

POULENC

DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

SAT, MAY 11

CONDUCTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin

PRODUCTION
John Dexter

SET DESIGNER
David Reppa

COSTUME DESIGNER
Jane Greenwood

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Gil Wechsler

LIVE IN HD DIRECTOR
Gary Halvorson

LIVE IN HD HOST
Renée Fleming

BLANCHE DE LA FORCE
Isabel Leonard

MME. LIDOINE
Adrienne Pieczonka

CONSTANCE
Erin Morley

MOTHER MARIE
Karen Cargill

MME. DE CROISSY
Karita Mattila

CHEVALIER DE LA FORCE
David Portillo

MARQUIS DE LA FORCE
Jean-François Lapointe

ACT I On the eve of the French Revolution, the young and fearful Blanche, daughter of the Marquis de la Force, enters the Carmelite convent in Compiègne. There, she meets Sister Constance, who shocks Blanche with the prediction that they will both die young on the same day. Madame de Croissy, the ailing prioress, consigns Blanche to the care of Mother Marie. Confessing her fear in the hour of death, the prioress dies.

ACT II Part 1 Constance wonders why the God-fearing Madame de Croissy had such an agonizing death. Maybe, she tells Blanche, someone else will be surprised to find death easy one day.

INTERMISSION

ACT II Part 2 Madame Lidoine has been appointed the new prioress. Blanche receives a visit from her brother, the Chevalier, who urges her to return home, but she replies that her duty is to her sisters. The revolutionary forces expel the nuns from the convent.

ACT III Before leaving the convent, the sisters take a vow of martyrdom. Blanche, who has run away, is forced to work as a servant in the ransacked mansion of her father. Mother Marie arrives to take her back to the sisters.

In prison, the nuns are read their death sentence. Constance has dreamed of Blanche's return.

The Carmelites walk singing towards the guillotine, their voices cut off one by one, finally leaving only Constance. Suddenly, Blanche steps up from the crowd, takes up the chant, and follows her to her death.

Production a gift of Francis Goelet

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