, quite the lady!

Women (sopranos)

Shouting more than anyone –
She should have saved a drop for herself.

Men (tenors)

Now then, women, stop your cackling!

Women (altos)

Who are you to order us about?

Men (tenors)

Quiet!

Women (sopranos)

Look, the policeman's coming for us!

Mityukha

Hey there, witches, quit your ranting!

Women (sopranos)

Oh, the damned scoundrel!
What a heathen we have here!
We had better leave, women,
For our own good and health
Away from fighting and misfortune!

Women (altos)

The devil won't let us be!
God forgive the shameless one!
Let's get away from misfortune,
For our own good and health.

Mužčiny

Cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha!
Ved'my v put' už sobralisja.

Mužčiny

Ne ponravilasja klička,
vidno solono prišlasja,
ne v ugodu, ne po vkusu.
Cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha!

Pristav

Čto ž vy? Čto ž smolkli?
Al' glotok žalko?

Vot ja vas!
Al' davno po spinam plětka ne guljala?
Prouču vas... ja žyvo!

Ženščiny

Ne serčaj, Nikitič,
ne serčaj, rodimyj!

Mužčiny

Tol'ko pootdochnem,
zaorëm my snova.

Narod

I vzdochut' ne dast, prokljatyj.

Pristav

Nu-ka! Tol'ko glotok ne žalet'!

Mužčiny

Ladno!

Pristav

Nu!

Men (*tenors*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
The witches are getting ready to leave!

Men (*basses*)

They didn't like their nickname
that is clear for all to see:
It wasn't to their liking, not to their taste.
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
(*The Police Officer reappears,
and the crowd falls silent again*)

Police Officer

What now? Why are you quiet?
Are you saving your breath?
(*raises his cudgel*)
I'll show you!
How long is it since you felt the whip?
I'll teach you – and that right away!

Women (*sopranos*)

Don't be angry, Nikitich,
Don't be angry, dear!

Men (*tenors*)

When we've had a short rest
We'll holler again.

The Crowd (*altos and basses*)

He won't even let us breathe, damn him!

Police Officer

Come on! And mind you don't spare your throats!

Men (*tenors*)

All right!

Police Officer

Come on!

[2] Narod

Na kogo ty nas pokidaeš', otec naš!
Ach, na kogo da ty ostavljaeš', rodimyj!
My tebja, siroty, prosim, molim
so slezami, so gorjučimi,
smilujša! smilujša! bojarin batjuška!
Otec naš! Kormilec!
A-a-a-a-a-a-a!

Prstav

Niškni! Vstavajte!
D'jak dumnyj govorit.

[3] Ščelkalov

Pravoslavnye! Neumolim bojarin.
Na skorbnyj zov
bojarskoj dumy i Patriarcha,
i slyšať ne chotel o trone carskom.
Pečaľ na Rusi, pečaľ bezschođnaja,
pravoslavnye!
Stonet zemlja v zlom besprav'i.
Ko Gospodu sil pripodite,
da nispošlēt on skorbnoj Rusi utješen'je
i ozarit nebesnym svetom
Borisa ustalyj duch!

[4] Kaliki perechožie

Slava tebe,
tvorcu vsevyšnemu na zjemli,
slava silam tvoim nebesnyim
i vsem ugodnikam,
slava na Rusi!

The Crowd (*together, kneeling*)

For whom do you desert us, our father?
Unto whom are you abandoning us, kinsman!
We orphans call out and pray to you
with burning tears:
Have mercy! Have mercy, dear lord boyar!
Our father! Our benefactor!
A-a-a-a-a-a-a

Police Officer

(*signals to the crowd on seeing Shchelkalov*)
Silence! On your feet!
The Secretary of the council speaks.

Shchelkalov (*greets the crowd*)

True-believers! The boyar is steadfast.
He did not listen to the appeal
of the Boyars' Council and the Patriarch,
regarding the royal throne.
Grief for Russia! Grief beyond consolation,
True-believers!
The land is moaning in this lawlessness!
Prostrate yourselves before the Mighty Lord,
May he send solace to the grieving land of Russia
And with the light of heaven
illumine Boris's weary spirit!
(*He enters the monastery*)

Chorus of Blind Pilgrims with their Guides

(*men and young boys, offstage*)
Glory to Thee,
Almighty Creator, on Earth!
Glory to thy heavenly Hosts
And to all the saints,
Glory throughout Russia!

Narod

Bož'i ljudi!

Kaliki perechožie

Angel Gospoden' miru rek:
podnimajtes', tuči groznye,
nesites' na zemlju ruskuju!
Vy nesites' po podnebes'ju,
zastilajte zemlju ruskuju!

Sokrušite zmija ljuta,
so dvanadesjat'ju krylami-chobotami,
togo zmija, smutu ruskuju, da beznačalie.
Vozvestite pravoslavniim da vo spasen'e:

Oblekajtes' v rizu svetlye,
podnimajte ikony Vladyčicy,
i so Donskoj i so Vladimirskej
grjadite carju vo sreten'e!

Vospojte slavu bož'ju,
slavu sil svjatyech nebesnyich!
Slava tebe, tvorcu, na zemli!
Slava otcu nebesnomu!

Mužčiny

Slychal, čto bož'i ljudi govorili?

Mitjuča

Slychal!
I so Donskoj i so Vladimirskej...

Mužčiny

Nu!

The Crowd (*in a whisper*)

Men of God!

Pilgrims (*approaching*)

The Angel of the Lord spoke:
'Arise, thunderous clouds,
Make your way to Russia!
Sweep across the heavens,
Cover the land of Russia!
(*coming on stage*)

Destroy the evil serpent
With twelve wings and snouts,
That serpent bringing endless troubles to Russia!
Announce to the true-believers, for their salvation:
(*distributing amulets among the crowd*)
Clothe yourselves in bright robes
Lift up images of Our Lady,
And with the icons of Don and Vladimir
go forth to meet the tsar!
(*continue towards the monastery*)
Glory to our Lord
and to the heavenly hosts!
Glory to thee, our Creator, on Earth!
Glory to our heavenly Father.

Men (*tenors II*)

Did you hear what the men of God said?

Mityukha

I did:
With the Don and Vladimir icons...

Men (*basses II*)

Yes?

Mitjucha

I so Donskoj i so Vladimirskej
vy idite...

Mužčiny

Čego?

Mitjucha

Idite...

Mužčiny

Nu!

Mitjucha

So Donskoj idite...

Mužčiny

Ploch, brat!

Mužčiny

Oblekajtes' v rizy svetlye,
i so Donskoj i so Vladimirskej
vy grjadite carju vo sreten'e!

Mužčiny

Carju?

Mužčiny

Kakomu Carju?

Pristav

Ěj, vy!

Mužčiny

Kak kakomu?

Mužčiny

A Borisu!

Mityukha

With the Don and Vladimir icons
Go...

Men (*tenors II*)

Come again?

Mityukha

Go forth...

Men (*basses II*)

Come on!

Mityukha

With the Don icon, go...

Men (*tenors II and basses II*)

Nonsense, brother!

Men (*tenors I and basses I*)

Clothe yourselves in bright robes
And with the icons of Don and Vladimir
go forth to meet the tsar.

Men (*tenors II*)

The tsar?

Men (*basses II*)

What tsar?

Police Officer

Hey, you!

Men (*tenors I*)

What do you mean, 'what tsar'?

Men (*basses I*)

Why, Boris!

Pristav

Ěj, vy, baran'e stado! Al' oglochli!
Vam ot bojar ukaz:
Zautro byt' v Kremle
i ždat' tam prikazanij. Slyšali?

Narod

Vona! Za delom sobirali!

A nam-to čto?

Veljat zavyt', zavoem i v Kremle.

Zavoem.

Dlja ča nje zavyt'.

Čto ž? Idëm, rebjata!

Police Officer

Hey, you bunch of sheep! Are you deaf?
This command is from the boyars:
Be at the Kremlin by morning
And wait there for orders! Do you hear me?

(Exit)

The Crowd

(basses)

So! We are told to gather!

(altos)

What does it matter to us?

(sopranos)

If we have to shout, we'll shout in the Kremlin too.

(altos)

We'll shout.

(basses)

Why not shout?

(tenors)

All right then, people, let's go!

(They disperse)

Scene 2: The Coronation Scene

Inside the Moscow Kremlin, on the square between the Cathedral of the Assumption and the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael. The crowd is kneeling. Great pealing of bells.

5 Šujskij

Da zdravstvuet car' Boris Feodorovič!

Narod

Živi i zdravstvuj, car' naš batjuška!

Šujskij

Slav'te!

Narod

Už kak na nebe solncu krasnomu slava, slava!

Už i kak na Rusi carju Borisu slava, slava!

Živi i zdravstvuj, car' naš batjuška!

Radujsjja, ljud! Radujsjja, veselisja, ljud!

Pravoslavnyj ljud!

Veličaj carja Borisa i slav'!

Bojare

Da zdravstvuet car' Boris Feodorovič!

Narod

Da zdravstvuet!

Už kak na Rusi carju Borisu slava, slava!

Carju slava! slava! slava! slava!

6 Boris

Skorbit duša.

Kakoj-to starch nevol'nyj

zloveščim predčuvstviem

skoval mne serdce.

Prince Shuisky (*at the entrance of the cathedral*)

Long live Tsar Boris Fyodorovich!

The Crowd

Long live the tsar, our dear father!

Shuisky

Glorify him!

The Crowd

As the red sun in the sky, glory, glory!

So Tsar Boris in the land of Russia, glory, glory!

(The royal procession emerges from the Cathedral of the Assumption.)

Long live the tsar, our dear father!

Rejoice, people! Rejoice, make merry, people!

True-believing people!

Magnify Tsar Boris and glorify him!

A group of Boyars

Long live Tsar Boris Fyodorovich!

The Crowd

All hail!

Glory to Tsar Boris in Russia! Glory!

Glory to the tsar! Glory! Glory!

Boris (*from the entrance to the cathedral*)

My soul is grieving.

An unknown fear I cannot control

grips my heart

with evil forebodings.

O, pravednik, o moj otec deržavnyj!
Vozzri s nebes na slezy vernych slug
i nispošli ty mne
svjaščennoe na vlast' blagosloven'e.
Da budu blag i praveden kak ty,
da v slave pravlju svoj narod.
Teper' poklonimsja
počijuščim vlastiteljam Rossii.

A tam szyvat' narod na pir,
vseh, ot bojar do ničšego slepca!
Vsem – vol'nyj vchoď, vse – gosti dorogie!

7 Narod

Slava! slava! slava!
Živi i zdravstvuj, car' naš batjuška!
Mnogaja leta carju Boricu!
Už kak na nebe solnyšku slava, slava!
Už kak na Rusi carju Borisu slava!
Slava i mnogaja leta! Slava! Slava!

