

Important things to know about Opera North's Relaxed Performance of *Rigoletto*

What	Type	When/where	Extra information
Props	Balloons	Gilda's bedroom.	We do not expect the balloons to pop, but we cannot guarantee.
Props	Replica guns	At various points throughout the performance.	There are no gun shots. Guns will not point into the audience.
Props	Whistles	Used by policemen when they come on stage.	Loud and high-pitched. For relaxed performance, the whistle sounds won't last as long.
Props	Clown masks	About 50 minutes into the show, for around 7 minutes.	These are classic clown masks. They only cover the top half of the face, so you can still see the actors' mouths.
Props	Gore	We see the head of a burnt body at the start of Act 3.	
Costumes	Blood stains	End of Act 3. When Gilda's body is revealed, she is seen with a large patch of blood on the front of her tracksuit.	Sparafucile's back is to the audience when he attacks Gilda. Because of this, we do not see the full attack.
Costumes	Wounds	Act 2. Gilda has some cuts on her arms that are bloody.	
Costumes	Bare chest	The Duke of Mantua has a	

		bare chest in the party scene in Act 1.	
Lights	Flashing lights replicating a thunderstorm	Throughout Act 3.	Below the threshold to trigger photosensitive epilepsy.
Lights	Red lights	For the whole stage, during Monterone's curse and Gilda's kidnap in the first half of the show.	Monterone appears in red light at the end of Act 3, but the rest of the stage is dark.
Lights	Camera flashes	Start of Act 3.	Below the threshold to trigger photosensitive epilepsy.
Lights	Stage goes black	20 seconds in Act 1, slightly longer in Act 2 (first half of the production).	The auditorium lights will remain on.
Lights	Torches	Acts 1 and 2 (first half of the production).	These will not point into the audience during the relaxed performance.
Lights	Lantern	Act 3.	This will not point into the audience during the relaxed performance.
Sound	Powerful orchestration	Throughout the production.	Find out more below.
Sound	Thunder effects	Act 3.	There are no added thunder effects, but the thunder is played in the orchestra, meaning these moments are louder.
Audience interaction	No audience interaction	N/A	N/A
Smells	No incense or other smells	N/A	N/A
Use of theatrical haze	MDG Neutral Fluid	Throughout.	Please contact access@operanorth.co.uk if you need additional

			information about the use of haze (e.g., substance used)
Themes	Violence against women, abduction, murder, drug-use, addiction	Throughout.	We recommend reading the plot summary on our Rigoletto webpage, to give you the best idea of what occurs when. Please contact access@operanorth.co.uk if you need additional information.

Extra things to know

The lights in the auditorium will be kept on.

You can wear sunglasses, ear defenders and earplugs if this might help you.

There will be more ear plugs, fidget toys and blankets available in the Quiet Space (Wilson Barrett bar).

Music guidance

Please expect some louder moments!

The nature of opera means that the orchestra's volume cannot be easily adjusted. The actors must sing loudly to make sure they are heard above the orchestra. Some of them have very high voices and some have very low voices.

Like with lots of productions, you can expect that some parts will be louder and some parts will be quieter. Unless this section says otherwise, you can expect that the loud moments will be surrounded by quieter ones.

Here you can read about the loudest moments in the production. They will be listed in the order that they happen. Please note that there will be plot spoilers!

Key words to know:

Climax or crescendo – loudest point

Swells – gets louder

Powerful orchestration – loud and dramatic music played by the orchestra

First half of the performance

The start of the production

At the very start of the production, after a brief moment of silence, some very dramatic music will grow louder and louder. It is loudest when Rigoletto comes on stage.

The Duke's art gallery

This whole sequence will last around 15 minutes.

When the scene opens onto the party in the Duke's art gallery, the music is much jollier! At different moments, the actors will cheer and clap loudly.

Sometimes the music will get very loud, but this won't last for long.

The music will swell when Rigoletto brings the Duke onto the table. There will be more clapping and cheering.

After a pig is brought onstage, the music becomes louder. There is more and more noise onstage until Count Monterone enters and stands on the table under a bright red light. The music becomes very dramatic and louder.

When Rigoletto stands in front of the Count and starts moving strangely, as if he is under a magic spell, the music builds to a crescendo.

Out in the street

There are a couple of loud moments in the interaction with Rigoletto and Sparafucile, but they don't last for long.

When Rigoletto is left alone on stage, his music becomes more dramatic and louder. It reaches a climax when he leaves to see Gilda.

Gilda's bedroom

Rigoletto and Gilda are sometimes accompanied by particularly loud, powerful and dramatic music.

Rigoletto leaves the room. The music is very loud until he returns, and then louder when he leaves again.

A while later, the man we know as the Duke comes out from his hiding place in Gilda's room. The music becomes very loud and dramatic again as he follows her around the stage.

You can expect the volume to stay loud until Gilda is left alone.

Outside

Rigoletto spots three men in red suits carrying torches and they have a very tense interaction. The music grows gradually louder before suddenly going very quiet.

Gilda's kidnap

The actors wearing clown masks sing softly as Gilda is asleep. It grows loud as they carry her off, cheering. The chaos that follows is loud and dramatic. Rigoletto is threatened and the music reaches its loudest point before the stage fades to black.

The Duke's house

The music is loud from the moment the Duke enters and begins to sing. When lots of people enter stage, it grows even louder! This is quite sudden and then lasts for a couple of minutes.

When they all stand around the Duke, the music reaches its crescendo. For the next few minutes, the music stays loud and dramatic as the Duke moves over to the right-hand side of the stage, and then even more still as he moves to the centre. As the Duke leaves the stage, the rest of the actors clap and cheer loudly.

A few minutes after Rigoletto enters the stage, the music swells again. The orchestra grows very powerful and stays loud. This lasts for a couple of minutes.

Count Monterone enters the stage and suddenly the music reaches a climax, which lasts until he leaves the stage. The music swells again while Rigoletto rages.

The music stops as the curtain drops for the interval.

Second half of the performance

Outside

The second half starts much more quietly than the first! The music grows louder as Rigoletto and Gilda hide.

The Duke takes centre stage to sing one of opera's most famous arias, '*La donna è mobile*'. Maddalena enters, and the music swells.

With Maddalena and Duke centre stage, and Rigoletto and Gilda hiding to the right, the music grows louder again.

This whole sequence lasts around 10 minutes.

Sparafucile and Maddalena

While Maddalena begs her brother not to kill the Duke, the music grows louder and the stage becomes darker, occasionally surrounded by lightning.

As Sparafucile replies and Maddalena continues to beg, the dramatic music swells and becomes very loud. There is even more lightning, too. There are some more sudden moments of powerful orchestration. The music continues to swell.

Gilda's death

The lightning increases and the crescendo builds as Gilda is stabbed repeatedly by Sparafucile. This is one of the loudest moments in the show.

Rigoletto's grief

As the music steadily grows louder, Rigoletto hears the Duke singing '*La donna è mobile*' and soon discovers that Gilda is dead.

His voice and the orchestra reach a powerful climax. Though some moments are quiet, the majority of this last section is very loud and sometimes the volume change is sudden.

This helps show how dramatic and devastating the scene is.

Gilda dies and the orchestra reaches the loudest point, as Count Monterone appears in the background under a gloomy, red sky. The music comes to a complete stop and the production ends.