



Spectacular, Historical and never seen before: Highly varied programme for the 2020 festival

A spectacular crowd-pleaser on the lake, ancient history on stage at the Festspielhaus, several world and Austrian premieres, and fascinating insights into the process of creating music theatre: the Bregenz Festival in its 75th season offers a kaleidoscope of events embracing both the familiar and the brand new. The curtain goes up on 22 July 2020 and the final event takes place on 23 August.

A production as spectacular as it is moving, with ingeniously engineered spaces for intimate scenes and the stage effects of a big show, where the elaborate stage technology is constantly at the service of the artistic idea. Verdi's opera *Rigoletto* – never previously shown at the festival – returns to the Bregenz lake stage next summer for its second run.

Last summer, the captive balloon of the *Rigoletto* set soared up into the Bregenz night sky; and currently, demand for tickets is reaching similar dizzy heights, with more than half of the total ticket availability for the lake stage production next season already booked. The Bregenz Festival therefore decided a few days ago to schedule an additional performance for 12 August 2020.

The hugely popular opera – directed by Philipp Stölzl with Enrique Mazzola conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra – will consequently be performed 28 times in the 2020 season. The total number of tickets available for *Rigoletto* is therefore approx. 203,000 (incl. dress rehearsal and crossculture night). The first performance is on 23 July, one day after the festival opens. In all, around 230,000 tickets are available for Bregenz Festival events in the coming season.

Olivier Tambosi to direct *Nero*

The indoor venue, the Festspielhaus, will present opulent music theatre on an ancient historical subject: the Roman emperor Nero will tread the boards as an enigmatic, unsavoury character in the eponymous opera by Arrigo Boito. The opera, which was posthumously premiered in 1924 at La Scala Milan, will open the 75th Bregenz Festival on 22 July. Boito's libretti – for instance for Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* and *Falstaff* – are among the outstanding achievements of operatic history. Boito also wrote the libretto for Franco Faccio's opera

Hamlet, which was performed at the 2016 festival in a production by Olivier Tambosi. Tambosi will now be returning to direct *Nero*, with Dirk Kaftan conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

Triple bill at the Kornmarkt

Kornmarkt Theater will be the venue of three very different events at the next festival. In the sixth year of its existence the Bregenz Opera Studio will stage Joseph Haydn's *Armida*, which is thought to be his penultimate opera. The work will be performed in the final week of the festival in a production by Jörg Lichtenstein, with Jonathan Brandani as conductor. After a break of one year, Kammersängerin Brigitte Fassbaender returns in July to coach the young singers in a masterclass.

Right at the start of the festival the Kornmarkt will present a world premiere: an opera commissioned by the festival from composer Ľubica Čekovská. She has turned Carlo Goldoni's comic play *The Impresario from Smyrna* – first performed in 1761 – into a contemporary opera buffa entitled *Impresario Dotcom*. The piece will be directed by Elisabeth Stöppler, who directed the opera *The Golden Dragon* at the Workshop Theatre in summer 2015 and just a few days ago was awarded the theatre prize *Der Faust*.

Beethoven goes Africa is a concert with theatre, featuring actors and puppets and lots of music: African traditionals, compositions by the Soweto String Quartet, Mango Groove, Zuko Samela and Ludwig van Beethoven, courtesy of the Bochabela String Orchestra & Friends. The scene is set in South Africa in the year 1975. The concert is on 30 July in the Kornmarkttheater.

Deutsches Theater in the Workshop Theatre

Deutsches Theater Berlin will be moving from the Kornmarkt to the Workshop Theatre for the coming season's drama production. It will stage a co-production of Heinrich von Kleist's *Michael Kohlhaas*, with three performances scheduled in the last days of July. The piece will be staged by the multiple award winning director Andreas Kriegenburg. The Berlin premiere is expected to take place in autumn 2020.

