

**Press Conference presenting
the 2017 Anniversary Season:
50 Years of the Salzburg Easter Festival**

Sunday, 20 March 2016

12:00

Hotel Sacher Salzburg, winter garden

Schwarzstrasse 5–7

5020 Salzburg

with

Christian Thielemann

Artistic Director of the Salzburg Easter Festival

Principal Conductor of the Staatskapelle Dresden

Prof. Dr Peter Ruzicka

Managing Director and Intendant of the Salzburg Easter Festival

Jan Nast

Managing Director of the Staatskapelle Dresden

Bernward Gruner

Board of the Staatskapelle Dresden

Benita von Maltzahn

Volkswagen Group Communications, Head of Cultural and Social Engagement

Guest of honour:

Eliette von Karajan

Patroness of the Salzburg Easter Festival

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An extraordinary opera production to celebrate a special jubilee:

WalküRe 1967 · 2017 – The re-creation of a stage work

When **Herbert von Karajan** founded the Salzburg Easter Festival 50 years ago, he set artistic standards that remain just as valid today. Under the ideal conditions offered by the Grosses Festspielhaus, Herbert von Karajan succeeded in realizing his dream of a 'festive play' within the Festival. The Salzburg Easter Festival revolved around him, just as the Bayreuth Festival had once centred on the person of Richard Wagner, the music dramatist, and just as the early years of the Salzburg Festival had focussed on that impresario and magician of the theatre, Max Reinhardt.

The Easter Festival would like to link up with this great tradition for its jubilee in 2017, by attempting to **re-create Karajan's musico-theatrical vision of *Die Walküre* from 1967**. Our re-creation of this work through the **stage designs of Günther Schneider-Siemssen** brings the historical original back into focus and at the same time poses the question as to how it may be reinterpreted for our own time. In our revival of the set designs of the 1967 *Walküre*, the Easter Festival by no means aims to glorify that era, but is instead posing questions about the stage aesthetic of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Christian Thielemann will conduct the *Walküre*. The internationally renowned director **Vera Nemirova** will realize her production in Günther Schneider-Siemssen's stage sets as reconstructed by **Jens Kilian**. Kilian will also be responsible for the costume design, while the light design will be by **Olaf Freese**. **Peter Seiffert**, one of the most sought-after heldentenors, will sing the role of Siegmund. The bass **Georg Zeppenfeld** will play Hunding – he is a popular guest at the Salzburg Easter Festival who sang here in 2014 and is again on the programme in 2016. The bass **Vitalij Kowaljow** will sing Wotan – a role with which he has already enjoyed major success in Los Angeles, Milan, Nuremberg and St. Petersburg. The soprano **Anja Harteros**, who gave an acclaimed performance of Strauss's *Four last songs* in Salzburg in 2014, will return to the Salzburg Easter Festival in the role of Sieglinde. **Anja Kampe** is especially celebrated for her Wagner interpretations, and she will be singing Brünnhilde in this jubilee production. The mezzo-soprano **Christa Mayer**, who has performed several times at the Easter Festival, will sing the role of Fricka.

This re-creation of the *Walküre* is a **coproduction with the Beijing Music Festival**.

Accompanying exhibition and symposia

Exhibition: WalküRe 1967 · 2017 – The re-creation of a stage work

1967 was a watershed year, a year of new departures, and not just in the student movement of the day. Pierre Boulez was demanding that the opera houses be blown up – and Herbert von Karajan was busy realizing his vision for music theatre by founding the Easter Festival in Salzburg. Nothing less than the ‘sum of his life’s experiences’ was intended to flow into Karajan’s *Ring* for Salzburg. The set designer Günther Schneider-Siemssen built an ellipse for the *Ring* on the Festival stage, into which he planted a mighty oak trunk. The production was planned to have a ‘timeless’ quality and a utopian slant, and it was to hover in ‘cosmic space’. And into this scenery, Karajan conjured up ‘sounds of often painful beauty’. The Easter Festival’s re-creation of the sets for *Die Walküre* on the occasion of its 50th anniversary brings the historic original back into focus, while Karajan’s idea of a ‘festive play’ is retold and made audible and visible again in an accompanying exhibition (curated by Margarethe Lasinger). By contrasting historical and latter-day dimensions, this exhibition will investigate viewing habits both old and new, and offer a sensory experience of different worlds of perception.

In collaboration with the **Eliette and Herbert von Karajan Institute**, the **Salzburg Museum** and the **University of Salzburg**.

Symposium I: WalküRe 1967 · 2017 – Moderator: Peter Ruzicka

Symposium II: Music reception and digital revolution – Moderator: Matthias Röder

The new production of Wagner’s music drama *Die Walküre* in the jubilee year of the Salzburg Easter Festival, with a reconstruction of Günther Schneider-Siemssen’s stage designs of 1967, offers an opportunity to contemplate the shift in theatre aesthetics and the changes in our reception habits over the past 50 years. To this end, two symposia will be held, to which a series of international experts will be invited. They will discuss what music theatre in the 21st century can learn from such a realization of scenic archetypes. Is it merely an ‘archaeological’ look back with candour on another epoch of operatic history, or does its charged relationship with the *Regietheater* of today pose new, fundamental, topical questions for us?

