

Versuchung **The Test** Summary

Summary

A wise man lands in the underworld before his time has come. The residents of the underworld make him take a test there so he can recognize how far or how close his soul is from enlightenment. He sees a young woman fanning the grave of her deceased husband. The grave is supposed to dry faster, thus freeing her from the loneliness of grief and allowing her to fall in love again. The wise man is shocked at her desire to forget quickly, and he decides to put his own wife to the test ...

There are several versions of this legend of the wise man Zhuang Zhou in China. Qu Xiao-song and his librettist Wu Lan have based their new opera *The Test* on these versions. In the staging and musical composition, *The Test* combines various Chinese traditions in theater with experiences in modern Western music. Some of the solo parts will be performed by artists trained in the traditions of the sophisticated Kunqu Theater; some of the solo parts will be performed by artists who are devoted to the traditions of the more ribald, popular Qin-qiang Theater; and some of the solo parts will be performed by singers trained in Western traditions. All solo singers are from China. The orchestra consists of musicians who play traditional Chinese string, wind and percussion instruments and a septet of European string instruments. In his

composition, Qu combines the musical forms of expression of different traditions in Chinese theater with the experiences he acquired while studying, composing and interpreting modern Western music. The goal of his compositions is an emotional immediacy. He sees silence as being the last secret that is encircled by music, and for him happiness is attained when music has reached the stage of silence, and this happiness exists in music only for brief moments. The stage production works with the arts of Chinese theater, with scant means and few props. Sabrina Hölzer experienced and studied Chinese theater during her several stays in the Middle Kingdom. The orchestra musicians are integrated into the events onstage, and they also perform dramatic roles in the production for short periods.

The Test is Qu Xiao-song's second opera being staged by the Zeitgenössische Oper Berlin – in close cooperation with the composer. The fantastic experiences working together with musicians who come from different cultural traditions and the tremendous resonance the Berliner Ensemble received after its production of *The Last String* encouraged the Zeitgenössische Oper Berlin to continue its enriching work with Qu in collaboration with the Munich Biennale.

The Test

Versuchung

Musik

Qu Xiao-song

Libretto

Wu Lan und Qu Xiao-song (nach einer traditionellen chinesischen Vorlage)

| | |
|---|--|
| Musikalische Leitung | Rüdiger Bohn |
| Regie | Sabrina Hölzer |
| Ausstattung | Etienne Pluss |
| Lichtdesign | Jeannot Bessière |
| Zhuang Zhou / Geschichten- erzähler (Bass) | Gong Dong-jian |
| Prinz Chu / Geschichtenerzähler (männliche Rolle aus der Kunqu-Tradition) | |
| Grabfächernde junge Frau / Tian, die Frau des Zhuang Zhou (Sopran) | Shi Xiao-mei |
| Schamane (Rolle aus der Qin Qiang-Tradition) | Wu Bi-xia |
| König des Reichs der Toten / Begräbnisvorsteher | Kang Jian-hai |
| Skette / Begräbnishelfer | gespielt vom Dirigenten gespielt von den Musikern |
| Orchester der Zeitgenössischen Oper Berlin | |
| Pipa | Qin Yi |
| Chinesische Flöte | Liu Yi |
| Sheng | Wu Wei |
| Guzheng | Xu Fengxia |
| Violine I | Marc Sabat |
| Violine II | Theodor Flindel |
| Viola I | Nancy Sullivan |
| Viola II | Mechtild Sommer |
| Violoncello I | Johanna Messner |
| Violoncello II | Maria M. Wiesmaier |
| Kontrabaß | Lars Burger |
| Schlagzeug I | Yang Ru Wen |

Aufführungsrechte: peermusic classical
Kompositions- und Librettoauftrag der Landeshauptstadt
München für die Münchener Biennale

Koproduktion: Münchener Biennale, Zeitgenössische Oper
Berlin mit dem Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin – gefördert durch die
Kulturstiftung des Bundes und durch die Senatsverwaltung
Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur, Berlin – mit
Unterstützung des Berliner Künstlerprogramms des DAAD

Komponistengespräch in Zusammenarbeit mit der
Münchner Volkshochschule

Moderation: **HABAKUK TRÄBER**
Do 13. MAI 2004, 18.00 Uhr
KLEINER KONZERTSAAL, GASTEIG

Schlagzeug II
Schlagzeug III

Wolfgang Eger
Adam Weisman

Musikalische Assistenz
Regieassistenz
Ausstattungsassistenz
Überteilungsinspizienz
Bühnenbau
Bühnentechnik
Hospitalanten

Alexis Agrafiotis
Jost Lehne
Hilde Brunstad
Marold Langer-Philippson
LICHTBLICK, Bühnentechnik
Andrea Schöneich
Paul Bräuer, Dorothé Brieger,
Ulrike Sebon

Zeitgenössische Oper Berlin
Künstlerische Leitung
Leitung PR und Marketing
Medienpartner

Andreas Rochholz
Barbara Gestlmayr
DeutschlandRadio
RBBKULTURadio, Zitty

Spieldauer **100 min** (ohne Pause)

Aufführung in chinesischer Sprache mit deutschen Übertiteln
Übersetzung
Barbara Mittler

Qu Xiao-song begleitete persönlich die Einstudierung seiner Oper
Versuchung bei der Zeitgenössischen Oper Berlin; er war in dieser
Zeit Gast des Berliner Künstlerprogramms des DAAD.

DeutschlandRadio wird *Versuchung* aufzeichnen und am 5. Juni ab
19.30 Uhr ausstrahlen.

Ein herzlicher Dank gilt dem Förderkreis der Zeitgenössischen Oper
Berlin.

URAUFFÜHRUNG WEITERE VORSTELLUNGEN

Do **13. MAI 2004**, 20 Uhr
Sa **15. MAI 2004**, 21 Uhr
So **16. MAI 2004**, 20 Uhr
**CARL-ORFF-SAAL/
GASTEIG**

€ 20,- / 15,-

€ 7,-

KARTEN ERMÄSSIGT WEITERE VORSTELLUNGEN

Do **20. – So 23. MAI 2004**,
20 Uhr
HEBBEL AM UFER BERLIN