



## DON CARLOS

Giuseppe Verdi

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Opera in 5 Acts

*Sung in French*

Libretto by Joseph Méry and Camille du Locle after Friedrich Schiller, *Don Carlos, Infant von Spanien*

### Opéra national de Paris

LIVE October 19, 2017 at 6pm Paris time

Approximate Running Time: 4h50 with 2 intermissions

### CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor	Philippe Jordan
Director	Krzysztof Warlikowski
Set Design	Małgorzata Szczęśniak
Lighting Design	Felice Ross
Video	Denis Guéguin
Choreography	Claude Bardouil
Dramaturgy	Christian Longchamp
Chorus Master	José Luis Basso
Orchestra & Chorus	Orchestra & Chorus of Opéra national de Paris

### ARTISTIC TEAM

Philippe II	Ildar Abdrazakov
Don Carlos	Jonas Kaufmann
Rodrigue	Ludovic Tézier
The Grand Inquisitor	Dmitry Belosselskiy
Élisabeth de Valois	Sonya Yoncheva
Princess Eboli	Elīna Garanča
Thibault	Eve-Maud Hubeaux
Flemish envoys	Tiago Matos, Michal Partyka, Mikhail Timoshenko, Tomasz Kumiega, Andrei Filonczyk, Daniel Giulianini
A voice from heaven	Silga Tiruma
The count of Lerma	Julien Dran
A royal herald	Hyun-Jong Roh
A monk	Krzysztof Baczyk

## PRESENTATION

**“Why should I be indiscreet when my silence can do him no harm, and possibly protect him? Why warn the sleeper of the storm cloud overhead?... It is enough for me to guide it away from you in silence, so that you may waken to clear skies.” - The Marquis of Posa, *Don Carlos*, Schiller, Act IV, Scène 6**

If there exists an opera that defies boundaries at every level, be they dramatic or dramaturgical, it is certainly Verdi's *Don Carlos*, a work by an Italian composer created in French, and in which the climate of war with Spain and the melancholy of human beings draw our attention to the fate to Flanders.

Politics, religion, history and psychoanalysis are all entwined here, increasingly exacerbating the fears and taboos between the protagonists. Krzysztof Warlikowski strips down a tragedy haunted by ghosts, and places the intimate at the heart of an imaginary fresco truer than history itself. Along with Philippe Jordan, he reveals to the public the very first version of this great five-act opera: the version modified by Verdi himself for the work's first performance in 1867. Echoing this historic version, the Paris Opera will be scheduling the five-act version of *Don Carlos* in Italian in 2019.

## SYNOPSIS

### ACT I

Scene 1: The Forest of Fontainebleau, France in winter

A chorus of woodcutters and their wives is heard, complaining of their hard life and the war with Spain. Élisabeth, daughter of the King of France, arrives with her attendants. She reassures the people that her impending marriage to Don Carlos, son of the King of Spain, will end the war.

Carlos, coming out from hiding, has seen Élisabeth and fallen in love with her. When she reappears, he initially pretends to be a member of the Count of Lerma's delegation, but then reveals his identity and his feelings, which she reciprocates. A canon-shot signifies that peace has been declared between Spain and France, and Thibault informs Élisabeth that her hand is to be claimed not by Carlos but by his father, Philippe II. Lerma and his followers confirm this, and Élisabeth feels bound to accept, in order to ensure peace. She departs for Spain, leaving Carlos devastated.

### ACT II

Scene 1: The monastery of Saint-Just (San Jerónimo de Yuste) in Spain

Monks pray for the soul of the Emperor Charles V ("Carlos Quinto"). His grandson Don Carlos enters, anguished that the woman he loves is now married to his father.

A monk resembling the former emperor offers him eventual consolation of peace through God. Carlos's friend Rodrigue, the Marquis of Posa, has just come from the oppressed land of Flanders. He asks for Carlos's aid on behalf of the suffering people there. Carlos reveals that he loves his stepmother. Posa encourages him to leave Spain and go to Flanders, and the two men swear eternal friendship. King Philippe and his new wife enter to do homage at Charles V's tomb, while Don Carlos laments his lost love.

Scene 2: A garden near Saint-Just

Princess Eboli sings the "Veil Song" about a Moorish king and an alluring veiled beauty who was revealed to be his neglected wife. Élisabeth enters. Posa delivers a letter from France (and secretly a note from Don Carlos). At his urging, Élisabeth agrees to see Carlos alone. Eboli infers that she, Eboli, is the one Don Carlos loves.

When they are alone, Don Carlos tells Élisabeth that he is miserable, and asks her to request that Philippe send him to Flanders. She promptly agrees, provoking Carlos to renew his declarations of love, which she piously rejects. Don Carlos exits in a frenzy, shouting that he must be under a curse. The King enters and becomes angry because the Queen is alone and unattended. He orders her lady-in-waiting, the Countess of Aremburg, to return to France, prompting Elizabeth to sing a sorrowful goodbye-aria. The King approaches Posa, whose character and activism have impressed him favorably. Posa begs the King to stop oppressing the people of Flanders. The King calls Posa's idealistic request unrealistic, and warns him that the Grand Inquisitor is watching him.

