

UNITEL and CLASSICA present



# The Passenger

Mieczysław  
Weinberg

Bregenz Festival

Staged by David Pountney



# The Mieczysław Weinberg Passenger

Conductor **Teodor Currentzis**  
Orchestra **Wiener Symphoniker**

Chorus **Prague Philharmonic Choir**  
Chorus Master **Lukáš Vasilek**

Lisa **Michelle Breedt**  
Walter **Roberto Saccà**  
Martha **Elena Kelessidi**  
Tadeusz **Artur Rucinski**  
Katja **Svetlana Doneva**  
Krzystina **Angelica Voje**  
Vlasta **Elżbieta Wróblewska**

Staged by **David Pountney**  
Video Director **Felix Breisach**  
Length **161'**

**Shot in HDTV 1080**

Cat. no. A04001538

By courtesy of Peermusic Classical GmbH

**Produced by FELIX BREISACH  
MEDIENWERKSTATT**  
in cooperation with **Bregenz Festspiele**

**A production of UNITEL and ORF**  
in cooperation with **CLASSICA**

## DOCUMENTARY:

### IN EXILE – MIECZYŚLAW WEINBERG AT THE BREGENZ FESTIVAL

Video Director **Markus Barnay**  
Length **29'**

**Shot in HDTV 1080**

Cat. no. A04500621

**A production of Wiederin Film- und Eventproduktion**  
on behalf of **ORF**  
in co-production with **UNITEL and CLASSICA**

Continuing its tradition of unearthing little-known or forgotten operatic works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Bregenz Festival trained the spotlight in 2010 on the Polish-Russian composer Mieczysław Weinberg's "The Passenger" – and obtained an unparalleled success with this rediscovery.

Not only drew it positive reviews from around the world, but with every performance sold out, one could say that it became the true hit of the 2010 festival.

The story revolves around the former concentration camp prison guard Lisa, who accidentally meets one of her former inmates, Martha, on a ship fifteen years after the end of the war. Lisa is traveling to South America with her husband, a West-German diplomat who is taking up a new post there and has no idea of his wife's past. Together on the same ship, Lisa and Martha are forced to confront one another – and their horrifying past.

Born in Warsaw, Weinberg (1919–1996) fled to the Soviet Union when the Nazis attacked Poland; he lost all his family in the concentration camps. As a composer, he was influenced by Dmitri Shostakovich, his friend and mentor. Written in 1967/68, the opera "The Passenger" – based on the novel by Zofia Posmysz – could not be staged in the Soviet Union during the composer's lifetime due to its controversial topic. The Bregenz Festival thus presented the world's first stage production of "The Passenger".

Weinberg's multi-faceted music ranges from lyrical folksongs to jazz rhythms, waltzes and melodies evocative of film scores. Bringing the work to vibrant and poignant life are the Wiener Symphoniker under Teodor Currentzis, as well as Michelle Breedt as Lisa and Elena Kelessidi as Martha. The London Telegraph lauded the work's "compelling dramatic crescendo and breathtaking moments of truth", which were well served by festival director David Pountney's stage direction and Johan Engels' two-level set, with the ocean liner above and the concentration camp below. The staging is a coproduction of Teatr Wielki, Warsaw, the English National Opera, London, and the Teatro Real, Madrid, and will be presented in Houston and Berlin as well. "Grandiose, gripping... a triumphal rediscovery" (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung)



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BREGENZER FESTSPIELE



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