



ROYAL  
OPERA  
HOUSE

THE ROYAL OPERA

MUSIC DIRECTOR SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO  
DIRECTOR OF OPERA OLIVER MEARS

### Approximate timings

Live cinema relay begins at 7.15pm, opera begins at 7.30pm

Acts I and II 75 minutes

#### Interval

Acts III and IV 85 minutes

(There will be a short pause after Act III; please remain seated)

**The live relay will end at approximately 10.40pm**

Tweet your thoughts about tonight's performance before it starts, during the interval or afterwards with **#ROHotello**

### FREE DIGITAL PROGRAMME

Royal Opera House Digital Programmes bring together a range of specially selected films, articles, pictures and features to bring you closer to the production. Use promo code 'FREEOTELLO' to claim yours (RRP £2.99).

**[roh.org.uk/publications](http://roh.org.uk/publications)**

### 2017/18 LIVE CINEMA SEASON

**THE MAGIC FLUTE** WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017

**LA BOHÈME** TUESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2017

**ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND** MONDAY 23 OCTOBER 2017

**THE NUTCRACKER** TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2017

**RIGOLETTO** TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2018

**TOSCA** WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2018

**THE WINTER'S TALE** WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2018

**CARMEN** TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2018

**BERNSTEIN CENTENARY** TUESDAY 27 MARCH 2018

**MACBETH** WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL 2018

**MANON** THURSDAY 3 MAY 2018

**SWAN LAKE** TUESDAY 12 JUNE 2018

# OTELLO

DRAMMA LIRICO IN FOUR ACTS

MUSIC **GIUSEPPE VERDI**

LIBRETTO **ARRIGO BOITO** AFTER THE PLAY BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

CONDUCTOR **ANTONIO PAPPANO**

DIRECTOR **KEITH WARNER**

SET DESIGNER **BORIS KUDLIČKA**

COSTUME DESIGNER **KASPAR GLARNER**

LIGHTING DESIGNER **BRUNO POET**

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR **MICHAEL BARRY**

FIGHT DIRECTOR **RAN ARTHUR BRAUN**

**ROYAL OPERA CHORUS**

CHORUS DIRECTOR **WILLIAM SPAULDING**

**ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE**

CONCERT MASTER **VASKO VASSILEV**

DIRECTED FOR THE SCREEN BY

**JONATHAN HASWELL**

LIVE FROM THE

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2017, 7.15PM

For more information about the Royal Opera House and to explore our work further, visit **[roh.org.uk/cinemas](http://roh.org.uk/cinemas)**

# Synopsis

*The action takes place on the island of Cyprus in the late 15th century*

## Act I

During a storm, Cypriots anxiously wait for the return of their governor Otello, who has led his forces into a naval battle against the Turks. While the crowd pray for their governor's safety, Otello's ensign Iago hopes for his destruction.

Otello arrives, victorious. The Venetian Roderigo is in love with Otello's wife Desdemona; Iago, who secretly hates Otello, offers to help Roderigo. Iago plies Cassio with wine and needles Roderigo into picking a fight with Cassio. The outgoing governor Montano calls Cassio to guard duty and is shocked to find him drunk. Roderigo laughs at Cassio, who attacks first him then Montano. Otello arrives and stops the fight, stripping Cassio of his captaincy.

Alone, Otello and Desdemona enjoy the peaceful evening. Otello cannot imagine ever again being so happy and Desdemona prays for their continuing contentment. They kiss.

## Act II

Iago urges Cassio to ask Desdemona to intercede for him with Otello. Alone, Iago rejoices in his own malignity.

Iago provokes Otello to jealousy with hints about Cassio's friendship with Desdemona. Cypriots arrive to serenade Desdemona, and their song briefly calms Otello, but when Desdemona pleads with her husband for Cassio's pardon, his suspicions return. Desdemona offers to bind her husband's aching head with her handkerchief, but he throws it to the ground. Emilia picks it up and Iago forces her to hand it over.

Otello demands proof from Iago of Desdemona's infidelity. Iago tells him that he heard Cassio talking in his sleep about his affair with Desdemona, and has seen him with her embroidered handkerchief. Otello is now certain of his wife's guilt, and he and Iago vow vengeance.

## Interval

## Act III

Iago promises to show Otello physical proof of Desdemona's guilt. Desdemona arrives and again pleads for Cassio's pardon. Otello becomes agitated and demands that she bind his aching head with her embroidered handkerchief. Desdemona explains that she doesn't have it, and Otello warns her of the awful consequences of losing it. He accuses her outright of infidelity and, alone, collapses in despair.

Iago persuades Otello to hide, then gossips with Cassio about the latter's mistress, Bianca. Otello mistakenly believes they are discussing Desdemona. Cassio confides that he has found a woman's handkerchief in his lodgings, and produces Desdemona's (planted by Iago). After Cassio has gone, Otello determines that Desdemona must die that night. Iago suggests that he suffocate her in her bed.

The crowd hail Otello and the Venetian emissaries. Lodovico notes that Cassio is absent. Otello reads out a decree from the Venetian Doge: he and Desdemona are to return to Venice, and Cassio will become governor. When Otello turns on Desdemona, ordering her to kneel and weep she is distraught, and the crowd pity her. Meanwhile, Iago promises to arrange Cassio's death and orders Roderigo to murder him.

Otello commands everyone to leave, and curses his wife. Imagining Desdemona and Cassio embracing he collapses in a fit as the crowd hail the 'Lion of Venice'.

## Act IV

Desdemona sings the Willow Song that she learnt from her mother's maid. She feels a presentiment of her own death, prays and finally falls sleep.

Otello wakes his wife with a kiss. He demands she confess her adultery before he kills her. Desdemona insists on her innocence, but Otello refuses to listen, and smothers her. Emilia arrives with the news that Cassio has killed Roderigo, and to hear Desdemona protest her innocence again as she dies. Cassio, Montano and Iago arrive with soldiers. Emilia, Cassio and Montano reveal how Iago deceived Otello, and Iago flees. Full of remorse for what he has done to Desdemona, Otello stabs himself. As he dies he begs Desdemona for one more kiss.

# Cast

MONTANO  
FORMER GOVERNOR OF CYPRUS  
**SIMON SHIBAMBU**

CASSIO  
A CAPTAIN  
**FRÉDÉRIC ANTOUN**

IAGO  
OTELLO'S ENSIGN  
**MARCO VRATOGNA**

RODERIGO  
A VENETIAN GENTLEMAN  
**THOMAS ATKINS**

OTELLO  
GENERAL OF THE VENETIAN FORCES  
**JONAS KAUFMANN**

DESDEMONA  
OTELLO'S WIFE  
**MARIA AGRESTA**

EMILIA  
IAGOS' WIFE  
**KAI RÜÜTEL**

HERALD  
**THOMAS BARNARD**

LODOVICO  
AN AMBASSADOR FROM VENICE  
**IN SUNG SIM**

VENETIAN SOLDIERS, SAILORS, CYPRIOTS, AMBASSADORS

REFER TO YOUR DIGITAL PROGRAMME FOR THE FULL CAST AND LATEST INFORMATION. CASTING IS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINTING. DETAILS OF LIVE PERFORMANCES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.