O holy one! O all-powerful father!
Look down upon the tears of your faithful servants
And send down
your holy blessing for the reins of power.
That I may rule my people in true glory,
And be as blessed and as just as you.
Now let us bow before
The sleeping sovereigns of Russia.
(majestically)
And now let the people be called to a feast,
All, from boyars to the poor blind beggar,
The doors stand open, all shall be our guests!
*(walks across the square to the Cathedral
of the Archangel)*

The Crowd

Glory, glory, glory!
Long live the tsar, our dear father!
Many years to Tsar Boris!
As the sun in the sky, glory, glory!
So Tsar Boris in the land of Russia, glory!
Glory for years to come! Glory! Glory!

Scene 3: In Pimen's Cell

Night. A cell in the Chudov Monastery. The monk Pimen is writing before an icon lamp. Grigory is asleep.

8 Pimen

Eščě odno poslednee skazan'e
i letopis' okončena moja.
Ispolnen trud, zaveščannyj ot Boga
Mne, grešnomu.

Nedarom mnogich let
svidetelem Gospod' menja postavil.
Kogda-nibud' monach trudoljubivyj
najdět moj trud userdnyj, bezymjannyj;
zasvetit on, kak ja, svoju lampadu,
i pyl' vekov ot chartij otrjachnuv,
pravdivye skazan'ja perepišet:
da vedajut potomki pravoslavnych
zemli rodnoj minuvšuju sud'bu.

Na starosti ja syznova živu.
Minuvšee prochodit predo mnoju,
volnujasja kak more-okean.
Davno l' ono neslos', sobytij polno...
Teper' ono spokojno i bezmolvno.
Odnako blizok den', lampada dogoraet.

Eščě odno poslednee skazan'e...

9 Grigoryj

Včě tot že son! Vozmožno l'!
V tretij raz prokljatyj son!
A starik sidit da pišet,
i dremotoj

Pimen (*writes; pauses*)

One more, one final tale
and then my chronicle is finished;
Fulfilled the task assigned by the Lord,
to me, a sinner.

(writes; pauses)

It was with reason the Almighty
Appointed me the witness of these many years.
Some diligent monk may in the future find
My assiduous and anonymous work;
Like me, he will then light his oil lamp,
Blow the dust of years off the parchment,
And copy these truthful tales,
So that the descendants of true-believers
May know the past of their native land.
(becoming thoughtful)

In ripe old age I live my life afresh,
The past unfolds before my very eyes,
ever-moving like the sea, the ocean.
Once upon a time it was filled with events...
Now all has grown peaceful, silent.
But day is drawing near, the lamp burns low.
(writes)

Just one more, one final tale...

Grigory (*wakes up*)

That dream once more! How can that be?
Three times the same damned dream!
And the old man sits there writing,
I don't think he has taken

znat' vo vsju noč' on ne smykal očej.
Ka ja ljublju ego smirennyj vid,
kogda, dušoj v minuvšem pogružennyj,
spokojnyj, veličavyj,
on letopis' svoju...

Pimen

Prosnulsja, brat?

Grigorij

Blagoslovi menja, čestnoj otec.

Pimen

Blagoslovi tebjja Gospod'
i dnes', i prisno, i vo veki.

10 Grigorij

Ty vsě pisal i snom ne pozabylsja.
A moj pokoj besovskoe mečtan'e
trevožilo, i vrag menja mutil.
Mne snilos': lestnica krutaja
vela menja na bašnju; s vysoty
mne videlas' Moskva, čo muravejnik,
narod vnizy na ploščadi kipel
i na menja ukazyval so smechem...
I stydno mne, i strašno stanovilos'...
I padaja sremglav, ja probuždalsja.

Pimen

Mladaja krov' igraet.
Smirjaj sebja molitvoj i postom,
i sny tvoji
videnij lëgkich budut polny.
Donyne, esli ja,
nevol'noju dremotoj obessilen,
ne sotvorju molitvy dolgoj k noči,

Even a short nap throughout the entire night.
How I love that peaceful look of his,
When, his soul is immersed in a distant past,
Calm and serious
He pens his chronicle...
(goes up to Pimen and bows deeply)

Pimen

So you are awake, brother?

Grigorij

Give me your blessing, reverend Father.

Pimen

May the Lord give you his blessing
Today, tomorrow, every day to come.

Grigorij

You have been awake and writing all night,
While I've been troubled by a hellish nightmare,
My soul plagued by the devil.
I dreamt of a steep staircase
That led me up a tower. From there
All of Moscow looked like an ant-hill,
People teeming on the square below.
They pointed up at me with mocking laughter,
And I became ashamed, and terrified –
And, falling headlong, I woke up.

Pimen

Youthful blood burns hot.
Discipline yourself with prayer and fasting,
And your dreams
Will be filled with lighter visions.
Even now, if I
Chance to fall asleep without
Having said my full prayers at night,

moj staryj son ne tich in ne bezgrešen.
Mne čudjatsja to bujnye piry,
to schvatki boevye,
bezumnye potechi junych let!

Grigorij

Kak veselo provël svoju ty mladost'!
Ty voeval pod bašnjami Kazani,
ty rat' Litvy pri Šujskom otrazal,
ty videl dvor in roskoš' Ioanna.
A ja ot otročeskich let
po kelijam skitajus', bednyj inok!
Začem i mne ne tešit'sja v bojach,
Ne pirovat' za carskoju trapezoi!

Pimen

Ne setuj, brat,
čto rano grešnyj svet pokinul.
Ver' ty mne: nas izdali plenjaet roskoš'
i ženskaja lukavaja ljubov'.
Pomysli, syn, ty o carjach velikich:
kto vyše ich? I čto že: o kak často, často
oni menjali svoj posoch carskij, i porfiru,
i svoj venec roskošnyj
na inokov klobuk smirennyj,
i v kelii svjatoj dušoju otдыхali.
Zdes', v etoj samoj kel'e
(v nej žil togda Kirill mnogostradal'nyj,
muž pravednyj), zdes' videl ja carja.
Zadumčiv, tich sidel pred nami Groznyj,
i ticho reč' iz ust ego lilašja,
a v očah ego surovych
raskajan'ja sleza drožala...
I plakal on...

My old man's rest is neither quiet nor innocent.
I dream instead of rowdy feasts,
And combat on the battlefield,
The wild amusements of my younger years!

Grigory

How much you experienced in your youth!
You fought beneath the towers of Kazan,
Under Shuisky you defeated the Lithuanian army,
You witnessed Ivan's court and its splendour!
Myself, since boyhood, I've gone
From cell to cell, a wretched monk!
Why shouldn't I, too, enjoy the thrill of battle,
Or revel at the table of a tsar?

Pimen (*quietly*)

Brother, do not lament
At having renounced so early the world of sin.
Believe me: seen from afar, luxury and the sly love
of women are seductive.
Consider, my son, those great and mighty tsars.
Who is higher than them? And yet: so very often
Have they exchanged sceptre,
Purple cloak and golden crown
For the simple cowl of a monk,
Seeking peace in a holy cell.
Here in this very cell
(where once the monk Kirill dwelt, a righteous
And long-suffering man) – here did I see the tsar:
Brooding and quiet the Terrible sat before us,
From his lips the words flowed softly,
And in his stern eyes
Tears of repentance trembled...
And then he wept...
(*becoming thoughtful*)

A syn ego Feodor!
On carskie čertogi
preobratil v molitvennuju kel'ju.
Bog volzljubil smirenje carja,
i Rus' pri nĕm vo slave bezmjatežnoj utešilas' ...
A v čas ego končiny
sveršilosja neslychannoe čudo!
Palaty ispolnilis' blagouchan'ja,
i lik ego kak solnce prosijal!
Už ne vidat' takogo nam carja!
Prognevali my Boga, sogrešili,
Vladykoju sebe
careubijcu narekli!

Григорий

Davno, čestnoj otec,
čotelos' mne tebja sprosit'
o smerti Dimitrija-careviča.
Ty, govorjat, v to vremja byl v Ugliče?

Pimen

Och, pomnju!
Privĕl menja Gospod' uvidet' zloe delo,
krovavyy grech! Togda ja v Uglič
na nekoe byl uslan poslušat'e.
Prišĕl ja v noč' ... Na utro, v čas obedni ...
Vdrug slyšu zvon: udarili v nabat;
krik, šum, begut vo dvor caricy,
ja tuda ž, gljažu:
ležit v krovi zarezannyj carevič,
carica mat' v bespamjatstve nad nim,
kormilica nesčastnaja v otčajan'i rydaet.
A tam, na ploščadi, narod, ostervenjas', voločit
bezbožnuju predateľnicu mamku.
Vop!'! ... Stony! ...

And what of his son Fyodor?
He made the royal chambers
Into a cell for prayer.
God loved him for his humility;
Under him, Russia thrived in serene glory.
And at the time of his passing,
A wondrous miracle took place:
The palace was filled with a saintly fragrance,
And his face itself shone like the sun.
Never again will we see such a tsar!
We've angered God with our sins,
Appointing as our ruler
A regicide!

Grigory

Good Father, I have often
Wanted to ask you about
The death of tsarevich Dimitry.
You were, they say, in Uglich at that time?

Pimen

I remember!
God brought me there to witness an evil deed,
A bloody crime! I had been sent away
To Uglich to do penance.
I arrived at night... and at the hour of morning Mass
I heard bells ring, sounding the alarm.
There were screams. All ran to the tsarina's courtyard.
I too hurried there and saw
the tsarevich bathed in his own blood, stabbed,
His mother lying near him, unconscious,
The sobbing nurse, helpless with despair.
And the enraged crowd in the square dragging along
The godless, treacherous wet-nurse.
Screams! Moans!

Vdrug meždu nich, svirep, ot zlosti bleden,
javljaetsja luda-Bitjagovskij...
„Vot on, vot, vot zlodej!“, razdalsja obščij vopl’.
Tut narod brosiljsja vo sled
bežavšim trëm ubijcam.
Zlodeev zachvatili
i priveli pred tëlpyj trup mladenca.
I čudo! Vdrug mertvec zatrepetal...
„Pokajtesja!“; narod im zagremel.
I v užase... pod toporom...
zlodei pokajalis’...
i nazvali Borisa...

Grigorij

Kakich byl let carevič ubiennyj?

Pimen

Let semi. Postoj!...
S tech por prošlo let desjat’?
Ili net!... Dvenadcat’?
Da, tak: dvenadcat’ let,
on byl by tvoj rovesnik
i carstvoval!

No Bog sudil inoe.

Borisa prestuplen’em vopijuščim
zaključu ja letopis’ svoju.
Brat Grigorij,
ty gramotoj svoj razum prosvetil,
tebe moj trud peredaju.
Opisyvaj, ne mudrstvuja lukavo,
vsë, čemy svidetel’ v žizni budeš’!
Vojnu il’ mir, upravu gosudarej,
proročestva i znamen’ja nebesny...
A mne pora, pora už otdochnut’.

