



TURANDOT

GIACOMO PUCCINI

Lyric drama in three acts and five scenes (1926)

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni

Closing duet and finale completed by Franco Alfano

Sung in Italian with German surtitles

No man shall ever possess her – the Chinese princess Turandot sets three riddles for every man that comes to woo her. So far none have been able to solve the riddles, and have paid with their heads. Then an unknown prince achieves the impossible: he correctly answers all three questions. But Turandot is still unwilling to surrender to him. So the Prince is ready to lay down his life if she can find out his name by morning. Throughout the night, no one may sleep: everyone must try to discover his name...

It is this aria sung by Calaf, *Nessun dorma*, that made Giacomo Puccini's opera Turandot world famous. On the Bregenz stage it's delivered against the imposing backdrop of a dragon-shaped wall on Lake Constance. Marco Arturo Marelli's stage set makes use of Chinese symbols of power. The stage wall is inspired by the world's longest man-made structure, the Great Wall of China. The Bregenz wall is criss-crossed by detachments of terracotta warriors, over two hundred in all, some of them sky-high, others half-submerged in the water.

There are Chinese elements in the music, too. Puccini was inspired by tunes from music boxes that a diplomat friend brought back from China. But however Chinese Puccini's last opera might appear, the plot is adapted from a Persian tale and the score is full-blown Italian opera. The powerful Turandot is contrasted with the self-sacrificing Liù, who loves Prince Calaf and knows his name but movingly takes the secret to her grave. The populace mourns her death as passionately as previously it relished the spectacle of Turandot's suitors being beheaded. Fire artists, dancers and soldiers accompany Turandot's entrance in Act Two. Before she sets the Prince her riddles, she reveals why she is so hard-hearted: long ago a female ancestor of hers was abused and murdered by a man. Finally, however, Calaf's love is able to break the mask of Turandot's ancestress. As Puccini wanted, the two of them "descend through love to the level of mankind, and this love must at the end take possession of the whole stage".

OPERA ON THE LAKE



BREGENZER
FEST
SPIELE

PREMIERE

21 July 2016 – 9.15 p.m.

FURTHER PERFORMANCES

22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30 and 31 July – 9.15 p.m.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, and 21 August – 9 p.m.

LAKE STAGE | FESTSPIELHAUS

Music director

PAOLO CARIGNANI | GIUSEPPE FINZI

Stage director & stage designer

MARCO ARTURO MARELLI

Costume designer

CONSTANCE HOFFMAN

Lighting designer

DAVY CUNNINGHAM

Choir director

LUKÁŠ VASILEK

VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PRAGUE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

BREGENZ FESTIVAL CHORUS

Bregenz Festival 20 July – 21 August 2016