
Press Release, April 10, 2025

Opernhaus Zürich AG
Falkenstrasse 1
CH-8008 Zürich
www.opernhaus.ch

Bettina Auge
Head of communication & Press Officer
T +41 44 268 64 34
bettina.auge@opernhaus.ch

First Season with New Artistic Director Matthias Schulz 2025/26 Season

Matthias Schulz will take office as the new Artistic Director of the Zurich Opera House on August 1, 2025. Schulz presented his program, new projects, and plans for the future at a media conference on April 10, 2025. The Zurich Opera House, together with the Zurich Ballet under the direction of Cathy Marston and the Orchestra with General Music Director Gianandrea Noseda, stands for the highest level of musical and theatrical excellence, a vibrant and diverse opera repertoire, innovative ideas from the modern era, and a commitment to historical performance practice. The new Artistic Director will further develop these essential features of the opera house while enriching them with bold new perspectives. The large number of premieres – thirteen operas and four ballets – makes for a particularly attractive program and offers frequent opportunities for presenting special and rarely-heard works. One of Schulz's stated goals is to improve accessibility for all population and age groups. In keeping with this, for the 2025/26 season innovative projects have been developed, other artistic priorities set, and new cooperations initiated.

Premieres, debuts, and distinguished returning artists

Many directors and conductors will be making their first appearance at the Zurich Opera House, others are returning after a long time, and audiences can look forward to several exciting role and house debuts. For the opening premiere "Der Rosenkavalier" with Diana Damrau as the Marschallin, Lydia Steier and Joana Mallwitz will be joining forces as the leading team. The production's aesthetic concept has been created by Austrian artist Gottfried Helnwein. Argentine director Valentina Carrasco will be making her Zurich Opera House debut with Verdi's "La forza del destino". Anna Netrebko returns to Zurich as Leonora. The multi-award-winning Zurich director, set designer, and musician Thom Luz will also be making his debut, taking on his first-ever opera direction with "Hänsel und Gretel". Austrian director Anna Bernreither and Swiss conductor Lorenzo Viotti will treat us to operetta enjoyment with a new production of "Die Fledermaus". The ensemble including Golda Schultz, Regula Mühlemann, and Marina Viotti will be dressed by fashion designer Arthur Arbesser. Paul Hindemith's opera "Cardillac" features on the program as a work of modernism. Hungarian theater director and filmmaker Kornél Mundruczó and former General Music Director of the Zurich Opera House Fabio Luisi will be taking on the production. Conductor Marc Minkowski and director Damiano Michieletto return to the Zurich Opera House with a new production of Mozart's "La clemenza di Tito" featuring

OPERNHAUS ZÜRICH

Pene Pati, Jeanine De Bique, and Lea Desandre in the leading roles. At the end of the opera season, Icelandic director Thorleifur Örn Arnasson will stage Wagner's "Tannhäuser". Russian conductor Tugan Sokhiev will feature on the podium for the first time at the Zurich Opera House. In addition to Eric Cutler in the title role, Christian Gerhaher, Rachael Wilson, Christina Nilsson, and Christof Fischesser will be joining the outstanding ensemble. The Zurich concert premiere of Berlioz's "La Damnation de Faust" will showcase stars Saimir Pirgu and Elīna Garanča. The mezzo-soprano can also be heard in the title role in the revival of Bizet's "Carmen". In addition to the new production of "Der Rosenkavalier", Diana Damrau will shine in "Arabella", where Michael Volle and Pavol Breslik will sing alongside her. A very special cast highlight will be featured in the revival of "Tosca" with Sonya Yoncheva, Jonas Kaufmann, and Bryn Terfel.

In the revivals, artists including Lisette Oropesa, Jeanine De Bique, Benjamin Bernheim, Jonathan Tetelman, Klaus Florian Vogt, Luca Salsi, Nina Minasyan, Olga Peretyatko, Elena Guseva, Ekaterina Semenchuk, Stephen Costello, Dalibor Jenis, Elena Stikhina, and many more will make the repertoire performances at the Zurich Opera House an unforgettable experience.

New collaborative opera by Olga Neuwirth and Elfriede Jelinek: Swiss premiere

With the grotesque political opera "Monster's Paradise", the Zurich Opera House presents the latest work by composer Olga Neuwirth and Literature Nobel Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek in Zurich in the 2025/26 season. Neuwirth and Jelinek have once again written an opera together after twenty-three years. As avatars of themselves, they send two "vampirettes" on a journey around the world. The co-production with the Hamburg State Opera will also be presented in Switzerland shortly after the premiere in the Hanseatic city by the highly regarded opera director and artistic director Tobias Kratzer. With Swiss conductor Titus Engel, a contemporary music expert conducts the Zurich Opera Orchestra.

