

Mieczysław Weinberg (1919-1996)

THE IDIOT, Op. 144 [1986-1989]

Opera in 4 acts (10 scenes) by Alexander Medvedyev based on the novel of the same name by Fyodor Dostoevsky

Russian – German by Brigitta Schrade

full eve

Prince Leo Nikolaevich Myshkin	tenor
Nastassia Filippovna.	soprano
Parfion Rogoshin	bass
Lebedev	baritone
Ivan Fyodorovich Epanchin, General	bass
Elisaveta Prokofievna Epanchina, his wife	contralto
Daughters of the Epanchins: Aglaia.	mezzo soprano
Alexandra	soprano
Adelaida.	silent role
Ardalionich Ivolgin (Ganya), Epanchin's secretary	tenor
Varvara (Varya), his sister	soprano
Ganya's and Varya's parents.	silent roles
Afanassi Ivanovich Totsky, Nastassia's former lover.	baritone
Tochilnik (backstage)	tenor
Citizens of Rostov.	3 tenors, 3 basses

3(picc).3(cor anglais).4(Eb clar, bass clar).3(db bn) – 4.3.3.1 – timp. 3-4 perc (tgl, side dr, bass dr, tam-t, bells, glsp, xyl, marimba). harp. cel. strings – piano on stage

Version for small orchestra: 1(picc).2.1(Eb clar).1(db bn) – 2.1.1.0 – timp. 2-3 perc. (tamb, bass dr, tam-t, bells, glsp, xyl, marimba). harp. cel. strings – piano on stage

The young Prince Myshkin, who suffers from epilepsy, returns utterly destitute to St. Petersburg after a several years' stay in a Swiss sanatorium. He immediately finds himself involved in a network of intrigues surrounding the dark-eyed beauty Nastassia. His love for her forces the decent Myshkin into an uneasy relationship with his impulsive rival Parfion Rogoshin, a rich merchant's son. Nastassia is fascinated by the profound folly of the Prince, who has meanwhile become a millionaire through a sudden inheritance. Rogoshin's attempt to do away with his adversary fails because Myshkin suffers an epileptic seizure during the attempted murder.

Myshkin's reaction to the profound affection of the proud and unspoilt Aglaia, the youngest daughter of the Epanchins, with whom he is distantly related, reveals his tragic inability to become truly committed. Nastassia gives her apparently irrevocable consent to the worried Prince in Pavlovsk, but flees a few minutes before the wedding with Rogoshin to St. Petersburg.

In a tantrum of raging jealousy, Rogoshin stabs Nastassia to death and spends hours of devotion next to the murdered woman. After desperate searching, Myshkin finds the scene of the horrible crime. Forgetting himself, he strokes the head of Rogoshin, who is sunk in painful paralysis.