

---

February 25, 2026

---

## «Zurich Baroque» The new festival for early music

---

Opernhaus Zürich AG  
Falkenstrasse 1  
CH-8008 Zürich  
[www.opernhaus.ch](http://www.opernhaus.ch)

Bettina Auge  
Leitung Kommunikation & Pressesprecherin  
T +41 44 268 64 34  
[bettina.auge@opernhaus.ch](mailto:bettina.auge@opernhaus.ch)

---

The Zurich Opera House will present the first edition of its new early music festival - Zurich Baroque - from [20 to 29 March 2026](#).

With Zurich Baroque, the Zurich Opera House places the rich diversity of Baroque music centre stage for the first time over the course of ten days. Conceived as an annual festival, it brings together [opera productions, concerts, chamber music, family formats and performative projects](#) in a concentrated panorama of historically informed performance practice.

One of the most formative artistic figures in the history of the Zurich Opera House was Nikolaus Harnoncourt, one of the pioneers of the original-sound movement. From his spirit of discovery emerged [Orchestra La Scintilla](#), founded by members of the Orchestra of the Zurich Opera House. That an opera house could develop its own period-instrument ensemble from within its orchestra is unique in Europe.

Zurich Baroque brings this distinctive feature into sharp focus and unites internationally leading artists in historical performance, including [Cecilia Bartoli, Philippe Jaroussky, Emmanuelle Haïm with Le Concert d'Astrée, and Raphaël Pichon with the Ensemble Pygmalion](#). Further principal artists include [Max Emanuel Cencic, Bruno de Sá, Elizabeth DeShong, Elsa Benoit, Anthony Gregory and Jeanine De Bique](#).

# OPERNHAUS ZÜRICH

The [thematic focus of the first edition](#) is the violinist and composer [Jean-Marie Leclair](#), whose music combines French refinement, Italian virtuosity and the cosmopolitan spirit of the eighteenth century. In dialogue with George Frideric Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach, three defining sound worlds of the era are brought into conversation.

At the heart of the first edition of the festival is the [premiere of Jean-Marie Leclair's tragédie lyrique \*Scylla et Glaucus\*](#). The only opera by the French composer is a musical rarity and a profound study of inner transformation. [Director Claus Guth](#) returns to the Zurich Opera House with this new production. The musical direction is taken by [Emmanuelle Haïm](#), who, with her ensemble Le Concert d'Astrée, is one of the world's leading specialists in early music.

The festival also presents one of the most famous works of the Baroque repertoire: [Georg Friedrich Handel's \*Giulio Cesare in Egitto\*](#). In coproduction with the Opéra de Monte-Carlo, director [Davide Livermore](#) sets the story aboard a luxurious Nile cruise ship. [Cecilia Bartoli](#) appears as Cleopatra in one of her signature roles.

Another opera premiere features [Handel's \*Aci, Galatea e Polifemo\*](#) in concert form. This charming miniature opera by the young Handel already reveals numerous musical ideas that recur in his later stage works. Countertenor [Philippe Jaroussky](#), internationally celebrated as a singer, makes his Zurich Opera House debut as a conductor, leading the Orchestra La Scintilla.

Highlights of the concert programme include the two major passions by Johann Sebastian Bach. The [St John Passion](#) will be performed by the Orchestra La Scintilla and the Zürcher Sing-Akademie under the direction of Florian Helgath. For the [St Matthew Passion](#), the French conductor [Raphaël Pichon](#) appears with his renowned [Ensemble Pygmalion](#). Additionally, soprano [Jeanine De Bique](#) performs a concert programme of arias by Handel and his contemporaries together with [Concerto Köln](#).