



**PRESS RELEASE**

**OPERA**

Ostrava, Czech Republic

30 April 2026



**PROKOFIEV'S *THE GAMBLER*—FIRST TIME IN OSTRAVA**

In May 2026, the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre will present, for the first time in its history, **Sergei Prokofiev's *THE GAMBLER***. Based on the novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, this rarely performed opera will be staged in a new production directed by Jiří Nekvasil, with music direction by Marek Šedivý. Premieres will take place on **21 and 23 May 2026 at the Antonín Dvořák Theatre**, with Alexander Kravets / Luciano Mastro and Anna Nitrová / Zuzana Revai appearing as Alexei and Polina.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) was one of the leading composers of the 20th century. His work spans symphonies, ballets, film scores, and operas, all marked by a distinctive musical voice balancing tradition and innovation. Composed in 1917 and first staged in 1929 in Brussels, *The Gambler* stands as one of Prokofiev's most distinctive and forward-looking works. Departing from traditional operatic forms, the composer replaces arias and set pieces with a continuous musical texture closely aligned with the rhythm of speech. The result is a sharply focused psychological drama, in which music responds to every shift in thought, emotion, and impulse. In this respect, *The Gambler* stands alongside works by Strauss, Puccini, and Janáček in their search for new forms of music theatre.

Prokofiev wrote the libretto himself, based on Dostoevsky's novel. Set in the spa town of Roulettenburg, the story follows Alexei, whose obsessive love for Polina becomes entangled with his growing dependence on gambling. Despite a streak of winnings, he ultimately loses what matters most—his love and control over his own life. Prokofiev captures this world of impulse and inner tension with striking musical precision.

The new Ostrava production is directed by Jiří Nekvasil, the theatre's General Director. While *The Gambler* remains a rare title, the NDM has a long-standing relationship with Prokofiev's work, returning to it regularly since the 1930s in an unbroken line across decades, most recently with *The Fiery Angel* in 2015. This production continues the *Opera Hits of the 20th Century* series, bringing to Ostrava a key work that has yet to be staged here and is only now receiving its second production in the Czech Republic.

The production team includes set designer Daniel Dvořák and costume designer Sylva Zimula Hanáková. Further cast members include Jozef Benci / Martin Gurbaľ (General), Jana Hrochová / Eliška Zajícová (Blanche), and Lucie Hájková / Stanislava Jirků (Grandma), and many others alongside the NDM Opera ensemble. See the full cast and creative team below.

Performed in the original Russian with Czech and English surtitles, *The Gambler* will be presented by the NDM Opera Orchestra and Chorus under the baton of Marek Šedivý or Filip Urban.



# NÁRODNÍ DIVADLO MORAVSKOSLEZSKÉ NATIONAL MORAVIAN-SILESIA THEATRE

*All of the activities of the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre are financially supported by The Statutory City of Ostrava, The Moravian-Silesian Region, and the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.*



## OSTRAVA!!!

### Show dates

**1<sup>st</sup> premiere: 21.05.2026**

**2<sup>nd</sup> premiere: 23.05.2026**

**reruns in the 2025/2026 season: 26 May; 2 and 10 Jun; 16 and 25 Sep; 22 and 27 Oct; 29 Nov; 4 Dec 2026; 21 Jan; 29 Apr; 4 May 2027**

Sung in Russian with Czech and English surtitles

### Venue

**Antonín Dvořák Theatre** Smetanovo nám. 3104, 701 04 Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz, Czech Republic

### Creative team

music director **Marek Šedivý**

conductor **Marek Šedivý / Filip Urban**

stage director **Jiří Nekvasil**

set designer **Daniel Dvořák**

costume designer **Sylva Zimula Hanáková**

movement director **Michaela Dzuroučínová**

chorus master **Jurij Galatenko**

dramaturg **Juraj Bajús**

### Cast

The General **Jozef Benci / Martin Gurbaľ**

Polina, ward of the general **Anna Nitrová / Zuzana Revai**

Alexei, tutor to the General's family **Alexander Kravets / Luciano Mastro**

Grandma, the general's aunt **Lucie Hájková / Stanislava Jirků**

The Marquis **Raman Hasymau / Josef Moravec**

Mr. Astley, an Englishman **Pavel Divín / Bence Szabó**

Blanche, demimondaine **Jana Hrochová / Eliška Zajícová**

Prince Nilsky **Petr Dvořák / Jiří Halama**

The Baron Würmergelm & The Director **Petr Urbánek / Siarhei Zubkevich**

Potapych & Old Gambler **Juraj Čiernik / Roman Vlkovič**

First Croupier **Jiří Halama / Jonáš Slovák**

Second Croupier **Pavel Uskov**

First Englishman **Erik Ondruš / Jan Rychtář**

Second Englishman **Jaroslav Marek / Vlastimil Nitschmann**



# NÁRODNÍ DIVADLO MORAVSKOSLEZSKÉ NATIONAL MORAVIAN-SILESIA THEATRE

Gaudy Lady **Eva Marie Kořená / Nikola Pavlicová Novotná**  
Pale Lady **Marcela Gurbařová / Klára Hlůšková**  
So-so Lady **Tetiana Hryha / Sára Slováková**  
Revered Lady **Ivana Ambrúsová / Veronika Andrašková**  
Doubtful Old Lady **Klára Čechová / Iveta Vandová**  
Passionate Gambler **Petr Dvořák / Petr Němec**  
Sickly Gambler / Hump-backed Gambler **Vít Habernal / Václav Morys**  
Unsuccessful Gambler **Ihor Maryshkin / Tomasz Suchanek**  
Baroness Würmergelm **Karolína Krajdlová**  
Head Waiter and Receptionist **Jiří Dvořák**  
Fjodor & Second Fjodor **Jaroslav Pěkník / Tomáš Prudil / Radek Šilc**  
Marfa **Julie Mordinská / Anna Nitrová**  
Hotel Porters **Jonáš Adámek / Ondřej Borák / René Gilar / Matyáš Nitra**  
General's Children **Heda Dufková / Anna Šedivá / Roman Patrik Baroš / Felix Horváth**

Including NDM Opera Chorus and NDM Opera Orchestra—concert masters **Jan Šošola** and **Lucie Staňková**—and external workers

## The NDM Opera Company

The NDM Opera Company, one of the oldest in the Czech Republic, is recognized for its high-quality programming and exceptional interpretation. Led by Music Director Marek Šedivý and Intendant Jiří Nekvasil, the company honours Ostrava's long-standing tradition of opera cycles, including the notable Smetana Opera Cycle and the Terežín Opera Cycle. Their predecessor's as well as their own dedication to excellence has affirmed the company's role as a distinguished cultural institution over the past decade.

## About the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre

The NDM (Národní divadlo moravskoslezské, founded in 1919) is the largest and oldest professional theatre in Ostrava and the Moravian-Silesian Region, established by the Statutory City of Ostrava. The theatre is home to four artistic companies—opera, drama, ballet, and musical—that perform regularly on three permanent stages: the Antonín Dvořák Theatre, Jiří Myron Theatre, and the chamber Theatre 12. Each season, the theatre opens approximately 20 productions and stages nearly 500 performances. Beyond its regular productions, the NDM co-produces the drama festival OST-RA-VAR and the biennial opera festivals New Opera Days Ostrava (NODO) and Ostrava Days.

## Mgr. Soňa Horsinková

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**OSTRAVA!!!**