New Festival of Baroque Music

Over ten days, the new "Zurich Baroque" Festival will present three operas, around ten concerts, and educational formats for the next generation, giving audiences the opportunity to immerse themselves deeply in this repertoire. The Festival's first edition will center around the premiere of the rarely-performed tragedy "Scylla et Glaucus" by the French composer Jean-Marie Leclair. Director Claus Guth returns to the Zurich Opera House with this new production. Emmanuelle Haïm leads her Le Concert d'Astrée ensemble, one of the leading specialist ensembles for early music. In George Frideric Handel's "Giulio Cesare in Egitto", Cecilia Bartoli sings one of her most famous roles as Cleopatra. Countertenor Philippe Jaroussky makes his Zurich Opera House conducting debut with Handel's "Aci, Galatea e Polifemo". Other concert highlights include Johann Sebastian Bach's two great passions with the Orchestra La Scintilla and the Zurich Singing Academy ("St. John Passion") as well as with the Ensemble Pygmalion under the direction of Raphaël Pichon ("St. Matthew Passion"). Together with Concerto Köln, soprano Jeanine De Bique will present a program of works by Handel and his contemporaries.

Key works from ballet history, newcomers, and first collaboration: Ballett Zurich

It is Cathy Marston's third season as Director and Chief Choreographer of Zurich Ballet, where she presents her own creations, works by other renowned living choreographers and newcomers, and key works from ballet history.

With his composition "Romeo and Juliet", Sergei Prokofiev created a worthy musical counterpart to world literature's most famous love story from the pen of Shakespeare. The piece is perfectly suited for a reinterpretation by ballet director Cathy Marston, whose choreographic focus lies with narrative ballets. For the first time, General Music Director Gianandrea Nosedà will accompany her on the podium of the Zurich Opera Orchestra. In "Oiseaux Rebelles", one of the leading choreographers of our time, Mats Ek, will be presented with his rarely-performed masterpiece "Carmen" together with an interpretation of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" by Australian choreographer Dani Rowe, who is making his European debut. In the four-part ballet performance "Timeframed", two works by past choreographic masters set the scene for two new creations by choreographers from the younger generation. William Forsythe's "New Suite" and Hans van Manen's "Live" made dance history. They will be heard alongside premieres by Greek choreographer Andonis Foniadakis and newcomer Lucas Valente, dancer with the Zurich Ballet, who will be creating his first work for the main company. The Zurich Ballet's long-standing tradition of supporting the dancers in developing their own choreographic voices continues in a new edition of "Next Generation".

Old name reborn: Zurich Opera Orchestra

As ambassador of the Zurich Opera House, the Zurich Opera Orchestra is returning to its original name starting with the new season. It will also feature in concerts in the Tonhalle Zurich in the Philharmonic Concerts series, and the ensemble together with General Music Director Gianandrea Nosedà will be touring to Aix-en-Provence, Dijon, Hamburg, Luxembourg, Munich, Paris, and Vienna.

New formats: Opera Cinema Day, "Opera House for Everyone", and Children's Opera Orchestra

One of the new Artistic Director's important goals is to improve accessibility for all population and age groups. As one example, an Opera Cinema Day will be launched exclusively for the canton of Zurich involving a collaboration with more than thirty cinemas. The popular "Opera for Everyone" format will be extended to three days and will present, as "Opera House for Everyone", Wagner's opera "Tannhäuser", Prokofiev's ballet Romeo and Juliet, and an open-air concert with the Zurich Opera Orchestra, Benjamin Bernheim, and Gianandrea Nosedà. The Opera House's educational program will be enhanced with exemplary lighthouse projects, and will include a Children's Opera Orchestra of around eighty members in cooperation with all the music schools of the canton of Zurich.

OPERNHAUS ZÜRICH

New venue: “Opera in the District”

Under the name “Opera in the District”, a new Opera House venue is being established in Zurich-Oerlikon, offering the opportunity to present music theater in smaller, contemporary forms and to launch an additional cultural site with many participation possibilities for the younger generation.

Experimental music theater and 24h opera house

Experimental music theater has not been left out either. Projects in the experimental productions category will be carried out in small venues. At the season opening on September 19 and 20, visitors will have the opportunity to discover the Zurich Opera House in an unconventional way over the course of twenty-four hours, spanning a night and day.

Service

Subscription sales will begin in mid-April 2025. General advance sales of individual tickets start on June 21, 2025 at the ticket office in the Opera House, at www.opernhaus.ch, or by e-mail: tickets@opernhaus.ch.

Special thanks go to the canton of Zurich and to the friends, patrons, and sponsors of the Opera House.

Zurich Insurance and the Zurich Opera House have enjoyed many years of cooperation with the common interest of making the genre of opera accessible to a wide audience. Starting next season, this cooperation will be expanded into a main partnership. With the Artistic Directorship of Matthias Schulz, the Swiss company and globally active Insurance Group Zurich will become the third partner of the Zurich Opera House together with long-standing supporters Rolex and UBS.

We thank our partners  **ROLEX**  **UBS**  **ZURICH**