



HAMLET

FRANCO FACCIO

Opera in four acts (1865)

Libretto by Arrigo Boito

Sung in Italian with German surtitles

It's an impetuous, impassioned Hamlet that treads the boards in composer Franco Faccio and librettist Arrigo Boito's opera *Amleto*, which was first staged in 1865 in Genua and performed again at La Scala Milan in 1871. The opera begins in the middle of the coronation ceremony for the new king, Claudius. Hamlet struggles to conceal his dark suspicions that Claudius had his father killed in order to seize his crown and his wife. Claudius's drinking song rings out like a cynical requiem for the dead.

Faccio and Boito skilfully and effectively challenge the conventions of Italian opera, which they wanted to revitalise by infusing it with the spirit of Shakespeare's drama. A fascinating libretto of great sensitivity and poetic power was delivered by Boito, who went on to write the libretti for Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* and *Falstaff*. The composer, Faccio, was also director of La Scala Milan and conducted the first performance in Italy of Verdi's *Aida* and the world premiere of *Otello*. However, his own opera *Amleto* was not a success at La Scala, notably because the tenor singing the lead role was so ill that the publisher Giulio Ricordi later described the performance as "*Hamlet* without Hamlet".

After that the opera was not staged again – until 2014 when it was revived in Albuquerque (USA) by conductor Anthony Barrese, who has also prepared a critical edition of the score. Curiously, the impressive funeral march for Ophelia's death has survived in the annual Easter ritual on the Greek island of Corfu.

The Bregenz Festival is now bringing Faccio's *Amleto* back to Europe. The *Turandot* conductor Paolo Carignani is as enthusiastic about the opera as Olivier Tambosi, the internationally acclaimed stage director. Joined by the respected stage designer Frank Philipp Schößmann and the successful costume designer Gesine Völlm, the team will enter the world of ghostly apparitions in the night, plays with treacherous intent, and a love that ends tragically.

OPERA AT THE FESTSPIELHAUS



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PREMIERE

20 July 2016 – 7.30 p.m.

FURTHER PERFORMANCES

25 & 28 July – 7.30 p.m.

FESTSPIELHAUS

Music director **PAOLO CARIGNANI**

Stage director **OLIVER TAMBOSI**

Stage designer **FRANK PHILIPP SCHLÖßMANN**

Costume designer **GESINE VÖLLM**

VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PRAGUE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

Bregenz Festival 20 July – 21. August 2016