



# NERO

**ARRIGO BOITO**

**Tragedy in four acts (1924) | Libretto by the composer  
In Italian with German surtitles**

One of history's most notorious figures will make his appearance at the Festspielhaus: Roman emperor Nero, as a colourful character in Arrigo Boito's lavish opera. Spectacular displays of power contrast with pangs of remorse felt after murdering his mother. Glaring contrasts exist in the sombre rituals practised by pagan magician Simon Magus and the transfiguring purity of emerging Christianity, embraced by the prophet Fanuel. Fanuel is loved by Rubria, a vestal virgin serving as mediator between both creeds. With the assistance of Asteria, who is in love with Nero, Simon Magus conjures up the appearance of the goddess of the night to make the Emperor compliant. However, Nero exposes the illusion, proclaiming the demise of the gods. Placing himself on the altar, he begins to sing there, enjoying adulation as an artist and godly poet. Even as Rome has started to burn, he commands that a huge spectacle begin.

Begun in 1862, Boito strived to complete the piece for several decades, and it became his life's work. Only after his death did conductor Arturo Toscanini create a performable version, whose world premiere was held at La Scala Milan in 1924. Boito's libretti, including those for Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* and *Falstaff*, are some of the most outstanding achievements in operatic history. A leading intellectual in the Scapigliatura artistic movement, Boito also wrote the libretto for Franco Faccio's opera *Hamlet*, which was performed at the 2016 Bregenz Festival, marking the first time in almost 150 years that it had been performed once again on a European stage.

The directorial team behind this acclaimed rediscovery is now working on a new production of Boito's *Nerone*: Olivier Tambosi, an ardent enthusiast of Boito, is staging this fascinating, multi-faceted opus in collaboration with set designer Frank Philipp Schössmann and costume designer Gesine Völlm. Dirk Kaftan, who also made his debut on the Werkstattbühne at the 2016 Bregenz Festival, is acting as musical director.

## **PREMIERE**

22 July 2020 – 7.30 p.m.

## **FURTHER PERFORMANCES**

26 July – 11.00 a.m.

29 July – 7.30 p.m.

FESTSPIELHAUS

Musical director **Dirk Kaftan**

Stage director **Olivier Tambosi**

Stage designer **Frank Philipp Schössmann**

Costume designer **Gesine Völlm**

Opera at the Festspielhaus



**BREGENZER  
FEST  
SPIELE**

**Prague Philharmonic Choir  
Wiener Symphoniker**

The 2020 Bregenz Festival runs from 22 July to 23 August 2020. For tickets and details visit [www.bregenzfestspiele.com](http://www.bregenzfestspiele.com) or call +43 (0)5574 407-6.