

**SYNOPSIS**

**ACT I**

Dmitry, Ivan and Alyosha, despite the abyss of differences, are connected to each other by invisible threads: the "foul, sinful" blood of the father, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov. Attempts by Alyosha, a monk, to untie these knots of clasped passions are in vain. He sees the bitter rivalry between his father and Dmitry over the beautiful Grushenka and the endless drunken orgies of his father, who is eager and ready to entangle all three brothers with his sin of lust.

A series of scandals gives way to rare moments of calm, during which the hearts of the brothers are filled with the piercing image of their mother. But eventually, inevitably the enmity flares up again with a new force. Alyosha is not only unable to help his loved ones, he himself is increasingly discovering the hated features of "Karamazovism".

Ivan and Alyosha are dragged into the fight between their father and Dmitry over Grushenka. Fyodor Pavlovich is killed. Dmitry is accused of the crime.

**ACT II**

Ivan and Alyosha heatedly debate the essence of being, the human soul. The disagreement materializes in the images of the legend of the Grand Inquisitor and Christ. What is the best course for people; a fully obedient slave, according to Inquisitor (Ivan), or to follow freedom of the heart and spirit, which is defended by Christ (Alyosha)?

Grushenka, seized by a sacrificial rush and full of desire for purification, arrives at the prison of Dmitry. Innocently convicted, he has been suffering profoundly due to the separation from his beloved.

Meanwhile, Ivan is tormented by a guilty conscience: he blames himself for wanting to kill his father. The real and the fantastic battle in his mind.

Ivan and Alyosha then visit Dmitry in prison and re-bond.

Dmitry dreams of a wedding with Grushenka, but upon embracing her in his arms comes a ruthless awakening.

Alyosha is unable to see human suffering, and, driven by love for his love of mankind, releases the prisoners. Intoxicated by the taste of freedom, the freed prisoners violently crush everything in their path.

In the end, Fyodor Pavlovich is dead, Dmitri remains falsely imprisoned, Ivan goes insane and Alexey suffers from the guilt and hopelessness of his actions. And yet, no matter how far man falls, how sinful he behaves, there is hope and opportunity on the path of redemption.

*Presented in Russian with English subtitles.*

**THE PRODUCTION**

*"Man is a mystery. It must be solved, and if you spend the entirety of your life attempting to solve it, do not say that you have wasted time. I deal with this mystery, because I want to be a man."*

These words of Fyodor Dostoevsky perfectly sum up the creative path of Boris Eifman, who, in his work, inquiringly studies the most complex spheres of the existence of the spirit.

The ballet *The Brothers Karamazov* is a stage work that is technically and artistically expressive and raises eternal questions. Originally produced in 1995, Eifman returned to the production 20 years later as a way of examining the current conditions of a total moral crisis. He turned to unshakable moral foundations and composed a ballet about belief and unbelief and faith, the nature of human sinfulness, and, ultimately, the notion of spiritual salvation. This is the production you are watching here in the cinema today.

**BORIS EIFMAN EXPLAINS**

The novel *The Brothers Karamazov* is the result of Dostoevsky's creative journey, the pinnacle of the philosophical quest of a titanic and restless mind. For two decades, watching the course of modern history, I became fully convinced of the eternal relevance of this work, which became the spiritual testament of the writer.

Expanding the possibilities of body language as a means of understanding the inner world of a person, we present our vision of the basic ideas of the novel. The resulting production not only develops the traditions of psychological ballet art, but also seeks to accomplish another equally challenging creative task - to create the equivalent of the tormenting burden of destructive passions, of an evil and vicious heredity that Dostoevsky ingeniously revealed.

The ballet *The Brothers Karamazov* is an attempt to study the sources of the moral catastrophe of the Karamazovs, an appeal to the deep essence of "broad" human nature, to the secrets of the human heart, where the "devil is fighting God". Fundamentally refusing to transfer a number of plot lines of the novel, I focused on the souls of the protagonists, torn apart by contradictions.

In the novel, the most important Dostoevskian idea resounds: if there is no God, then "everything is permissible." The modern age, however, transposes this and could be exhaustively described as: "God exists and everything is permissible.". Which is why the time has come to revisit the questions that plagued Dostoevsky and his characters. The search for paths to universal happiness and the price of such harmony, the power of vice over man, the nature of true faith. Reflecting on these topics, no one has the right to hope for comprehension of absolute truth, but, affecting them, we approach step by step ways of finding ourselves in an imperfectly changing world.

*The film will run for 86 minutes.*

