



Semperoper
Dresden

Semperoper Dresden: Premiere of »Les Huguenots/ Die Huguenotten« on 29 June 2019

PRESS RELEASE

Director Peter Konwitschny returns to the Semperoper with Meyerbeer's »Les Huguenots« – premiere on Saturday, 29 June 2019

Dresden, 21 June 2019. On Saturday, 29 June, Giacomo Meyerbeer's »Les Huguenots« closes the Semperoper's cycle of premieres for the 2018/19 season. After an absence of almost 20 years, famed director Peter Konwitschny has accepted Peter Theiler's invitation to stage the timeless and highly charged social tableau in Dresden at the end of Theiler's first season as managing director of the Semperoper.

Konwitschny's most recent production at the Semperoper was a controversial staging of »Die Czárdásfürstin« in 1999. Now the much sought-after director is returning to create a visually stunning and sensual new production in collaboration with Johannes Leiacker, who has been named »Stage Designer of the Year« three times for his scenery and costume designs for both opera and theatre. For this interpretation of »Les Huguenots«, Konwitschny will benefit from a brilliant ensemble that includes Venera Gimadieva (Marguerite de Valois), Jennifer Rowley (Valentine), Christoph Pohl (Graf de Nevers) and John Osborn (Raoul de Nangris). The Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden will be conducted by Stefan Soltész. Also on stage will be the Sächsischer Staatsopernchor Dresden, musically prepared by Jörn Hinnerk Andresen, and the Kinderchor der Semperoper Dresden.

The cycle of Semperoper premieres for the 2018/19 season was opened by Calixto Bieito's staging of »Moses and Aron« by Arnold Schoenberg. For the final premiere, managing director Peter Theiler has chosen a work by Giacomo Meyerbeer in order to send a clearly audible signal about the important contribution music theatre can make to the sociopolitical and cultural debate. Already ostracized by his contemporaries because of his Jewish faith, Meyerbeer's music was later suppressed by the Nazi regime.

»Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott«

Commissioned for the Grand Opéra in Paris, Giacomo Meyerbeer's »Les Huguenots« premiered in 1836. With its lyrical arias as well as spectacular choral and mass scenes, it is considered one of the most important operas of the 19th century, and at the same time one of the most successful works by the celebrated composer. Against the backdrop of the infamous massacre of the Huguenots by their Catholic fellow citizens (now known as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre) in Paris in 1572, regarded as the climax of France's Wars of Religion, the tragic love story of Raoul and Valentine turns into a deadly tragedy, a symbol of a love that, under impossible political circumstances, has lost all hope.

Until today we understand the message of this suggestive exploration of religious fanaticism and political manipulation: The historical tableaux, the sharp contrasts between the joy of a religious holiday and the impending pogrom, the acceleration of the plot towards catastrophe, are strikingly modern in their plea for us to resist religious delusion and political falsehood.

»Les Huguenots/ Die Hugenotten«

Premiere at 6 pm on 29 June 2019 in the Semperoper Dresden.

Total duration: 3 hours 40 minutes (approx.).

Further performances on 2, 4, 10 and 13 July 2019; also in the 2019/20 season on 15, 18 and 21 March 2020. An introductory talk about the work begins 45 minutes before each performance.

With the kind support of the Stiftung Semperoper – Förderstiftung.

Tickets can be purchased from the Schinkelwache daytime box office on Theaterplatz (Phone +49 (0)351 4911 705) as well as online. See our website for more details: semperoper.de

Please direct your requests for review tickets (with details of your journalistic assignment, the publishing medium and expected publication date) as well as press inquiries and interview requests to: presse@semperoper.de

Semperoper Dresden

susanne.springer@semperoper.de, Phone +49 (0)351 4911 251 (Head of Communication and Marketing)

oliver.bernau@semperoper.de, Phone +49 (0)351 4911 336 (Press Officer)

semperoper.de

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