Suddenly, in the throng, wild, pale with hatred,
that Judas Bitjagovsky appeared.
‘That’s him, that’s the villain’, yelled the crowd.
And then the people
Ran after the three fleeing murderers.
The villains were seized
And brought before the warm corpse of the boy.
A miracle! The corpse began to tremble...
‘Confess!’ the crowd howled.
Horrificed... threatened with the axe,
The assassins confessed,
And named Boris...

Grigory

How old was the tsarevich when they killed him?

Pimen

Some seven years... But wait!
Is it ten years ago now?
Or not? Maybe twelve?
Yes, that’s it: Twelve years ago.
He’d be about your age,
And seated on the throne.
*(Grigory draws himself up to his full height,
then lowers himself with feigned humility.)*
But God decided otherwise.
So, with this horrific deed by Boris
I end my chronicle.
Brother Grigory,
The gift of writing has enlightened your mind,
I hand my work down to you.
Describe, without unnecessary embellishment,
All that you will come to witness in life:
War as well as peace, the rule of the mighty,
Prophecies and celestial portents...
For me it’s time to rest. *(He rises, listening)*

12 Zvonjat k zautrene...Blagoslovi, Gospod',
svoich rabov! Podaj kostyl', Grigorij.

Monachi

Pomiluj nas, Bože!
Pomiluj nas, vseblagij!
Otče naš, vsederžitel',
Bože večnyj, pravyj,
pomiluj nas!

Grigorij

Boris, Boris, vsě pred tobój trepeščet,
nikto ne smeeť i napomnit'
o žrebiu nesčastnogo mladenca.
A meždu tem otšel'nik v tёмnoj kel'e
Zdes' na tebja donos užasnyj pišet,
I ne ujděš' ty ot suda ljudskogo,
kak ne ujděš' ot bož'ego suda!

It's ringing for matins... O Lord,
Bless Thy servants! Hand me my stick, Grigory.

Monks and Novices

(passing the cell window)

Lord, have mercy upon us!
All-merciful, have mercy upon us!
Our Father, Omnipotent,
God eternal and righteous,
Have mercy upon us!

(Exit Pimen)

Grigory

Boris, Boris! Before you all tremble.
Not a living soul would dare to remind you
Of the fate of that unfortunate child.
Meanwhile, in this dark cell a hermit
Is writing a dire denunciation against you,
And you shall not be spared the judgement of this world
Nor escape that of the Lord on high!

Scene 4: At the Inn

An inn on the Lithuanian border. Enter Varlaam and Missail, two vagrant monks, with Grigory behind them in layman's clothes.

13 Chozjajka

Čem-to mne vas potčevat', starcy čestnye?

Misail

Čem Bog poslal, chozjajuška.

Varlaam

Net li vina?

Chozjajka

Kak ne byt', otcy moi! Sejčas vynesu.

Varlaam

Čto ž ty prigorjunilsja, tovarišč?

Vot i granica Litovskaja,

do kotoroj tebe tak chotelos' dobrat'sja.

Grigoryj

Poka ne budu v Litve,

ne mogu byt' spokojen.

Varlaam

Da čto tebe Litva tak sljubilas'?

Vot my, otec Misail da az mnogogrešnyj,

kak utekli iz monastyrja,

tak i v us sebe ne duem!

Litva li, Rus' li,

čto gudok, čto gusli,

vsě nam ravno:

bylo b vino

Da vot i ono!

Innkeeper

What can I offer you, reverend fathers?

Missail

Whatever the Lord has provided, hostess.

Varlaam (*smacks Missail on the neck*)

Is there any wine?

Innkeeper

Certainly, fathers! Let me go fetch it.

(*Varlaam looks at Grigory*)

Varlaam

Why this brooding, comrade?

Here is the Lithuanian border

You've been so anxious to reach.

Grigory (*thoughtful*)

I won't relax until

I'm in Lithuania.

Varlaam

Why this love that you have for Lithuania?

Look at us, Father Missail and myself, a sinner.

Ever since we ran away from the monastery,

Nothing matters to us:

Lithuania or Russia,

A flute or a harp;

We don't care

as long as there's wine

(*Enter the Hostess with the wine*)

And here it comes!

Chozjajka

Vot vam, otcy moi, pejte na zdorov'e.

Misail i Varlaam

Spasibo, chozjajuška, Bog tebjá blagoslovi!

[14] Varlaam

Kak vo gorode bylo vo Kazani,
Groznyj car' piroval da veselilsja.
On tatarej bil neščadno,
čtob im bylo nepovadno
vdol' po Rusi guljat'.

Car' podchodom podchodil
da pod Kazan'-gorodok,
on podkopy podkopal
da pod Kazanku-reku.
Kak tatare-to po gorodu počaživajut,
na carja Ivana-to pogljadyvajut.
zli tatarove!

Groznyj car'-to zakručinilsja,
on povesel golovušku na pravoe plečo.
Už kak stal car' puškarej szivat',
puškarej vsě zažigal'ščikov,
zažigal'ščikov.
Zadymilasja svečka vosku jarogo,
podchodil molodoj puškar'-to k bočečke.
A i sporocho-m-to bočka zakružilasja, oj!
po podkopam pokatilasja,
da i chlopnula!
Zavopili, zagaldeli zli tatarove,
blagim matom zalivalisja.
Poleglo tatrovej t'ma t' myščaja,

Innkeeper

Here you are, fathers. Drink to your hearts' content.

Missail and Varlaam

Thank you, hostess, and may God bless you.
(Pouring out and drinking)

Varlaam

Once upon a time in the city of Kazan,
The Terrible Tsar feasted and made merry:
He beat the Tatars without mercy,
Teaching them not to go
Rampaging round Russia!
(drinks)
The tsar approached
The city of Kazan.
Digging a tunnel under
The Kazanka River.
The Tatars in the city walked back and forth,
On the look-out for Tsar Ivan,
The evil Tatars!
(drinks)
This angered the Terrible Tsar:
He pondered as he bowed his head.
Then he summoned his gunners,
Gunners to light the fuses,
To light the fuses.
The waxed stick was smoking
As a young gunner went up to the barrel;
The powder-barrel started to roll – oh!
It rolled through the tunnel,
And then it blew up!
The Tatars started to wail and howl,
Angry oaths were heard.
Untold numbers of Tatars were slain,

poleglo ich sorok tysjačej
da tri tysjači.

Tak-to vo gorode bylo, vo Kazani... È!

15 Čto ž ty ne podtjagivaeš'
da i ne potjagivaeš'?

Grigorij

He choču.

Misail

Vol'nomu volja.

Varlaam

A p'janomy raj, otec Misail!

Vyp'em čaročku

za šinkaročku!

Odnako, brat:

kogda ja p'ju,

tak trezvych ne ljublju.

Ino delo p'janstvo,

ino delo čvanstvo.

Chočeš' žit' kak my, milosti prosim!

Net! tak ubirajsja, provalivaj.

Grigorij

Pej, da pro sebja razumej,

otec Varlaam!

Varlaam

Pro sebja! Da čto mne pro sebja razumet'? Èch!

Yes, forty thousand men

And then three.

Once upon a time in the city of Kazan, hey!

(to Grigory)

Why aren't you singing,

And why aren't you drinking?

Grigory

I'm not in the mood.

Missail

A free choice for a free man...

Varlaam

And a paradise for the drunk, Father Missail.

Let's empty a cup to

Our fair hostess...

(Both of them drink, but Varlaam

continues to study Grigory)

However, brother:

When I drink,

I don't like sober people.

Being drunk is one thing,

Being proud is another.

If you want to live like us, you're welcome:

If not, begone and good riddance!

Grigory

Drink, and keep your thoughts to yourself,

Father Varlaam!

Varlaam

To myself? And why think to myself? Eh!

(slumping over the table)

[6] Kak edet ěn,
edet ěn, ěn,
da pogonjaet ěn.
Šapka na ěm
torčit kak rožon,
kaftan ot ves'-to grjazěn.

Grigorij

Chozjajka! Kuda vedět ěta doroga?

Chozjajka

A v Litvu, kormilec.

Grigorij

A daleĉe do Litvy?

Chozjajka

Net, rodimyj, nedaleĉe,
k veĉeru možno pospet',
kaby ne zastavy.

Grigorij

Kak? Zastavy?

Chozjajka

Kto-to bežal iz Moskvy, a veleno
vseh zaderživat' da osmatrivat'.

Grigorij

Ě! Vot tebe, babuška, i Jur'ev den'!

Varlaam

Svalilsj ěn,
ležit ěn, ěn.
Da vstat' ne možeět ěn.

Grigorij

A kogo im nužno?

He rides on,
He rides on,
And drives his horse hard.
The hat on his head
Sticks up like a horn,
And his cloak is covered in mud...

Grigorij (*to the Innkeeper*)

Hostess, where does this road lead?

Innkeeper

To Lithuania, master.

Grigorij

And is it far to Lithuania?

Innkeeper

No, dear, it's not;
You could reach it by evening,
If not for the border guards.

Grigorij

What? Border guards?

Innkeeper

Someone has escaped from Moscow,
And everybody is to be questioned.

Grigorij

Well, grandmother, that was a nasty surprise!

Varlaam

He falls off,
He lies there,
And cannot get up again.
(*nodding off*)

Grigorij

So who are they after?

Chozajka

Už ne znaju, vor li, razbojnik kakoj,
tol'ko prochodu net
ot pristavov prokljatych.

Grigorij

Tak...

Chozajka

A čego pojmajut?
Ničego, ni besa lysogo.
Budto tol'ko i puti, čto stolbovaja!
Vot, choť otsjuda:
svoroti nalevo,
da po tropinke
i idi do Čekanskoj Časovni,
čto na ruč'ju,
a ottuda na Chlopino, a tam na Zajcevo,
a tut už vsjakij mal'čiška do Litvy tebja provodit.
Ot ètich pristavov tol'ko i tolku,
čto tesnjat prochožich
da obirajut nas, bednych.

Varlaam

Priechal èn,
da v dver' tuk-tuk!
Da čto est' močen'ki tuk-tuk-tuk!

Chozajka

Čto tam eščë?

Vot oni, prokljatye!
Opjat' dozorom idut!

Innkeeper

I don't know: a thief or some robber,
Anyway there's no way past
Those damned guards.

Grigory

So...

Innkeeper

And what will they catch?
Not even the devil's shadow.
As if the highway was the only way!
Here's what you need to do:
Turn left from here,
Take the path as far
As the Cekansky Chapel
By the stream,
Then straight to Khlopino, and onwards to Zajcevo,
And from there any child can guide you to Lithuania.
As for these guards all they do
Is bother travellers
And rob us poor people.