### *ACT III*

Scene 1: Evening in the Queen's garden in Madrid

Élisabeth is tired, and wishes to concentrate on the following day's coronation of the King. In order to avoid the evening's events, she exchanges masks with Eboli, assuming her absence will not be noticed, and leaves.

Don Carlos enters. He has received a note suggesting a tryst in the gardens, which he thinks is from Élisabeth, but which is really from Eboli, to whom he mistakenly declares his love. The disguised Eboli realizes that he believes she is the Queen, and Carlos is horrified that she now knows his secret. When Posa enters, she threatens to tell the King that Élisabeth and Carlos are lovers. Carlos prevents Posa from stabbing her, and she exits in a vengeful rage. Posa asks Carlos to entrust to him any sensitive political documents that he may have, and, when Carlos agrees, they reaffirm their friendship.

Scene 2: In front of the Cathedral of Valladolid

Preparations are being made for an "Auto-da-fé", the public parade and burning of condemned heretics. While the people celebrate, monks drag the condemned to the woodpile. The royal procession follows, and the King addresses the populace, but Don Carlos brings forward six Flemish deputies, who plead with the King for their country's freedom. The people and the court are sympathetic, but the King, supported by the monks, orders the deputies' arrest. Carlos draws his sword against the King. The King calls for help, but the guards will not attack Don Carlos. Posa steps in, and persuades Carlos to surrender his sword. The King then promotes Posa to Duke. The woodpile is fired, and, as the flames start to rise, a heavenly voice can be heard promising peace to the condemned souls.

### *ACT IV*

Scene 1: Dawn in King Philippe's study in Madrid

Alone, the King, in a reverie, laments that Élisabeth has never loved him, that his position means that he has to be eternally vigilant, and that he will only sleep properly when he is in his tomb. The blind, ninety-year-old Grand Inquisitor is announced. The King asks if the Church will object to his putting his own son to death, and the Inquisitor replies that the King will be in good company: God sacrificed His own son. In return, the Inquisitor demands that the King have Posa killed. The King refuses to kill his friend, whom he admires and likes, but the Inquisitor reminds the King that the Inquisition can take down any king; he has destroyed other kings before. The King admits that he is powerless to save his friend and begs the Grand Inquisitor to forget about the whole discussion. The Grand Inquisitor replies "We'll see," and leaves. Élisabeth enters, alarmed at the apparent theft of her jewel casket, but the King produces it and, pointing to the portrait of Don Carlos which it contains, accuses her of adultery. She protests her innocence and faints. He calls for help. Eboli and Posa appear, and a quartet develops. The King realizes that he has wronged his wife. Posa resolves to save Carlos, though it may mean his own death. Eboli feels remorse for betraying Élisabeth; Élisabeth, recovering, expresses her despair.

The two women are left together. Eboli confesses not only that she stole the casket because she loved Carlos and he rejected her, but, worse, she has also been the mistress of the King. Élisabeth tells her that she must go into exile or enter a convent, and exits. Eboli, alone, curses the fatal pride that her

beauty has bestowed on her, chooses the convent over exile, and resolves to try to save Carlos from the Inquisition.

#### Scene 2: A prison

Don Carlos has been imprisoned. Posa arrives to tell him that he will be saved, but that he himself will have to die, incriminated by the politically sensitive documents which Carlos had entrusted to him. A shadowy figure shoots Posa in the chest. As he dies, Posa tells Carlos that Élisabeth will meet him at Saint-Just on the following day, and says that he is content to die if his friend can save Flanders and rule over a happier Spain. After his death, Philippe enters, offering his son freedom. Carlos is repulsed by the murder of Posa and refuses his father. The King, seeing that Posa has been killed, cries out in his sorrow.

Bells ring, and Élisabeth, Eboli and the Grand Inquisitor arrive, while a crowd demands the release of Carlos and threatens the King. In the confusion, Eboli escapes with Carlos. The people are brave enough to threaten the King, but they are terrified by the Grand Inquisitor, and they instantly obey his angry command to quiet down and bow to the King.

#### ACT V

##### Scene 1: The moonlit monastery of Saint-Just.

Élisabeth kneels before the tomb of Charles V. She is committed to help Don Carlos on his way to fulfill his destiny in Flanders, but she herself longs only for death. Carlos appears and they say a final farewell, promising to meet again in Heaven. Philippe and the Grand Inquisitor enter: the King declares that there will be a double sacrifice, and the Inquisitor confirms that the Inquisition will do its duty. A short summary trial follows.

Carlos, calling on God, draws his sword to defend himself against the Inquisitor's guards, when suddenly, the Monk emerges from the tomb of Charles V. He grabs Carlos by the shoulder, and loudly proclaims that the turbulence of the world persists even in the Church; there is no rest except in Heaven. Philippe and the Inquisitor recognize the Monk's voice as that of the King's father, former-Emperor Carlos V ("Carlos Quinto"). Everyone screams in shock and terror, and the Monk/former-Emperor drags Carlos forcibly into the tomb and closes the entrance. The curtain falls.