

Verdi - Don Carlo (Met 2010)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 23 February 2013 16:59 -

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1 Introductions 2 Don Carlo - Acts 1 and 2 3 First Interval 4 Don Carlo - Act 3 5 Second Interval 6 Don Carlo - Acts 4 and 5 7 Curtain Calls Don Carlo - Yonghoon Lee Elizabeth of Valois - Marina Poplavskaya Rodrigo - Simon Keenlyside Princess Eboli - Anna Smirnova Philip II - Giorgio Giuseppini Grand Inquisitor - Eric Halfvarson Priest Inquisitor - Maxime de Toledo Celestial Voice - Jennifer Check Friar - Alexei Tanovitsky Tebaldo - Layla Claire Count of Lerma - Eduardo Valdes Countess of Aremberg - Anne Dyas Yannick Nézet-Séguin – conductor METROPOLITAN OPERA, NEW YORK, 18 December 2010

Verdi's five-act opera, which clocks in at around four and a half hours, is set in Spain circa 1560 against the dark backdrop of the Inquisition. It tells the story of Carlo, heir to the throne, whose beloved Elisabeth, the daughter of King Henry II, marries Carlo's father, King Phillip II, in order to broker a peace treaty between France and Spain. Based on the play by Friedrich Schiller, the opera cleverly weaves known historical figures and facts with a fictional narrative that involves two love triangles, soap opera-worthy family drama, betrayal, heartbreak, religious oppression, and political rebellion.

Originally written in French but subsequently translated and commonly performed in Italian (as it will be at the Met), "Don Carlo" is the longest of Verdi's 28 operas. It was premiered by the Paris Opera in 1867, though Verdi revised the work numerous times over the course of two decades. It was not performed at the Met until 1920, at which point it was virtually unknown in the United States.

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