Varlaam (*yawns and stretches*)

He arrives,
And knocks on the door, bang, bang!
With all his might, bang, bang, bang!

(Loud knock on the door)

Innkeeper

What's going on?
(goes to the window and peers out)
Here they are, damn them!
Out patrolling again.

*(opens the door and lets in a patrol of
border guards)*

Varlaam

Kak edet ěn...
Edet ěn, ěn...
Da pogonjaet ěn...

Pristav

Vy ěto za ljudi?

Misail i Varlaam

Starcy smirennye, inoki ěestnye,
chodim po selenijam, sobiraem milostyn'ku.

Pristav

A ty kto takoj?

Misail i Varlaam

Naš tovarišě.

Grigorij

Mirjanin iz prigoroda,
provodil starcev do rubeža,
idu vosvojasi.

Pristav

Paren'-to, kažetsja, gol:
plocha poživa...
Vot razve starcy... Hm!

Nu, otcy moi, kakovo promyšljaete?

Varlaam

Och! Plocho, syne, plocho!
Christiane skupy stali,
den'gu ljubjat, den'gu prjaěut,
malo Bogu dajut.
Priide grech velij
na jazytcy zemnii.
Chodiš', chodiš', moliš', moliš',
ele-ele tri poluški vymoliš'.

Varlaam (*wakes up briefly*)

He rides on,
He rides on,
And drives his horse hard.

Border Guard (*to Varlaam*)

Who are you?

Missail and Varlaam (*grovelling*)

God-fearing, humble monks,
Visiting the villages collecting alms.

Border Guard (*to Grigory*)

And you?

Missail and Varlaam (*hastily*)

Our companion...

Grigory (*casually*)

A layman from the outskirts of town.
I've been escorting the monks to the border,
and now I'm going back home.

Border Guard (*to his men*)

The young one looks poor, I'd say;
we'll get nothing out of him.
But the monks... Hm!
(*clears his throat and goes up to the table*)
Well, good fathers? How are things going?

Varlaam

O! Badly, my son, badly!
Christians are tight-fisted nowadays...
They love their money and hide it away,
Offering nothing to the Lord.
Great sins have come
Upon the peoples of Earth.
You walk and walk; you pray and pray
but it hardly brings you three copper coins.

Čto delat'?

S gorja i ostal'noe prop'eš'.

Och, prišli naši poslednie vremena!

Chozjajka

Gospodi, pomiluj i spasi nas!

Varlaam

Čto ty na menja tak pristol'no smotriš'?

Pristav

A vot čto:

Al'čha! Pri tebe ukaz? Davaj sjuda!

Vidiš': iz Moskvy bežal nekij eretik,
Griška Otrep'ev.

Znaeš' li ty èto?

Varlaam

Ne znaju.

Pristav

Nu, i car' velel ego, eretika,
izlovit' i povestit'.

Slychal li ty èto?

Varlaam

Ne slychal.

Pristav

Čitat' umeeš'?

Varlaam

Net, syne, ne umudril Gospod'.

Pristav

Tak vot tebe ukaz.

What to do?

Out of worry you waste what's left on drink.

Oh, our last days have arrived!

Innkeeper

Lord have mercy and preserve us!

(The border guard looks intently at Varlaam)

Varlaam

What are you staring at me for?

Border Guard

This is what for!

(to his comrade)

Alyosha! Do you have the order? Give it to me!

(to Varlaam)

Listen up: a heretic, Grishka Otrepiev,
Has fled from Moscow.

Don't you know about this?

Varlaam

No, I don't.

Border Guard

Well, the tsar commands that this heretic
Be caught and hanged.

Have you heard about that?

Varlaam

No, I haven't.

Border Guard

Can you read?

Varlaam

No, my son, the Lord never taught me.

Border Guard

Here's the order for you.

Varlaam

Na čto on mne?

Pristav

Étot eretik, razbojnik, vor, Griška – ty!

Varlaam

Vona! Čto ty, Gospod' s tobój!

Chozjajka

Gospodi!

I starca-to v pokoe ne ostavjat!

Pristav

Éj! Kto zdes' gramotnyj?

17 Grigorij

Ja gramotnyj.

Pristav

Éva! Nu, čitaj... Vsluch čitaj!

Grigorij

Čudova monastyrja

nedostojnyj černeck Grigorij,

iz rodu Otrep'evych,

naučen diavolom,

vzdumal smuščit' svjatuju bratiju

vsjakimi soblazny i bezzakonijami.

A bežal on, Griška, k granice Litovskoj,

i car' prikazal izlovit' ego...

Pristav

I povesit'!

Grigorij

Zdes' ne skazano povesit'.

Varlaam (*in horror*)

What's it to me?

Border Guard

This heretic, robber, thief, this Grishka is – you!

Varlaam

What are you saying? God bless you!

Innkeeper

Good Lord!

They don't even leave monks in peace!

Border Guard

Right! Does anyone here read?

Grigory

I can read.

Border Guard (*surprised*)

Really? Well then, read it... read it aloud!

Grigory (*reads*)

'An unworthy monk

Of the Chudov Monastery,

Grigory, of the Otrepiev family, has,

Inspired by the devil,

Stirred up the holy brethren

With various temptations and iniquities.

He then fled, this Grishka, to the Lithuanian border

And the tsar has ordered that he be arrested...'

Border Guard

And hanged.

Grigory

It doesn't say 'hanged' here.

Pristav

Vrěš'! Ne vsjako slovo v stroku pišetsja.
Čitaj: izlovit' i povesit'.

Grigorij

I povesit'.

A let emy...

Griške, ot rodu... pjat' desjat...
boroda sedaja, brjucho tolstoe,
nos krasnyj...

Pristav

Derži ego! Derži, rebjata!

Varlaam

Čto vy!

Postrely okajannye!

Čego pristali? Nu kakoj ja Griška!

Net, brat, molod šutki šutit'.

Hot' po skladam umeju,

chot' plocho razbiraju, a razberu!

Razberu,

kak delo-to do petli dochodit.

A le... let... a let... emu... dvadcat'.

Gde ž tut pjat' desjat? Vidiš'!

A rostu on srednego, volosy... ryžie,

na nosu... na nosu borodavka,

na lbu... drugaja,

odna ruka... ruka... koroče... koroče drugoj...

Da èto už ne...

Border Guard

You're lying! They don't write down every word
in these. Read: 'To be apprehended and hanged'.

Grigory

'And hanged.' (*continues to read*)

'And the age of... (*looking at Varlaam*)

This Grishka is... fifty years...

He has a grey beard, a fat belly
and a red nose...'

Border Guard

Seize him! Seize him, comrades!

(*the guards rush at Varlaam*)

Varlaam

What's this?

Away, you wretches!

What do you want? How could I be Grishka?

(*taking the order away from Grigory*)

No, brother! You're too young for jokes like this.

Even if I can only just spell it

and barely make sense of it, I'll manage!

I'll manage,

since otherwise it's the noose!

(*reads, tracing the letters with his finger*)

'And his age is... twenty.'

Where does it say fifty? See!

'Of medium height, red hair...

on his nose... his nose a wart,

and another on his... his brow,

and one arm... one arm shorter than the other...'

(*stares at Grigory*)

But isn't that...

(*Grigory pulls his knife and jumps through
the window*)

Misail, Varlaam, Pristav

Derži, derži, derži ego!

Varlaam

Derži!

Pristav

Derži!

Misail

Derži ego!

Varlaam, Missail and Border Guard

Seize him, seize him!

Varlaam

Seize him!

Border Guard

Seize him!

Missail

Seize him!

*(All run out through the door, shouting
'Seize him!')*

Scene 5: Kremlin Scene

The Tsar's apartments in the Kremlin.

DISC 2 **1** **Ksenija**

Milyj moj ženich,
prekrasnij korolevič!
Ne mne ty dostalsja,
ne svoej neveste,
A syroj mogilke,
na čužoj storonke.

Feodor

Volga, pritek eč Oka,
Kljaz'ma, vot i Vladimir
na Kljaz'me,
a tam Kama, Šeksna, Mologa,
vse pritoki Volgi.
Goroda: Tver', Jaroslavl', Uglič,
Kostroma, Nižnij.
Vot i Astrachan', tut i ust'e Volgi.
Gospodi, šir' kakaja! Skol'ko ostrovov!

Ksenija

Gde ty, moj nenagladnyj,
na kogo ty menja pokinul.
Na slězy gor'kie
da na kručinu po tebe, moj milyj,
Ivanuška Korolevič,
želannyj moj ženich.

Feodor

Kaspij more, ust'e Volgi.
Širina Volgi v ust'e sem' vërst.
Dlina eč s istoka dve tysjači vërst,
a požaluj i poble...

Xenia (*laments over her bridegroom's portrait*)

My beloved bridegroom,
My beautiful prince!
You do not belong
To me, your bride,
But to a bare grave
On a foreign shore.

Fyodor (*studying a map of Russia*)

The Volga... its tributary the Oka...
The Klyazma, here's the city of Vladimir
on the Klyazma,
And there's the Kama, Sheksna, Mologa,
All of them tributaries of the Volga
The cities: Tver, Yaroslavl, Uglich,
Kostroma, Nizhny.
Here's Astrakhan, and there's the mouth of the Volga.
Good Lord, how wide it is. So many islands!

Xenia

Where are you, my darling?
Why did you leave me?
Who will comfort me;
My bitter tears, my heavy grief,
Prince Ivanushka,
My longed-for bridegroom.

Fyodor

The Caspian Sea, the mouth of the Volga.
The mouth of the Volga is seven versts wide,
Its full length is two thousand versts,
Perhaps even more...

2 Mamka

Polno, carevna-golubuška!
Polno plakat' da ubivat'sja.

Ksenija

Ach, grustno, mamuška! Tak grustno.

Mamka

!!... što ty, ditjatko!
Devič'i slězy, čo rosa,
vzoidět solnyško, rosu vysušit.
Ne klinom svet sošělsja:
Najdēm my ženicha
i prigožego i privetlivogo,
zabudeš' pro Ivana Koroleviča.

Ksenija

Ach net, net, mamuška.
Ja i mērtvomu budu emu verna.

Gde ty, moj nenagladnyj,
želannyj moj ženich,
ach gde ty, Ivanuška, gde...

Boris

Čto, Ksenija, čo, milaja moja,
v nevestach už pečal'naja vdovica.
Všě plačeš' ty o mērtvom ženiche?
Sud'ba mne ne sudila
vinovnikom byt' vašego blaženstva.
Byt' možet, ja progneval nebesa!
No ty, bezvinnaja, začem že ty stradaeš'?

Idi, moj drug, v svoju svetlicu,
besedoj tēploju s podrugami svoimi
rassej svoj um ot dum tjaželych.

Nurse (*embracing Xenia*)

Enough, my tsarevna. My dove!
Enough of tears and grief!

