

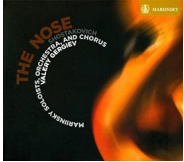
## Shostakovich - The Nose (2009)

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## Shostakovich - The Nose (2009)



Disc: 1 1. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Prologue. U tebia, Ivan Yakovlevich...* 2. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Scene 1. A... Segodnia ya...* 3. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Scene 2. Podymi! Von ty chto-to urotil.* 4. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Interlude* 5. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Scene 3. Brr. Brr. Brr, brr.* 6. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Galop* 7. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 1. Scene 4. A... A... A...* 8. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 2. Prologue. U sebia politsmeister?* 9. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 2. Scene 5. Poverite li, sudar'...* 10. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 2. Interlude* 11. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 2. Scene 6. Nepobedimoi siloi...* Disc: 2 1. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 3. Scene 7. Vlast'iu moei daetsia...* 2. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 3. Scene 8. Zdes' li zhivet...* 3. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 3. Interlude. Nos Maior Kovaleva progulivaetsia zdes'...* 4. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 3. Scene 9. Vot on! Vot on! Nos!* 5. *The Nose, opera, Op. 15: Act 3. Scene 10. Zdravstvuite, Platon Kuzmich!*

Platon Kuzmich Kovalev, a collegiate assessor - Vladislav Sulimsky (baritone) Ivan Yakovlevich, a barber - Alexei Tanovitski (bass) Praskovya Osipovna, Ivan Yakovlevich's wife - Tatiana Kravtsova (soprano) A district contable - Andrei Popov (tenor) The Nose - Sergei Semishkur (tenor) A doctor - Gennady Bezzubenko (bass) A clerk in a newspaper office - Vadim Kravets (bass) Ivan, Kovalev's valet - Sergey Skorokhodov (tenor) Yaryzhkin - Yevgeny Strashko (tenor) Pelagaya Grigorievna Podtochina - Yelena Vitman (mezzo) Pelagaya Grigorievna Podtochina's daughter - Zhanna Dombrovskaya (soprano) Chorus and Orchestra of The Mariinsky Theatre Valery Gergiev - conductor

This month, the Mariinsky Theatre proudly launches its own record label, which will draw on the theatre's rich legacy and historical ties to the great Russian composers. It will showcase the extraordinary talent within the theatre and orchestra, presenting works that are both familiar and less well known. Under the leadership of Valery Gergiev, the Mariinsky's international reputation has grown through frequent touring and recordings. It recently reverted to the Mariinsky name, having previously been known more widely by its Communist-era of Kirov. *The Nose* is one of the young Shostakovich's greatest masterpieces, an electrifying tour de force of vocal acrobatics, wild instrumental colors and theatrical absurdity. In his first dramatic work the composer immediately showed himself to be a master of musical drama, as well as a born

avant-garde experimenter. The plot is based on one of the most famous stories in Russian literature. A pompous government official, Kovalyov, wakes up one day to find that his nose has taken on a life of its own and gone for a walk around the city of St. Petersburg. The result, in Shostakovich's ruthlessly irreverent hands, is like an operatic version of Monty Python. --- Editorial Reviews, amazon.com

As the indefatigable Valery Gergiev works his way through the standard and not-so-standard repertoire of Russian opera, it's a delight that he has turned his attention to Shostakovich's astonishing *The Nose*, written when the composer was just 22. The opera is astonishing not only because of the young composer's absolute mastery of one of the most difficult art forms (which makes it all the more tragic that he completed only two operas), but because of the daring originality of his music, which is ideally suited to the absurdist story by Gogol on which it's based. (The British musicologist Arthur Jacobs called *The Nose* "the comic *Wozzeck*.") The opera is full of alarming and incongruous but entirely convincing musical turns; virtually the only predictable thing about it is its lack of predictability. The zany and eccentric orchestration, which prominently features the percussion, is unlike quite anything that had come before it. Shostakovich's vocal writing is mostly atonal, but it's relatively lyrical, without the angularity that frequently characterizes atonal vocal writing. Gergiev leads the Chorus and Orchestra and soloists of the Mariinsky Theatre in a colorful and propulsive reading that fully exposes the brash quirkiness of the score. The opera has over 80 characters, and even with extensive doubling of minor roles, the vocal resources it requires are huge. It's very much an ensemble piece, and the Mariinsky singers perform it with polish and gusto. Vladislav Sulimsky and Sergey Semishkur are especially effective in the critical roles of the hapless Kovalev and his errant nose. The sound of the SACD is vibrant and clean, with a terrific sense of presence and immediacy. Highly recommended for any fans of modern opera. ---Stephen Eddins, Rovi

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