Next *Insight session* for the opera *Wind* on 26 November

The first *Insight session* took place back in spring 2015 and enabled the general public to follow the process of creating a new work of music theatre. That first work was then premiered in summer 2017. The Opera Workshop – initiated by artistic director Elisabeth Sobotka – is now helping to incubate a second work. So far there have been four *Insight sessions* for a



new work by the Vorarlberg-born composer Alexander Moosbrugger, which is entitled *Wind* in allusion to an organ's method of sound production. The theatre space is being designed by Flaka Haliti. Production partners are the Kunsthhaus Bregenz and the organ-building firm Rieger-Orgelbau. The next *Insight session* will take place on 26 November at the Kunsthhaus Bregenz. The world premiere is scheduled for 19 August 2020 in the Workshop Theatre.

Welcome Leo McFall, farewell Philippe Jordan!

The chief conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra bows out with a concert of music by Beethoven and Strauss, while the new chief conductor of the Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra (SOV) Leo McFall introduces himself along with no fewer than four soloists. The traditional three Vienna Symphony concerts present a smorgasbord of works by Wagner, Rossini, Respighi, Strauss and Beethoven as well as the first performance in Austria of a piece by Ľubica Āekovská, whose opera buffa *Impresario Dotcom* is being staged at the Kornmarkt Theater. The orchestra will be conducted by its outgoing chief conductor Philippe Jordan as well as by Enrique Mazzola, music director of the Bregenz Rigoletto, and their American colleague Karina Canellakis.

On the final day of the festival the SOV will give the first performance in Austria of Thomas Larcher's Symphony No. 3. Ludwig van Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture (op. 84) and Joseph Haydn's Sinfonia concertante (Hob. I:105) are also on the programme of that traditional matinee concert.

World premiere in the Lake Studio

The Lake Studio plays host to the popular Musik & Poesie section of the festival programme on three evenings in the coming season. They as always feature artists who are also appearing at other festival events.

In addition the Lake Studio will be the venue of *Ihr seid bereits eingeschifft* (*You are embedded*), a new project created by Silvia Costa. This is a world premiere of Vorarlberg Landestheater, presented in co-production with the Bregenz Festival and in association with Kunsthhaus Bregenz and vorarlberg museum.

"Rigoletto for Kids"

The 2020 season actually begins in late May, at least for the youngest festival fans. Following the enormously popular "Carmen for Kids" in spring 2018, the Bregenz Festival is offering "Rigoletto for Kids", a piece of music theatre that has been specially adapted for the six-to-twelve age group. Once again in partnership with AsLiCo – Opera Domani from Como, the



Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra and Superar Vorarlberg.

crossculture, the programme for kids and young adults that was established in 1996, again offers a varied programme of creative activities connected to the themes of the 2020 Bregenz Festival. The high point as always is crossculture night, when more than 5,000 youngsters attend one of the final rehearsals on the lake stage. On 16 August there will be a matinee concert with graduates of a wind band camp, the 5th International Blasmusik-Camp, conducted by Martin Kerschbaum. The instructors at the camp are members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

Concert at the KUB, Franui at the Festspielhaus, and festival breakfasts

The concert at the Kunsthaus Bregenz will feature music from the Renaissance, the early Baroque and the present day. Echoing the opera *Wind* which will receive its world premiere at the Opera Workshop, the concert will also feature one of the singers from that production. In the Great Hall of the Festspielhaus, the Musicbanda Franui are putting on a show with another familiar face at the festival, the puppeteer Nikolaus Habjan. The soirée, entitled *Alles nicht wahr*, features songs by the Austrian song writer Georg Kreisler. In addition, four festival breakfasts will again be arranged in association with the broadcaster ORF Vorarlberg and the Friends of the Bregenz Festival, offering a chance to get to know various artists performing at the festival.

Reinhold Luger: *Grafische Provokation*

In November, a temporary exhibition at vorarlberg museum will be devoted to Vorarlberg-born graphic artist Reinhold Luger. He designed posters of timeless appeal for all the Bregenz Festival's opera productions from 1983 to 2003. Beyond that, "Nolde" Luger was a leading figure in the cultural protest movements of the 1970s in the federal state of Vorarlberg, producing fiercely critical posters, caricatures, pamphlets and flyers. The exhibition *Grafische Provokation* (*graphic provocation*) opens on the evening of 22 November; guests at the opening are expected to include Alfred Wopmann, former artistic director of the festival.

The 2020 Bregenz Festival runs from 22 July to 23 August. For tickets and information, please visit www.bregenzfestspiele.com or call 0043 5574 4076.