Xenia

Oh, I feel so sad, Nurse, so sad!

Nurse

Oh, come now, my child.
A girl's tears are like dewdrops;
When the sun rises, the dew dries up.
There are plenty more fish in the sea!
We'll find you another bridegroom,
A handsome and happy one
And you will soon forget Prince Ivan.

Xenia

No, no, dear Nurse,
I shall be true to him although he is dead.
(*enter Boris*)

Where are you, my darling?
My longed-for bridegroom,
Oh, where, Ivanushka, where...

Boris

Dear Xenia, my beloved, unhappy daughter.
Widowed before you became a wife.
Do you still grieve the death of your bridegroom?
It was not the will of fate
For me to be the author of your bliss.
Have I perhaps provoked the ire of heaven?
But why must you, so innocent, suffer?
(*caresses and kisses Xenia*)
Now go, my child, to your chambers,
Where intimate conversation with your friends
May distract you from your heavy thoughts.

Idi, ditja.

A ty, moj syn, čem zanjat? Ęto čto?

Feodor

Čertěz zemli Moskovskoj, naše carstvo
iz kraja v kraj. Vot vidiš': vot Moskva,
vot Novgorod, a vot Kažan',
vot Astrachan', vot more, Kaspij more.
vot permskie dremučie lesa,
a vot Sibir'.

Boris

Kak chorošo, moj syn.
Kak s oblakov, edinyim vzorom,
ty možeš' obozret' vsě carstvo:
granicy, reki, grady.
Učis', Feodor.
Kogda-nibud', i skoro, možet byt',
tebe vsě Ęto carstvo dostanetsja:
učis', moj syn.

3 Dostig ja vjššej vlasti.

Šestoj už god ja carstvujju spokojno,
no sčast'ja net moej izmučennoj duše.
Naprasno mne kudesniki suljat
dni dolgie, dni vlasti bezmjatežnoj.
Ni žizn', ni vlast', ni slavy obol'sčen'e,
ni klikli tolpy menja ne veseljat.
Mne sčast'ja net. Ja dumal svoj narod
v dovol'stvii i slave uspoikoit',
ščedrotami ljubov' ego sniskat',
no otložil pustoe popečen'e.
O skol' bezumny my,
kogda narodnyj plesk il' jaryj vopl'

Go, my child!

(Exeunt Xenia and Nurse)

And you, my son, what are you doing? What is that?

Fyodor

A map of the lands of Muscovy; our realm
from end to end. Look here: here's Moscow,
Here's Novgorod and here's Kazan,
there's Astrakhan. That is the sea – the Caspian –
and these are the wide forests of Perm...
And that's Siberia.

Boris

Well done, my son!
As from the clouds above, with a glance
you can take in all our domains:
The frontiers, rivers, cities.
Study, Fyodor.
At some time in the future, perhaps soon,
all of this kingdom will be yours.
Study, my son.
(goes to the table, sits down lost in thought)

I've achieved the highest power;
This is the sixth year that I reign in peace.
But there's no joy within my tortured soul.
Falsely fortune-tellers have promised me
A long life, and a reign free from trouble:
But neither life, nor power, nor the lure of glory,
Nor the shouting of the crowd can cheer me.
There is no joy for me. I thought to appease
My people with wealth and with glory.
To win their love with generous gifts,
But soon I gave up such vain concerns.
How mad we are,
When the crowd's unending praise,

tšeslavnoe trevožit serdce naše.
Bog nasyal na zemlju našu glad,
narod zavyl, v mučen'jach iznyvaja.
Ja velel otkryt' im žitnicy,
ja zlato rassypal im,
ja im syskal raboty.
Oni ž menja, besnujas', proklinali.
Požarnyj ogn' ich domy istrebil,
i vetr raznēs ich žalkie lačužki.
Ja vystrol im novye žilišča,
ja odeždy rozdal im,
ja prigrel, ja prijutl ich.
Oni ž menja požarom uprekli.
Vot černi sud!

V sem'e svoej ja mnil najti otradu,
gotovil dočeri
vesělyj bračnyj pir,
mojej carevne, golubke čistoj.
No ne sudil Gospod'
mne éto utešen'e.
Kak burja, smert' unosit ženicha.
I tut lukavaja molva
vinovnikom dočernego vdovstva
sčitala – Bože pravednyj!
Menja, menja, nesčastnogo otca.

Kto ni umrēt, ja vseh ubijca tajnyj:
ja otravil sestru svoju, caricu,
ja uskoril Feodora končinu,

ja otroka nesčastnogo,
čareviča maljutku...

Its howling can disturb and touch our hearts!
The Lord punished us with a great famine,
The people was wailing, died in awful pain:
I opened up the granaries,
Scattered gold at their feet,
Found them work to do.
But in their madness they cursed me!
A fire broke out, and swallowed houses and farms,
And storms swept away their miserable hovels;
I had new houses built for them to live in
I clothed them
I looked after and protected them;
And in their turn they blamed me for the fire!
Such is the judgment of the rabble.

I hoped to find contentment in my family,
wanted for my daughter's sake
to prepare a joyous wedding feast,
for my princess, my pure little dove.
But God did not allow me
this consolation.
Like a storm, death carried off the bridegroom.
And even now rumours among the people
Blame me for the unhappiness of my beloved child
– o righteous God! –
me, me, the unhappy father.

*(shudders. A Boyar-in-attendance enters the room
quietly and stands waiting by the door)*

Whenever someone dies, I am the assassin.
I poisoned the tsarina, my own sister,
I had a part in hastening Fyodor's end,
(the Boyar approaches Boris)
And the unfortunate boy...
The little tsarevich...
(Startled, angrily)

4 Tebe čego?

Bojarin

Velikij gosudar'!

Boris

Nu! Nu čto ž? čto ž smolk?

Bojarin

Velikij gosudar'!

Tebe knjaz' Vasilij Ivanyč Šujskij
čelom b'ët.

Boris

Šujskij? Zovi! Postoj!
Skaži, čto rady videt' knjazja
I ždëm, skaži, bez gneva ego besedy.

Bojarin

Večër Puškina cholop
prišël s donosom
na Šujskogo, Mstislavskogo i pročich,
i na chozjaina:
noč'ju tajnaja beseda šla u nich.
Gonec iz Krakova priechal...

Boris

Gonza schvatit'!

Protiven mne rod Puškinych mjatežnyj!

A Šujskomu ne dolžno doverjat':
uklončivyj, no smelyj i lukavyy.

Šujskij

Velikij gosudar', čelom b'ju.

Boris

Čto skažeš', knjaz' Vasilij?

What do you want?

Boyar (*apprehensively*)

Great Sovereign...

Boris

Well! What's the matter? Why are you silent?

Boyar

Great Sovereign!
Prince Vasily Ivanovich Shuisky
Asks humbly for an audience.

Boris

Shuisky? Summon him in! Wait!
Tell him that we're glad to see him
and wait, without anger, to hear his news.

Boyar (*whispers to Boris*)

Last night, Pushkin's servant
Came to report:
that Shuisky, Mstislavsky and others
Had a meeting at his master's:
They spoke in secret during the night.
And a messenger arrived from Cracow...

Boris (*menacingly*)

He must be seized!
(*exit Boyar*)
I loathe those troublemakers from the house of Pushkin!
(*enter Shuisky*)
Nor is Shuisky one to be trusted –
He's deceitful, shrewd and cunning.

Shuisky (*comes up to Boris and bows deeply*)

Great Sovereign, I am your servant.

Boris (*with studied calm*)

What's on your mind, Prince Vasily?

Šujskij

Moj dolg velit tebe povedat'
vest' važnuju.

Boris

Ne tu l', čto Puškinu privěz
večor s Litvy tainstvennyj gonec?

Šujskij

Ja dumal, ne vedaš' ty étoj tajny.

Boris

Net nuždy, knjaz', rasskazyvaj.

Šujskij

No, pri careviče... nelovko...

Boris

Vzdor! Šujskij! Carevič možet znat',
čto vedaet knjaz' Šujskij. Govori.

Šujskij

Car', v Litve javilsja samozvanec.

Boris

Čto?
Kto ž étot samozvanec?

Šujskij

Korol', pany i papa za nego.

Boris

No čem opasen on?

Šujskij

Konečno, car', sil' na tvoja deržava.
Ty milost'ju, raden'em i ščedrotoj
usynovil serdca svoich rabov.
No znaeš' sam: bessmyslennaja čern'
izmenčiva, mjatežna, sueverna,

Shuisky

It is my duty to bring you
important news.

Boris

The same news that Pushkin received in secret
last night by courier from Lithuania?

Shuisky (*startled*)

I was not aware that you knew of this secret...

Boris

No matter, Prince; to the point!

Shuisky

But in front of the Tsarevich... it's awkward...

Boris

Nonsense, Shuisky! The Tsarevich is entitled
To know what's known to Prince Shuisky. Speak!

Shuisky (*aghast*)

Sire, in Lithuania a Pretender has appeared!

Boris

What? (*contemptuously*)
And who is this Pretender?

Shuisky

The king, the nobility and the Pope support him!

Boris (*anxiously*)

But is he a threat?

Shuisky

Your power, my Lord, is needless to say great.
By kindness, zeal and generosity
You've won the hearts of those who serve you.
But, as you know full well, the senseless rabble
Is treacherous, rebellious, superstitious,

legko pustoj nadežde predana,
malejšemu vnušeniju poslušna,
k istine sucha i ravnodušna,
vsě basnjami pitaetsja ona.
Ej nravitsja besstydnaja otvaga.
Tak esli sej nevedomyj brodjaga
Litovskuju granicu perejdět,
k nemu tolpu bezumcev privlečëť
Dimitrija voskresnuvšee imja!

Boris

Dimitrija! Carevič, udalis'!

Feodor

No gosudar', pozvol' mne...

Boris

Nel'zja, moj syn, podi!
Podi!

Vzjat' mery sej že čas,
čtob ot Litvy Rus' ogradilas'
zastavami!
Čtob ni odna duša ne perešla za etu gran',
čtob zajac ne pribežal iz Pol'si k nam,
čtob voron ne priletel iz Krakova.
Stupaj!

☐ Ili net! Postoj, postoj, Šujskij!
Nepravda l', éta vest' zatejlivá?
Slychal li ty kogda-nibud',
čtob deti mërtyve iz groba vychodili
doprašivat' carej, carej zakonnych,
naznačennyh, izbrannyh vsenarodno,
uvenčennyh velikim Patriarchom...

And can be easily swayed by empty hopes,
Obedient to any momentary passion,
Deaf and indifferent to the simple truth
And choosing fairy-tales to feed their minds.
Their admiration is for brash courage
And so if this mysterious vagabond
Should cross the Lithuanian border,
The crowd may well be attracted by his name
Dimitry, brought to life again!

