

Boris Godunov

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Yuri Ahronovitch from Leningrad, and now snapped up by Cologne Opera, made a marvelously successful appearance at the Royal Opera conducting with the hand of a true master. Personally I would not hope to hear "Boris" better conducted, and the whole presentation, which has been known to have its tired renderings these past few years, came magnificently to new life and power. Mr. Anderson has also trimmed the staging somewhat and, though the decors look faded, they were still a fine frame for such a very distinguished performance.

Mr. Christoff, after 25 years in this great role, was enormously impressive and deeply moving. He had colleagues worthy of him. In the nursery scene Gale Pashley, and Peters Lanigan a superb foil as Shuisky, making the scene of remorse and guilt come up perfectly "(where Mussorgsky rivals "Macbeth") ; the Polish scene had stalwarts in Veasey as the princess, Herinex as the Jesuit, and Jon Andrew as the false Dimitri. Tear (Simpleton), Howell as old Pimen the monk and chronicler of the dire times, Bainbridge, Langdon, and Oliver in the Lithuanian scene, were all at their best. A fine revival of a great and moving work, lasting nearly four and a half hours. No cuts please, but perhaps an earlier start?