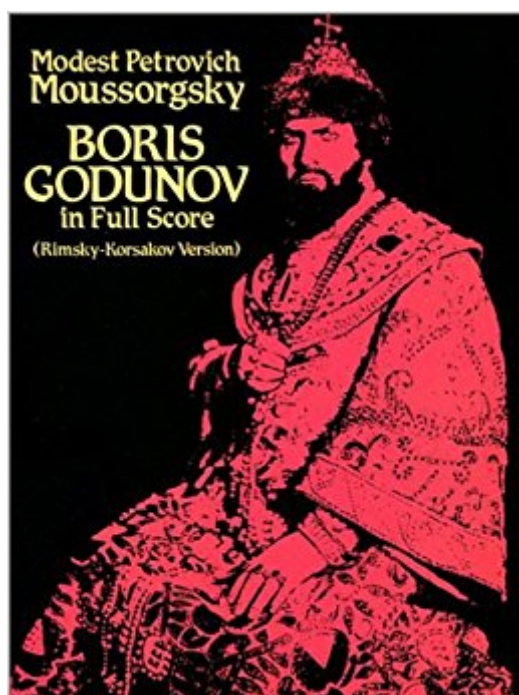


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Boris Godunov In Full Score (Rimsky-Korsakov Version)



Synopsis

Great masterwork of Russian opera, standard of the international repertoire, in most studied, performed, recorded version. Reproduced from the authoritative Russian edition, Boris reveals composer's intense lyricism, dramatic intensity, sharply realized characters. Republication of edition published by State Music Publishers, Moscow, 1959.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When Dover decided to publish Modest Mussorgsky's towering music drama, Boris Godunov, they made a rather unfortunate decision. Rather than publishing Mussorgsky's own rough hewn, brilliantly emotional orchestration of the work, they opted for the sanitized re-orchestration by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. I tend to believe they chose Rimsky for two reasons: first, most reliable editions of Mussorgsky's version were edited relatively recently, and, therefore, still under editorial copyright. The finest edition they could find within public domain was the Soviet run State Music Publisher's edition of the Rimsky score, the edition they eventually published. In any event, it is a shame that music lovers cannot enjoy a reasonably priced Boris, written as Mussorgsky intended; a score that includes, for example, the Kromy Cathedral scene, injudiciously excised by Rimsky. Still, with all its faults, the Rimsky Boris does not completely mute Mussorgsky's unique voice. Dover's edition, as usual, is nearly indestructible. The size of the score and size of the book would probably make this edition unsuitable for the podium. However, for the average Opera fan, this Boris is decidedly better than none.

For the money, this score is a terrific value. I love the earlier versions of "Boris", but I would certainly hate to forgoe the orchestral brilliance of Rimsky's Version (especially the Coronation Scene and Polish Act). Some folks might argue that Rimsky's version compromises Mussorgsky's original conception, but I can't agree. Mussorgsky revised "Boris" so many times that I doubt one can point to any version as definitive. Certainly no one suggests we ditch Rimsky's version of Mussorgsky's "Night on Bare Mountain." I'm surprised so many music lovers have no tolerance for Rimsky's excellent orchestration for "Boris". In any case, there's room for all versions for lovers of this opera. "Boris" is so multifaceted that each version has something to recommend it.

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