Boris (*aghast*)

Dimitry? Tsarevich, leave the room at once.

Fyodor

My Lord, allow me...

Boris

No, my son, leave! (*accompanies Fyodor to the door*)
Go! (*Exit the tsarevich. Boris closes the door and goes up to Shuisky*)
Take measures, now at once,
Seal Russia off from Lithuania
Set guards on all roads;
let not a single person cross that border;
not a single hare must come to us from Poland;
not a single crow fly here from Cracow...
Now leave!
(*Shuisky bows*)

But no! Wait, wait a moment, Shuisky!
Don't you think this story sounds unlikely?
Did you ever hear
Of dead children rising from their graves
To question the tsars... the lawful tsars,
Appointed by the people,
Crowned by the great Patriarch...

Cha, cha, cha, cha, cha, cha, cha, cha!

A? Čto? Smešno?

Čto ž ne smeš'sja?

Šujskij

Ja? Gosudar'...

Boris

Slušaj, Šujskij: Kak otroka sego...

Kak otrok sej lišilsja kak-to žizni...

Ty poslan byl na sledstvie. Teper'
tebja krestom i bogom zaklinaju,
po sovesti, vsju pravdu mne skaži:
v ubitom uznaš li ty Dimitrija?

Šujskij

Kljanus' tebe...

Boris

Net, Šujskij, ne kljanis'.

Skaži, to byl carevič?

Šujskij

On!

Boris

Vasilij Ivanyč!

Ja milost' obeščaju,
prošedšej lži opalaju naprasnoj
ne nakažu. No esli ty chitriš',
golovoju syna kljanus'!
Tebja postignet zlaja kazn'!
Takaja kazn', čto sam Ivan Vasil'ič car'
ot užasa vo grobe sodrognětsja!

Ha, ha, ha, ha...

(laughing wildly he stares at Shuisky)

Eh?... What?... Isn't that funny?

Why aren't you laughing?

Shuisky

I, Majesty...

Boris

Now listen, Shuisky: when the little boy was...

(hesitates)

When the little boy had somehow lost his life...

(harshly)

You were sent to investigate. So now
I command you by the Cross and the name of the Lord
To tell the truth upon your conscience:
Did you identify the murdered Dimitry?

Shuisky

I swear to you...

Boris

No, Shuisky, do not swear!

But tell me: was it the tsarevich?

Shuisky *(seems to make an effort to remember)*

Yes!

Boris

Vasily Ivanich!

I promise my indulgence,
I shall not punish past deceit.
But if you're lying to me,
I swear on the life of my own son
That I will think up a fearful punishment,
To make even Tsar Ivan Vasilyevich
Shudder in his grave with horror!

6 Šujskij

Ne kazn' strašna,
strašna tvoja nemilost'.
Pred tobaj mogu li ja lukavit'?
Tri dnja v Ugliče, v sobore,
ja trup mladenca naveščal.
Vokrug nego trinadcat' tel ležalo
i po nim už tenie
zametno prostupalo.
No lik careviča
byl svetel, čist i jasen.
Glubokaja ne zapekalas' jazva,
čerty ž lica sovsem ne izmenilis'.
Kazalosja, v svojej on kolybel'ke
spokojno spit, složivši ručki
i v pravoj krepko sžav
igrušku detskuju, volčëk...

Boris

Dovol'no, udalis'!

Uff! tjaželo, daj duch perevedu.
Ja čuvstvoval, vsja krov' mne kinulas' v lico
i tjažko opuskalas'.
O sovest' ljutaja,
kak strašno ty karaeš'!
Eželi v tebe pjatno edinoe,
edinoe slučajno zavelosja,
kak jazvoj morovoj duša sgorit,
nal'čtsja serdce jadom,
i tjažko stanet,
kak molotkom stučit v ušach
ukorom i prokljat' em.
I dušit čto-to!
I golova kružitsja...

Shuisky

Death does not frighten me,
What frightens is your displeasure.
How would I dare try to deceive you?
For three days in the cathedral in Uglich
I visited the corpse of the child.
Thirteen dead bodies lay around him
And in them signs of decay
Were to be seen;
But the face of the tsarevich
Was clear, fresh and calm.
The deep wound had not closed
But his features were unaltered.
He might as well have been asleep in his cradle,
His little hands were folded,
His right one tightly clasping
A child's toy – a spinning top...

Boris

Enough! Now go! (*Exit Shuisky, turning around to look at Boris a few times*)
Oh, how unbearable! Let me catch my breath.
I felt the blood rush to my face
And then drain away.
Oh, cruel conscience,
How terrible your punishment is!
For should there be a spot upon you,
One single spot incurred by accident,
The soul is eaten up as if by a plague,
A poison fills the heart
Such suffering...
Beating like a hammer in the ears
There's reproaches and curses.
It stifles me!
My head is spinning,

V glazach ditja okrovavlennoe...
Von... von tam... čto čto... tam v uglu...
kolyšetsja, rastět... blizitsja...
drožit i stonet...
Čur, čur, ne ja, ne ja tvoj lichodej!
Čur, čur, ditja, ne ja!... narod...
volja naroda...
Čur, ditja!
O, Gospodi!
Ty ne chočeš' smerti grešnika...
Pomiluj dušu
prestupnogo carja Borisa!

And before my eyes a blood-stained child!
There... over there... What's that? In the corner...
Swaying, growing... coming closer;
Shuddering, moaning... (*backing away*)
Begone, begone; not I, I'm not your evildoer!
Begone, begone, child, not I!... The people...
The will of the people!
Begone, child! (*on his knees*)
O, Lord!
You do not demand the death of a sinner.
Have mercy on the soul
of guilty Tsar Boris!

Scene 6: In front of the Cathedral of St Basil the Blessed

The square before the Cathedral of Basil the Blessed in Moscow. Coming out of the cathedral, a group of men are joining those already standing about in the square.

7 Mužčiny

- Čto, otošla obednja?
- Da. Už proklinali togo.
- Kogo èto?
- A Grišku-to, Grišku Otrep'eva!
- Vot èto!

Mitjucha

Vyšel èto, bratcy, d'jakon zdorovenyj, da tolstyj, da kak garknet:

„Griška Otrep'ev, anafema!“

Mužčiny

- Čego, čèrt, èto ty brešeš'!
- Al' beleny ob'elsja?
- Vzapravdu, bratcy!
- Vot tak-taki chvatil:
- „Griška Otrep'ev“, govorit, „anafema!“
- Cha-cha-cha, da nu ich!
- Čareviču plevat',
- èto Grišku proklinajut.
- Nešto on Griška?
- Vestimo!

Mitjucha

A careviču propeli večnuju pamjat'.

Mužčiny

- Vona, čas ot času ne legče.
- Živomu-to?
- Vot bezbožniki-to, pravo!

Men (in groups)

- Is the Mass over?
- Yes. They have damned him already.
- Who's that?
- Grishka, Grishka Otrepiev.
- Ah! Him!

Mityukha

The deacon, big and fat, came out and hollered:

‘Grishka Otrepiev – anathema!’

Men

- What the devil! What rubbish!
- Have you gone mad?
- It's the truth, brothers!
- That's what he shouted:
- ‘Grishka Otrepiev’ he said, ‘anathema!’
- Ha, ha, ha. And so what!
- The tsarevich couldn't care less if Grishka is damned.
- He's not Grishka, is he?
- That's right.

Mityukha

And for the tsarevich they sang a requiem.

Men

- Well! It gets worse and worse.
- For someone who is alive?
- What heretics, to be sure!

Živomu careviču!

Nu pogodi užo! Zadast on, znat', Borisu!

– Už pod Kromy, bajut, podošěl.

– Idět s polkami na Moskvu!

– Gromit po vsem koncám Borisovy polki.

– Pobednyj put' vedět ego

na otčij prestol carej pravoslavnych,
na pomošč' nam,

na smert' Borisu i Borisovym ščenkam.

– Čto vy, čto vy! Tiše, čerti!

Al' dybu da zastenok pozabyli?

8 Mal'čiški

Trrr-rrr-rrr-rrr! Železnyj kolpak, železnyj kolpak!

Trrr-rrr-rrr-rrr! Železnyj kolpak, železnyj kolpak!

U-lju-lju-lju-lju-lju...! Trrr-rrr!

Jurodivyj

Mesjac edet,

kotěnok plačet,

jurodivyj vstavaj,

Bogu pomolisja,

Christu poklonisja,

Christos Bog naš,

budet vědro,

budet mesjac...

budet vědro...

mesjac...

Mal'čiški

Zdravstvuj, zdravstvuj, jurodivyj Ivanyč,

vstan', nas počestvuj, v pojas poklonisja nam,

For the living tsarevich!

But just wait: he'll teach Boris a lesson!

– They say he is already in Kromy.

– He's marching on Moscow with his army.

– He's routing Boris's forces everywhere.

– A path of victory takes him to the throne
of his fathers the true-believing tsars,
bringing help to us

and death to Boris and his whelps!

– What kind of talk is this? Quiet, you devils!

Have you forgotten the torture chamber and
the dungeons?

*(Looking around, they continue
walking about the square)*

Street Urchins (chasing after the Holy Fool)

Trrrr... Tin hat, tin hat!...

Trrrr... Tin hat, tin hat!...

La la la la la... Trrrr...

Holy Fool

The moon is sailing,

The kitten whines,

Holy Fool, arise,

Pray unto the Lord,

And bow to Christ,

Christ our Lord,

The weather will be fair,

The moon will shine...

Fair weather...

Moon...

Street Urchins

Greetings, greetings, holy fool Ivanovich!

Stand up and honour us, bowing low!

kolpačėk-to skin'! Kolpačėk tjažė!

Dsyn'-sdyn'-dsyn', dsyn'-dsyn'-dsyn',
ėk zvonit!

Jurodivyj

A u menja kopečėka est'.

Mal'čiški

Šutiš'! Ne nadueš' nas, ne bojs'!

Jurodivyj

Viš'!

Mal'čiški

Fit'!

Jurodivyj

A-a-a! Obideli jurodivogo!

A-a! Otnjali kopečėku!

A-a-a-a!

Ženščiny

Kormilec batjuška,
podaj Christa radi!
Otec naš gosudar',
Christa radi!

Mužčiny

Car', car' idėt!
Car' gosudar',
podaj Christa radi!
Kormilec batjuška,
pošli ty nam milostyn'ku, Christa radi!

Ženščiny

Gosudar' batjuška, Christa radi!

Take off your hat! That's a heavy hat!

(They tap the hat)

Ting, ting, ting! Ting, ting, ting!

Hear it ring!

Holy Fool

I've got a kopeck.

Street Urchins

You're joking! You can't trick us!

Holy Fool *(hunts for the kopeck)*

See!

