

Gaetano Donizetti
ANNA BOLENA

October 15, 2011

Conductor **Marco Armiliato**

Production **David McVicar**

Set Designer **Robert Jones**

Costume Designer
Jenny Tiramani

Lighting Designer
Paule Constable

Choreographer **Andrew George**

Live in HD Host
Renée Fleming

Anne Boleyn (Anna Bolena)

Anna Netrebko

Jane (Giovanna) Seymour

Ekaterina Gubanova

Mark Smeaton

Tamara Mumford

Lord Richard (Riccardo) Percy

Stephen Costello

Henry VIII (Enrico)

Ildar Abdrazakov

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LIVE

ACT I England, 1536. Queen Anne's star is sinking since King Henry VIII has fallen in love with another woman. At Greenwich Castle, Anne admits to her confidante and lady-in-waiting, Jane Seymour, that she is troubled. A song her page Smeaton sings reminds her of the happiness of her first love, which she gave up to marry the king.

Jane, who is in fact the king's new lover, is guilt-ridden over her betrayal. Henry promises her marriage and glory, but she is disturbed by his threats about Anne's future. She realizes that it is too late for her to turn back.

Lord Richard Percy, Anne's former lover, has been called back from exile by the king. When he asks Lord Rochefort, the queen's brother, about Anne, Rochefort answers evasively. Percy admits that his own life has been miserable since he parted from Anne. The king arrives with a hunting party, followed by Anne and her ladies-in-waiting. He coolly greets his wife, then tells Percy that he has the queen to thank for his pardon. In fact, he has arranged Percy's return as a trap for Anne. He orders one of his officers to spy on the couple.

Smeaton, who is in love with the queen, is on his way to her apartments to return a miniature portrait of her that he had stolen. He hides when Anne appears with Rochefort, who persuades his sister to admit Percy. Percy enters and declares his continuing love. Anne admits that the king hates her, but she remains firm and pleads with Percy to find another woman worthy of his affection. Just as he draws his sword and threatens to kill himself, Henry bursts in. Smeaton proclaims the queen's innocence but the furious king seizes the miniature as welcome proof of his wife's seeming infidelity. Anne, Percy, and Smeaton are arrested.

INTERMISSION

ACT II Anne has been imprisoned in her London apartments. Jane tells her that she can avoid execution by confessing her love for Percy, thereby allowing the king to remarry, but Anne refuses and curses the woman who will be her successor. Jane admits that she is that woman. Shocked, Anne dismisses her, but then gives in to Jane's desperate pleading, insisting that it is the king, not her, who is to blame.

Smeaton has falsely testified under torture to being the queen's lover. He believes his confession will save her life. When Anne and Percy are brought before the council, Anne tells the king that she is ready to die but begs him to spare her the humiliation of a trial. Percy claims that he and Anne were married before she became the king's wife. They are led away. Jane pleads with Henry for Anne's life, but he dismisses her. The council declares that the royal marriage is dissolved and Anne and her accomplices are to be executed.

Anne, in a state of delirium, imagines herself on her wedding day, then recalls her girlhood love for Percy. When bells and cannon fire are heard, announcing the king's new marriage, she suddenly comes to her senses. She furiously curses the royal couple and goes off to face her execution.

COMING SOON

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Rodelinda

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JANUARY 21, 2012

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