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# OPERNHAUS ZÜRICH

Zurich, October 2, 2017

## AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT MAHAGONNY

**Karita Mattila and Annette Dasch debut new roles in Zurich**

On Sunday, November, 5, at 7 pm, the curtain will rise on the premiere of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, in a production by **director Sebastian Baumgarten**. Baumgarten, no stranger to Brecht's works, was at the helm of Wolfgang Rihm's *Hamletmaschine* two years ago, when it took audiences at the Opernhaus Zürich by storm.

Brecht/Weill's Mahagonny opera is a larger-than-life creation straight from the epic music theater tradition. It is simultaneously anarchic protest and corrosive social critique. Mahagonny is a paradise city, where your wildest dreams come true: Limitless pleasure. Endless thrills. Gluttony. Boxing. Boozing. Love-making. Anything – and everything – goes. Until the bill comes. And if you can't pay cash, you'll pay with your life.

The cast for this production consists primarily of established singers making role debuts. **Finnish star soprano Karita Mattila** makes a double debut, appearing for the first time in a staged production in Zurich while bowing for the first time as the widow Begbick, a whorehouse madam and city foundress. The production marks **German soprano Annette Dasch's** first appearance as the prostitute Jenny Hill, and **tenor Michael Laurenz**, a familiar face in Zurich, sings Willy the Procurist.

**Christopher Ventris**, one of the leading tenors today, sings the electrifying – and, at the end of the opera, electrified – central role of Paul Ackermann. Kurt Weill's deceptively simple-sounding music, filled with double entendres and ambiguity, is in the capable hands of General Music Director **Fabio Luisi**.

Although it's been nearly 90 years since its history-making, scandalous premiere in 1930, Mahagonny hasn't lost any of its timeliness. The laws of human happiness, which Paul Ackermann finds in a moment of crisis, read like an anthem devoted to the manic capitalism of the 21st century: "The money is yours for the taking; just do it!"

**Introductory Matinee**                      **Sunday, October 22, 2017, 11:15 am, Bernhard Theater**

**Premiere**                                      **Sunday, November 5, 2017, 7 pm**

**Performances**                              **November 9, 12, 14, 17, 19, 22, & 24, 2017**