Street Urchins

Yah! *(Snatch the coin and run off)*

Holy Fool

Oh, oh, oh, oh! They've wronged the Holy Fool!

Oh, oh! They've taken his coin!

Oh, oh, oh!

(The royal procession emerges from the cathedral)

Women *(at the entrance of the cathedral)*

Benefactor, father,
Alms in the name of Christ!
Our father and lord,
in the name of Christ!

Men *(in the square)*

The tsar, the tsar is coming!
Our sovereign tsar,
Alms in the name of Christ!
Provider, Father,
Alms in the name of Christ!

Women *(following Boris)*

Sovereign and father, in the name of Christ!

Narod

Naš batjuška, podaj nam chleba!
 Chleba! chleba! daj golodnym!
 Chleba! chleba! chleba podaj nam, batjuška,
 Christa radi!

Jurodivyj

A-a-a-a-a-a!
 Boris! A Boris!
 Obideli jurodivogo! A-a-a!

[9] Boris

O čem on plačet?

Jurodivyj

Mal'čiški otnjali kopeečku,
 veli-ka ich zarezat',
 ka ty zarezal malen'kogo Zareviča.

Šujskij

Molči, durak! Schvatite duraka!

Boris

Ne tron'te! Molis' za menja, blažennyj.

Jurodivyj

Net Boris! Nel'zja, nel'zja, Boris!

Nel'zja molit'sja za carja Iroda!
 Bogorodica ne velit.
 Lejtes', lejtes',
 slězy gor'kie,
 plač', plač', duša
 pravoslavnaja.

The Crowd

Beloved father, give us bread!
 Bread! Bread for those who hunger!
 Bread! Bread! Give us bread, Lord,
 in the name of Christ!

Holy Fool

Oh, oh, oh, oh! (*catching sight of Boris*)
 Boris! Hey, Boris!
 They have wronged the Holy Fool! Oh, oh, oh!

Boris (*stopping in front of the Holy Fool*)

Why is he crying?

Holy Fool

The boys have taken my kopeck away!
 Have them murdered,
 the way you murdered the little tsarevich.

Shuisky

Silence, idiot! Seize the idiot!

Boris

(*stopping Shuisky*)
 Don't touch him! Pray for me, holy man...
 (*exit*)

Holy Fool

(*jumping up*)
 No, Boris... I cannot, I cannot, Boris!
 (*the crowd disperses*)
 I cannot pray for Tsar Herod...
 The Mother of God forbids it...
 Flow, flow,
 Bitter tears!
 Weep, weep,
 True-believing soul!

Skoro vrag pridët,
i nastanet t'ma,
temen' tëmnaža,
neprogľadnaja.
Gore, gore Rusi,
plač', plač', ruskij ljud,
golodnyj ljud.

The enemy is soon here
And darkness will fall,
Darkest darkness,
Endless darkness.
Woe, woe to Russia!
Weep, weep, Russian folk!
Starving folk!

Scene 7: The Death of Boris

A hall in the Granovitaya Palace in the Kremlin. On each side there are benches for the boyars to sit. Extraordinary session of the boyars' дума.

10 Ščelkalov

Sanovitye bojare!

Velikij gosudar', car' Boris Feodorovič,
s blagoslovenija velikogo svjatejšego oca
i Patriarcha vseja Rusi,
velel vam ob'javit':

„Razbojnik, vor, brodjaga bezyzvestnyj,
zlodej i buntovščik,
vosstavšij mjatežom
s tolpoj naëmnikov golodnyh
i imenem Careviča nazvavšis',
sebjä carëm iskonnyim veličaja,
soputstvuem bojarami opal'nymi
i vsjakoj svoloč'ju litovskoj,
zadumal sokrušit' tron Borisov
i vas, bojar, k tomu ž nadmenno priglašäet,
o čëm zlodejskie ukazy razosla.“
Togo radi, blagoslovjas',
nad nim pravdivyj sud vaš sotvorite.

11 Bojare

– Čto ž? Pojdëm na golosa, bojare.
– Vam pervym načinat', bojare.
– Da naše mnenie davno gotovo.

– Piši, Andrej Michailyč.
Zlodeja, kto b ni byl on, skaznit'!

Shchelkalov

Noble Boyars!

(The boyars rise)

Our Great Lord, Tsar Boris Fyodorovich,
With the blessing of the Great and Most Holy Father
And Patriarch of all Russia,
Bids it be proclaimed to you:

(reading from a document)

'A robber, thief, nameless vagrant,
Villain and rebel,
Having risen in mutiny
With a crowd of starving mercenaries
And, having taken himself the name of tsarevich,
Proclaiming himself as the true tsar,
Accompanied by disgraced boyars
And a variety of Lithuanian rabble,
Searches to overthrow Boris's throne
And, moreover, invites you, boyars,
To join him with his villainous proclamations.'
Wherefore, with the blessing of God,
Pronounce your righteous judgement upon him.

The Boyars *(in groups)*

– Well then, let us now vote, boyars.
– Your turn first, my lords.
– Our minds have long been made up.
(to Shchelkalov)
Write, Andrei Mikhailich.
The villain, whoever he may be, is to be executed!

– Stoj, bojare! Vy prežde izlovi,
a tam skazni, požaluj.
– Ladno.
– Nu, ne sovsem-to ladno.
– Da nu, bojare, ne sbivajte!
Zlodeja, kto b ni byl on, imat'
i pytat' na dybe krepko.
– A tam skaznit'
i trup ego povесit';
pust' kljujut vrany golodnye!
– Trup ego predat' sožžen'ju
na lobnom meste vsenarodno.
I triždy prokljast' tot prach poganyj.
– I razvejat' prach prokljatyj
za zastavami po vetru.

– Čtob i sled prostyl naveki
pobrodjagi samozvanca!

– I každogo, kto s nim edinomyslit, skaznit'!
– I trup k pozornomu stolbu pribit'.
– O čëm ukazy razoslat' povsemestno.

– Po sělam, gorodam i po posadam, po vsej Rusi,
čitat' v soborach i cerkvach,
na ploščadjach i schodach.
I Gospoda molit' kolenopreklonno,
da sžalitsja nad Rus'ju mnogostradal'noj.

– Wait, boyars! He must first be captured
and then executed!
– Very well!
– But maybe not so very well after all.
– Come now, my lords! Do not confuse us!
– The villain, whoever he may be,
Is to be captured and tortured mercilessly on the rack.
– Then to be executed
And his corpse strung up
For the starving crows to peck.
– His body to be burnt
On the place of execution, before the people,
And his ashes to be cursed three times.
– And the accursed ashes to be scattered
To the winds outside the city gates.
(all together)
That no trace should remain
Of the vagabond Pretender.
(in groups)
– And each of his accomplices to be executed.
– And their bodies nailed to a pillory.
– To which effect, proclamations are to be sent
everywhere,
(all together)
– To villages, towns and hamlets, all over Russia,
to be read in cathedrals and churches,
In squares and at gatherings of the people.
And the Lord to be humbly beseeched
That he might have mercy on suffering Russia.
(Enter Shuisky slowly, looking intently at the gathering)

12 Bojare

– Žal', Šujaskogo net knjazja.
Chot' i kramol'nik, a bez nego,
kažis', neladno vyšlo mnen'e.

Šujaskij

Prostitute mne, bojare.

Bojare

Ėk, lëgok na pomine!

Šujaskij

Pozapozdal malen'ko,
ne vovremja požalovat' izvolil.
Čto delat'?'
Dela, zaboty tjažkie, legko li, pravo!

Bojare

Stydilsja by, Vasil' Ivanyč,
v tvoji kramoloju postydnoj zanimat'sja.
Narod na ploščadjach mutit'.
Čto živ carevič zaverjat'.

Šujaskij

Oj! Čto vy, bojare! Pobojtes' Boga!
Mogu li ja vo dni velikoj skorbi,
v sebe nosja kručinu Rusi celoj,
mogu li ja kramolam predavat'sja?
Všë nagovory zlye, všë nedrugi.

I za čto ne ljubjat!

Vot i teper',
ljubja vas vsej dušoj, bojare, choču predupredit'.
Namedni, uchodja ot gosudarja,
skorbja vsem serdcem,

A Group of Boyars

A pity that Prince Shuisky is not here;
He is a plotter, but without him
Our verdict may be not be the best.

Shuisky

Forgive me, boyars!

Another group (aside)

Speaking of the devil!

Shuisky

I am somewhat late,
I was not able to be here on time.
What can one do?
Business, worrisome cares... it isn't easy.

Boyars

– Shame on you, Vasily Ivanich,
To be dealing with shameful intrigues at your age!
– Stirring up the crowds in the squares.
– Claiming that the tsarevich is alive...

Shuisky (frightened)

Oh. What is this, boyars? Fear the Lord!
Would I, at a time of great hardship,
while bearing in my soul all Russia's grief,
involve myself with intrigues?
That is just the calumnies of my enemies.
(aside)
This is why they hate me!
(approaches the boyars)
And so this time,
loving you as I do, my lords: a warning.
The other day, after taking my leave of our lord,
Grieving with all my heart,

radeja o duše carëvoj,
ja v ščëločku... slučajno... zagljanul.

O, čto uvidel ja, bojare!
Blednyj, cholodnym potom oblivajas',
droža vsem telom,
nesvjazno bormoča kakie-to slova čudnye,
gnevno očami sverkaja,
kakoj-to mukoj tajnoj terzajas',
stradalec gosudar' tomilsja.
Vdrug posinel,
glaza ustavil v ugol,
i strašno stenja i čurajas'...

Bojare

Lžëš'! lžëš', knjaz'!

Šujskij

K careviču pogibšemu vzyvaja...

Bojare

Čto?

Šujskij

Prizrak ego bessil'no otgonjaja,
čur, čur, šeptal.

13 Boris

Čur, čur!

Šujskij

Čur, ditja!

Ščelkalov

Tiše! car'... car'...

concerned for the soul of the tsar,
I happened to glance... by chance...
through a crack...

Oh, the sight I saw, boyars!
Pale, streaming with cold perspiration,
His whole body trembled
Incoherently muttering strange words,
His eyes flashing in fury.
Plagued by some secret torment,
Our Tsar was suffering in agony.
Suddenly, his face turned blue,
his eyes fixated on one corner,
And he groaned horribly, cowering...

Boyars

You are lying! You are lying, Prince!

Shuisky

Calling out to the dead tsarevich...

Boyars

What?

Shuisky

Trying in vain to chase away his ghost:
'Begone! Begone!' he whispered
(Enter Boris, gesturing as if warding off a spirit)

Boris (speaking)

Begone! Begone!

Shuisky

'Begone, child!'

Shchelkalov

Silence! The tsar! The tsar!

Boris

Čur, čur!

Bojare

Gospodi!

Boris

Čur, diťja!

Bojare

O, Gospodi! S nami krestnaja sila!

