

Press Release

Stuttgart, 20 Jan 2025

Unlucky in cards, unlucky in love

Axel Ranisch directs Sergei Prokofiev's opera *Der Spieler* based on Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel of the same name. Nicholas Carter, designated General Music Director of Staatsoper Stuttgart, takes on the musical direction

Director Axel Ranisch returns to Staatsoper Stuttgart: his new production of Sergei Prokofiev's *Der Spieler* premieres on 2 Feb 2025 at 5 pm. Following *Die Liebe zu drei Orangen* and *Hansel and Gretel*, the new production is Ranisch's third directorial work in Stuttgart. Responsible for the musical direction is Nicholas Carter, the designated General Music Director from 2026-27 onwards. The new production features a mixture of Staatsoper Stuttgart's soloist ensemble and prominent guest singers, including Goran Jurić (General), Aušrinė Stundytė (Polina), Daniel Brenna (Alexei), Véronique Gens (Babulenska), Elmar Gilbertsson (Marquis), Shigeo Ishino (Mr Astley) and Stine Marie Fischer (Mlle Blanche).

The opera *Der Spieler* is based on Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel of the same name, in which he tackled his own gambling addiction whilst freeing himself from the ties of an unfavorable publishing contract. At the centre of the story is young tutor Alexei Ivanovich, who loses himself in gambling and unrequited love. Sergei Prokofiev turned it into an opera by shortening the original material and by adding further dialogues of his own. The result was the composer's first attempt at creating a full-length operatic work in the form of a dialogue opera. He also paid great attention to text comprehensibility by using a declamatory vocal style, whilst it is left to the orchestra to create an accurate and biting satirical characterization of the numerous characters that populate the gambling scenes.

Axel Ranisch stages the fictitious setting of German town Roulettenburg as an exile resort for the super-rich. There, successful and unsuccessful fortune-seekers live together in a toxic and coercive community in which everybody looks down on everybody else. It is also the world where real, borrowed and fictitious money is at stake and where apparently only those count who really make the big money.

PREMIERE

Sergei Prokofjev

Der Spieler

Sunday, 2 Feb 2025, 5 pm

Further performances

5 / 20 / 23 Feb 2025

10 / 15 / 19 / 30 March 2025

Conductor **Nicholas Carter**
Director **Axel Ranisch**
Set Designer **Saskia Wunsch**
Costume Designer **Claudia Irro, Bettina Werner**
Video Designer **Philipp Contag-Lada**
Light Designer **Valentin Däumler**
Chorus **Manuel Pujol**
Dramaturg **Miron Hakenbeck**

General **Goran Jurić**
Polina **Aušrine Stundyte**
Alexei **Daniel Brenna**
Babulenska **Véronique Gens**
Marquis **Elmar Gilbertsson**
Mr Astley **Shigeo Ishino**
Mlle Blanche **Stine Marie Fischer**
Count Nilski **Robin Neck**
First croupier **Hojong Song**
Second croupier **Ilja Werger**
Dolled up lady **Olga Paul**
Colourless lady **Catriona Smith**
Pathological gambler **Alexander Efanov**
Hunchback gambler **Alexej Shestov**

Staatsopernchor Stuttgart
Staatsorchester Stuttgart

STAATSOPER STUTTGART

Tickets

Online

www.staatsoper-stuttgart.de

Telephone

+49 711 20 20 90

Monday to Friday 10 am to 8 pm, Saturday 10 am to 6 pm

Box office

Schauspielhaus, Oberer Schloßgarten 6, 70173 Stuttgart

Monday to Friday 10 am to 6 pm, Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Contact

Sebastian Ebling, Press officer

T +49 (0) 711 20 32 -515

M +49 (0) 1520 29 43 041

sebastian.ebling@staatstheater-stuttgart.de