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# Andrea Chénier

2010.11/12 - 24

OPERA PALACE | 5 performances | Opera in 4 Acts (Sung in Italy with Japanese Supertitles)

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Conductor : Frédéric Chaslin

Production, Scenery, Lighting Design : Philippe Arlaud

Costume Design : Andrea Uhmman

Andrea Chénier : Mikhail Agafonov

Maddalena di Coigny : Norma Fantini

Carlo Gérard : Alberto Gazale

Roucher : Narita Hiroyuki

Un Incredible : Takahashi Jun

La Contessa di Coigny : Moriyama Kyoko

Bersi : Yamashita Makiko

Madelon : Takemoto Setsuko

Mathieu : Okubo Makoto

Fléville : Hagiwara Jun

L'Abate : Kamoshita Minoru

Fouquier Tinville : Kobayashi Yoshiki

Il Maestro di Casa/Schmidt : Osawa Ken

Chorus : New National Theatre Chorus

Orchestra : Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Andrea Chénier is one of the best known Verismo operas by Italian opera composer Umberto Giordano, yet is very rarely performed. Its NNTT premiere in December 2005 marked just the third time the opera had been produced in Japan. The production design is by the Paris-born and bred Philippe Arlaud. In Arlaud's production, the viewer sees onstage the presence of the multitude of people who lost their lives amid the tumult, as the story is advanced by the loves fostered in the hearts of the characters. Each act is punctuated by the guillotine, and the stage art takes visual cues from iconic paintings of the times. For the first act, it is the work of Fragonard from the Rococo period; for the second act, Liberty Leading the People by Delacroix; for the third, the dark, weighty work of Goya; and for the fourth, the work of Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich. The opera challenges us living in the present to consider whether the chain of history, one in which violence begets violence, can be broken. French-born conductor Frederic Chaslin will bring his fluid style to the score, making this a musical experience worth the wait.

## SYNOPSIS

The setting is the suburbs of Paris in 1789. At a soirée in Count Coigny's house, Maddalena, the daughter of the count, is impressed by a poem written by the poet Chénier, which celebrates the nobility of love and his patriotic sentiments. Meanwhile, Gérard, the count's servant, who is in love with Maddalena, is also moved by Chénier's poem and leaves the count's house in a fit of dissatisfaction with class society. Five years later, Gérard is a high-ranking official with the revolutionary government. Maddalena is now ruined while Chénier, critical of the revolutionary government, is chased by a secret agent. Slipping through police surveillance, the two meet again and confirm their love, but Gérard, who is looking for Maddalena, arrests Chénier, bring him to trial. Maddalena begs Gérard for Chénier's life. Ashamed of his love for Chénier's lover, Gérard swings over to the defense of Chénier, but despite his efforts, the poet is sentenced to death. On behalf of a condemned female convict, Maddalena steals into the prison where Chénier is incarcerated. They are taken to the guillotine while vowing eternal love...