Boris

Čur, čur! Kto govorit ubijca?

Ubijcy net! Živ, živ maljutka.

A Šujskogo, za lživuju prisjagu, čertvertovat'!

Šujskij

Blagodat' Gospodnja nad tobou!

Boris

A?

Ja sozval vas, bojare,
na vašu mudrost' polagajus'.

V godinu bed i tjažkich ispytanj
Vy mne pomoščniki, bojare.

Šujskij

Velikij gosudar'!

Dozvol' mne, nerazumnomu, smirennomu rabu,
slovo molvit'.

Zdes', u Krasnogo kryl'ca,
starec smirennij ždět soizvolen'ja
predstat' pred oči tvoi svetlye.

Muž pravdy i soвета,
muž žizni bezuprečnoj,
velikoje on čudo povedat' chočet.

Boris

Begone! Begone!

Boyars

Oh, God!

Boris

Begone, child!

Boyars

Oh, God! The Almighty Cross protect us!

Boris

Begone! Begone! Who said 'murderer'?

There is no murderer! The little one is alive, alive.

And as for Shuisky, that liar, to be quartered!

Shuisky (*makes the sign of the Cross at Boris*)

The Lord's blessing upon you!

Boris (*listening*)

What?

(*coming to himself*)

I have summoned you, boyars.

I am counting on your wisdom.

(*sitting down*)

In a time of troubles and heavy trials,
you are my helpers, boyars.

Shuisky (*approaching Boris and bowing*)

Great Sovereign!

Permit me, your unworthy and humble servant
To speak...

Here, by the Great Stairs,

A gentle old man waits, hoping

To be allowed before your radiant eyes.

A man of truth and wisdom,

A man of unblemished reputation,

Who wishes to tell you of a great miracle.

Boris

Byť tak. Zovi ego!

Beseda starza, byť možet, uspokoiť
trevogu tajnuju izmučennoj duši!

14 Pimen

Smirenyj inok,
v delach mirskich ne mudryj sudija,
derzaet zdes' podat' svoj golos.

Boris

Rasskazyvaj, starik, vsě, čto znaješ', bez utajki.

Pimen

Rasskaz moj budet prost i kratok,
beschitrošnaja povest'
o divnom promysle Gospodnem!
Odnaždy, v večernij čas,
prišel ko mne pastuch, uže mastityj starec,
i tajnu mne čudesnuju povedal.
„Ešče reběnkom“, skazal on, „ja oslep
i s toj pory ne znal ni dnja, ni noči,
do starosti. Naprasno ja lečilsja
i zeliem, i tajnym našeptan'em,
naprasno ja iz kladezej svjatyh
kropil vodoj celebnoj oči, naprasno!
I tak ja k t'me svoej privyk,
čto daže sny moi
mne vidennyh veščej
už ne javljali,
a snilis' tol'ko zvuki.

Boris

So be it. Summon him!
(Exit Shuisky)

A talk with the old man will, perhaps, calm
The strange turmoil in my tormented soul!
*(Pimen enters. He stops in the doorway,
looking intently at Boris, then goes up to him)*

Pimen

A humble monk,
No wise judge in the matters of this world,
Now ventures to speak...

Boris

Tell me, old man, everything you know,
without hesitation.

Pimen

My tale shall be short and simple:
An artless account
Of the Lord's wondrous doings!
Once, at evening,
A shepherd came to me, a venerable old man,
And he told to me a wondrous secret.
'When I was a boy', he said, 'I was struck blind,
And from then on knew neither night nor day,
Until old age. In vain I sought a cure,
through herbs or whispered magic charms;
In vain I fetched water from holy wells
Sprinkling it upon my sightless eyes – in vain!
I became so used to my own darkness
That even in my dreams
I saw no longer
what I once had seen,
My dreams were sound alone.

15 Raz, v globokom sne, vdruk slišu:
detskij golos zovet' menja, tak vnjatno zovet':
'Vstan', deduška, vstan',
idi ty v Uglič grad,
zaidi v sobor Preobražen'ja,
tam pomolis' ty nad moej mogilkoj;
znaj, deduška, Dimitrij ja carevič,
Gospod' prijal menja v lik angelov svoich,
i ja teper' Rusi velikij čudotvorec.'
Prosnulsja ja... podumal...
vzjal s soboju vnuka
i v dal'nij put' poplělsja.
I tol'ko čto sklonilsja nad mogilkoj,
tak chorošo vdruk stalo,
i slězy polilis',
obil'no, ticho polilis', i ja uvidel
i božij svet, i vnuka, i mogil... "

Boris

Oj! Dušno! dušno! svetu!

Careviča skorej!

Och, tjažko mne! Schimu!

16 Ostav'te nas! Ujdite vse!

Proščaj, moj syn, umiraju...
Sejčas ty carstvovat' načneš'.
Ne sprašivaj, kakim putěm
ja carsvo priobrěl.
Tebe ne nužno znat'.

Once, deep in sleep, I suddenly heard
A child's voice calling to me, its words most clear:
'Rise up, old man, rise up
And go to Uglich town,
Go into the Cathedral of the Transfiguration
And pray there over my little tomb;
Know, old man, that I am Dimitry the Tsarevich;
The Lord has taken me among his angels,
And I am now a great miracle-worker in Russia.'
'I woke up... thought a little while...
Took my grandson with me
and left on the long journey.
And as I bowed over the tomb,
I felt a suddenly wellbeing,
and my tears began to flow.
They flowed profusely and silently, and I saw
God's world, my grandson, and the gra...'

Boris (*crying out and falling down in a faint*)

Ah! I can't breathe! I can't breathe! Light!

(The boyars rush to Boris's aid)

Bring the Tsarevich – quickly!

Ah! How I suffer! Fetch a monk's scapular!

(Some of the boyars, with Shuisky, run for the Tsarevich; another group set out for the Chudov monastery; the rest stay with Boris. The Tsarevich runs in)

Leave us... go away, everyone!

(Boyars exeunt)

Farewell, my son, I am dying.

Soon now your reign as tsar begins.

Do not ask by what means

I became tsar myself.

You don't need to know that.

Ty carstvovat' po pravu budeš',
kak moj naslednik, kak syn moj pervorodnyj.
Syn moj! Detja moë rodnoe!
Venec tebe dostalsja v tjažkiju godinu.
Silën zloj samozvanec!
On imenem užasnym opolčën.
Vokrug tebja bojar kramola,
izmena vojska, glad i mor...
Slušaj, Feodor:
Ne vverjajsja navetam bojar kramol'nych,
zorko sledi
za ich snošenijami tajnymi s Litvoju,
izmenu karaj bez poščady,
bez milosti karaj,
strogo vnikaj v sud narodnyj,
sud nelicemernyj,
stoj na straže borcom za veru pravuju,
svjato čti svjatyh ugodnikov bož'ich.
Sobljudi ty čistotu svoju, Feodor,
v nei mošč' tvoja i sila,
i razuma krepost' i spasen'e.
Sestru svoju, carevnu, sberegi, moj syn,
ty ej odin chranitel' ostačš'sja,
našej Ksenii, golubke čistoj.

17 Gospodi! Gospodi!
Vozzri, molju,
na slëzy grešnego otca,
ne za sebja molju,
ne za sebja, moj Bože!
S gornej nepristupnoj vysoty
prolej ty blagodatnyj svet
na čad moich nevinnych, krotkich, čistych.
Sily nebesnyje!

But you will reign rightfully
As my heir, as my first-born!
My son! My own dear child!
It is in troubled times that the crown comes to you.
The evil Pretender is strong!
He is armed with an awe-inspiring name.
You are surrounded by seditious boyars,
a treacherous army, famine and plague...
Listen to me, Fyodor:
Do not believe the slander of treacherous boyars,
Keep a sharp watch on
their secret relations with Lithuania,
Punish treachery without mercy,
Punish it without clemency,
Listen closely to the judgement of the people,
It is impartial;
Be strong as the champion of the true faith,
Honour the holy saints of the Lord.
Preserve your purity, Fyodor,
In that is your power and strength,
your wisdom and salvation.
Look after your sister, the Tsarevna, my son,
You are now her only protector...
Our Xenia, pure little dove...
(rapturously, almost speaking)

Oh Lord! Lord!
Look down, I beseech Thee,
on the tears of a sinful father!
Not for myself I pray,
not for myself, O God!
Lord, from Thy inaccessible height
Let a beneficial light pour down
Upon my children, innocent, meek and pure...
Ye heavenly powers!

Straži trona predvečnogo!
Krylami svetlymi vy ochranite
moë ditja rodnoe ot bed i zol...
ot iskušeni!

Zvon! Pogrebal'nyj zvon!

Pevčie

Plačte, plačte, ljudie,
nest' bo žizni v něm
i nemy usta ego
i ne dast otveta.
Plačte! Alliluja!

Boris

Nadgrobnij vopl'! Schima... svjataja schima...
V monachi car' idët.

Feodor

Gosudar', uspokoj'sja, Gospod' pomožet.

Boris

Net, net, moj syn, čas moj probil.

Pevčie

Vižu mladenca umirajušča
i rydaju, plaču,
metëtsja, trepeščet on,
i k pomošči vzyvaet
i net emu spasen'ja.

Boris

Bože! Bože! tjažko mne!
Užel' grecha ne zamolju!
O, zljaja smert'! kak mučiš' ty žestoko!

Guardians of the eternal throne!
With your radiant wings protect
my little child from woes and evil...
From temptation
(presses his son to his breast and kisses him; listens)
The bell... the funeral knell!

A Chorus of Monks and the Crowd *(offstage)*

Weep, weep, you people!
Life is fleeing from him,
And his lips are mute,
And he answers no more,
Weep. Hallelujah!

Boris

The lament for the dead! The scapular,
the holy scapular: the tsar becomes a monk.

Fyodor

My sovereign! Calm yourself! The Lord will help!

Boris

No! No, my son – my hour has come!

Chorus *(approaching)*

I see a child dying,
And I sob, I weep.
He tosses and turns
And calls for help.
There is no salvation for him...
(comes on stage, followed by the boyars)

Boris *(in torment)*

O God! O God! My burden's heavy!
I cannot now atone my sin!
O evil death! How cruel are your torments!
(leaping up)

Povremenite... Ja car' eščë!

Ja car' eščë...

Bože! Smert'! Prosti menja!

Vot, vot car' vaš... car'...

Prostitute...

Prostitute...

Wait, wait a while! I am still tsar!

(collapses; in a muffled voice)

I am still tsar...

O God! Death! Forgive me!

(speaking to the boyars, pointing to his son)

There! There! Your tsar! tsar!

Forgive me!

Forgive me!

(falls unconscious and dies)

Transliteration from the Cyrillic by Sergej Liamin



Göteborg Opera Chorus

Photo: © Lennart Sjöberg

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KENT NAGANO

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