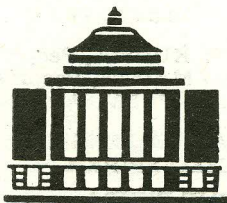




**BORIS GODUNOV**



**RAT · ESTONIA ·**

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

# **BORIS GODUNOV**

Opera in three acts with a prologue  
(initial version, revised by BORIS ASAFIEV and PAVEL LAMM)

The composer's libretto after  
ALEXANDER PUSHKIN and NIKOLAI KARAMZIN

Intermissions after Scene 3 and 5  
Opened April 21, 1980

Conductor:  
ERI KLAS, People's Artist of the ESSR

Director:  
ARNE MIKK, Merited Art Worker of the ESSR

Designers:  
VALERI LEVENTAL, Merited Artist of the RSFSR and  
MARINA SOKOLOVA (Moscow)

Choir-Masters:  
UNO JÄRVELA, People's Artist of the ESSR and ANNE DORBEK

Concert-Masters:  
REET LAUL, HELJU TAUK, IVARI ILJA  
Concert-Master of the orchestra: MATI UFFERT  
Manager of the performance: JÜRI KRUS

Characters:

Boris Godunov	—	TIIT KUUSIK, People's Artist of the USSR TEO MAISTE, People's Artist of the ESSR MATI PALM, People's Artist of the ESSR
Fyodor	} children of Boris	— MARIKA EENSALU LEELO SPIRKA
Ksenya		— SIRJE PUURA YELENA SOLOVYOVA
Wet-nurse	—	LIIDIA PANOVA, Merited Artist of the ESSR EVE NEEM
Prince Vassili Shuisky	—	HENDRIK KRUMM, People's Artist of the USSR KALJU KARASK, Merited Artist of the ESSR TIIT TRALLA
Andrei Shchelkalov, Duma clerk	—	HANS MILBERG VÄINO PUURA
Pimen, monk, chronicler	—	MATI PALM, People's Artist of the ESSR UNO KREEN
Grigori Otrepyev	—	IVO KUUSK, Merited Artist of the ESSR EUGEN ANTONI
Varlaam	} itinerant monks	— TEO MAISTE, People's Artist of the ESSR UNO KREEN
Missail		— ENNO EESMAA, Merited Artist of the ESSR TIIT TRALLA
Hostess of the tavern	—	URVE TAUTS, People's Artist of the ESSR LEILI TAMMEL
Yurodivyi	—	ROSTISLAV GURIEV ANTS KOLLO TIIT TRALLA
Police-officer	—	ERVIN KÄRVET ENNO MIKKELSAAR
Mityuha, peasant	—	HARRI ILVES TÖNIS TAMM TÖNU VALDMA
Boyar	—	EUGEN ANTONI MAIT ROBAS

Boyars, Czar's bodyguard, police-officers, priests, mendicant bards (God's people), common people, children (opera choir of the Estonia Theatre, assistant choir, pupils of the Tallinn Ballet School, the boy's choir of the State Academic Male Choir)  
Place and time: Russia, 1598—1605, the so-called "turbid time"

Contents of the Opera:

PROLOGUE

Scene 1

People in the courtyard of the Novodeviche Monastery beg Boris Godunov to become Czar. Boris won't comply.

Scene 2

The Uspensky Cathedral: Boris is crowned to be Czar of Russia. The people rejoice. Boris feels afflicted by bad omens. After a brief prayer he invites everybody, from boyars to beggars, to take part in the crowning festivities.

ACT I

Scene 3

In a cell of the Chudov Monastery old Pimen is writing a record of events he has witnessed. There is only one story left — the story about the murdering of Czarevitch Dmitri. The young monk Grigori who has been dozing wakes up and tells Pimen what he dreamed about: he had climbed up a high tower and when looking down had seen that people were pointing at him and grinning. Grigori envies Pimen's tempestuous youth and wants to go away from the monastery. The story about Czarevitch Dmitri incites him to flee from the monastery. Grigori and Dmitri could have been of the same age...

Scene 4

Itinerant monks Varlaam and Missail together with Grigori have reached a tavern near the Lithuanian frontier. The monks start a revel; Grigori who holds aloof, learns from the hostess that the police-officer with his henchmen is looking for a runaway. The police-officer appears with an order to capture a former monk Grigori Otrepyev. The illiterate police-officer asks Grigori to read the order; the latter identifies the description of the runaway's appearance with Varlaam's appearance. Varlaam demands that the paper should be given to him. With great difficulties he spells out what is actually written in it. Grigori, realizing that he is caught, jumps out of the window and escapes.

ACT II

Scene 5

Czar's living-room. Ksenya, Czar's daughter, is mourning for her dead bridegroom. Boris appears and consoles Ksenya tenderly. He praises his son Fyodor for good progress in his studies. Boris feels distressed. The much-desired reign has brought him no happiness, his good plans have not been realized. He is bitterly disappointed at the unjust accusation of the people. And the thought of the murdered Czarevitch becomes more and more haunting. A message from Prince Shuisky about the appearance of Wrong-Dmitri makes Boris doubt the death of Dmitri. He asks for more facts to get conformation of this doubts. Shuisky describes the events in detail. Boris cannot bear it. In the corner of the room he sees an apparition of the killed boy...

### ACT III

#### Scene 6

In front of the Blazhennyi Church people are discussing the news about Wrong-Dmitri. The majority of the people is convinced that he is the real Czarevitch. The quiet madman Yurodivyi appears in the crowd. He is happy having received a kopeck. But boys snatch it from him.

Czar with boyars comes out of the church. The hungry crowd begs for bread. Yurodivyi complains to the Czar that boys have taken his kopeck from him and asks Boris to kill the boys as he killed little Dmitri. The bodyguard rush at Yurodivyi but Boris stops them and asks the blessed to pray for him. Yurodivyi says that he won't pray for a child killer.

#### Scene 7

In the Kremlin the Boyars' Duma is discussing what can be done with Wrong-Dmitri and his army. Shuisky enters and tells the boyars that he peeped into Czar's room and saw him behave like a madman. The news is accepted with disbelief but then Boris appears exactly in such state of mind as Shuisky had described. With great effort the Czar pulls himself together and turns to the boyars. Shuisky suggests that they should listen to a respectable old man who is waiting behind the door. Pimen's story about a blind herdsboy who got his eyesight back on Dmitri's grave, bereaves the Czar of this last strength. Realizing that he is at death's door, Boris asks Fyodor to come to him; the Czar insists on his son being a just ruler. He dies having been Czar again.

Of *Boris Godunov* several different versions are known.

The initial version consists of a prologue and three acts. When Mussorgsky presented this version of the opera in 1869 to the board of imperial theatres, it was unanimously rejected. The refusal was explained by the absence of a female soloist for the leading role and by the excessive choir part. It was a heavy blow to Mussorgsky, he felt offended and for a while even gave up the wish to see his opera staged. V. Stasov and other members of the "Powerful Group" insisted on the composer that he should rewrite the opera. He agreed at last. In 1871 he started working. One, the so-called Polish act and the episode about the people's uprising were added. Scenes 3, 4 and 5 were remade. The main version in four acts with a prologue was ready. But the opera was still not accepted by the board. Only thanks to the efforts of the composer's friends was it at last staged. The première was held on January 27, 1874, in the Maria Theatre, St Petersburg. The opera was published in the same year.

After Mussorgsky's death Nikolai Rimski-Korsakov revised the opera twice, in 1896 and in 1908. He omitted or softened the places that sounded harsh or technically imperfect to him, and prepared a totally new orchestration for the opera.

In 1927 Boris Asafiev and Pavel Lamm started work on a new version of the opera. Their aim was to restore the initial music of Mussorgsky. If Rimski-Korsakov's version was grandiose, elevated, colourful, then that of Mussorgsky was more true to life, more austere, his music was less bright and more tragic.

Price 20 cop.