In collaboration with the **Eliette and Herbert von Karajan Institute**, the **Salzburg Museum**, the **Mozarteum University Salzburg** and the **University of Salzburg**.

A chamber opera by Salvatore Sciarrino: *Lohengrin*

The second opera production at the 2017 Salzburg Easter Festival also has a connection to Wagner. In a coproduction with the Semperoper Dresden, the Easter Festival will produce **Salvatore Sciarrino's chamber opera *Lohengrin***. Its composer called it an 'Azione invisibile per solista, strumenti e voci' (an invisible action for female soloist, instruments and voices), and its first version was given its world première in 1983; a second version was premièred a year later, in 1984. It will be directed by the renowned stage and film director **Michael Sturminger**. The main role will be sung by **Sarah Maria Sun**, and she will be joined by **members of the Giuseppe Sinopoli Academy of the Staatskapelle Dresden**.

Sciarrino's starting point is not the Wagnerian version of the *Lohengrin* tale, but French aestheticism of the late 19th century. He based his work on the version of *Lohengrin* by Jules Laforgue, who died in 1887 at the age of just 27. 'His *Lohengrin* is a prose text with Symbolist characteristics that are punctuated by a melancholy irony. Thus the noble knight does not flee from Elsa because she ignores his instruction not to ask him about his origins, but because he is unable to bear her sensual nearness. The pillow of the marital bed is transformed into the swan on which he rises and disappears into the "heights of metaphysical love" – thus the musicologist and journalist Max Nyffeler in his report on the world première.

Herbert von Karajan Prize 2017 awarded to Daniil Trifonov

As was announced last October, the **Herbert von Karajan Prize**, newly endowed by Eliette von Karajan and worth **€50,000.–**, will be awarded for the first-ever time at the 2017 Salzburg Easter Festival. The first prize-winner will be the Russian pianist **Daniil Trifonov**, who will be the Artist in Residence at the 2017 Easter Festival and who will perform in several concerts: in the orchestral concert under the baton of **Christian Thielemann**, in the Concert for Salzburg – in each case with Mozart's Piano Concerto in C Major K 467 – and in a chamber music concert where he will play in Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, op. 44. Daniil Trifonov will also be a Capell-Virtuoso of the Staatskapelle Dresden in the 2016/17 season, and he is regarded as one of the exceptional pianists of the younger generation. He caused a sensation in the 2010/11 season when he won prizes at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw, the Rubinstein Competition in Tel Aviv and the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. He has already performed with orchestras such as the Vienna Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Mariinski Orchestra under Valery Gergiev, the Israel Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Lorin Maazel.

Franz Welser-Möst as Guest Conductor in 2017

As is the case every year, in 2017 the Easter Festival's Artistic Director **Christian Thielemann** will himself conduct an orchestral concert with the Staatskapelle Dresden in the subscription programme – where, as mentioned above, the soloist will be **Daniil Trifonov**. He then invites a renowned guest conductor for a further orchestral concert, and in the coming year this will be **Franz Welser-Möst**, who will conduct the Staatskapelle in Gustav Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Franz Welser-Möst is a world-famous conductor who needs no introduction here. He conducted the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra in concerts at the Salzburg Easter Festival in 1999, 2002 and 2005, and in 2009 he was a guest conductor in the Choral Concert with the Berliner Philharmoniker.

Choral Concert under the baton of Myung-Whun Chung

Myung-Whun Chung, the First Guest Conductor of the Staatskapelle Dresden, performed at the Salzburg Easter Festival in 2013 and will return again next year to conduct the Choral Concert. This will once feature the **Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks** (Bavarian Radio Chorus). The programme will comprise Gabriel Fauré's Requiem and Camille Saint-Saëns's Organ Symphony. The soloists in the Requiem will be the soprano **Anna Prohaska** and the baritone **Adrian Eröd**. The soloist in the second work on the programme will be the star organist **Cameron Carpenter**.

An 'old master' and a 'shooting star' in the Concert for Salzburg:

Georges Prêtre and Lorenzo Viotti

Besides **Christian Thielemann**, the Concert for Salzburg will feature two further conductors – and from very different generations: the grand master and sorcerer of sound **Georges Prêtre**, and the up-and-coming **Lorenzo Viotti**, who last year won the Young Conductor's Award of the Salzburg Festival.

For details of the programme, please see the accompanying prospectus for 2017.

Two Special Concerts with two special guest orchestras: the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Vienna Philharmonic

The year 2017 will be the fifth season in which the **Staatskapelle Dresden** has been the celebrated Orchestra in Residence at the Salzburg Easter Festival. In honour of the 50th anniversary of the Festival, there will also be two **Special Concerts** on the programme, in which the Easter Festival will welcome two special guest orchestras that are in different ways both closely bound up with the history of the Salzburg Easter Festival:

The **Berliner Philharmoniker** was the Orchestra in Residence at the Salzburg Easter Festival until 2012. It is now returning in 2017 for an orchestral concert under its Chief Conductor, Sir Simon Rattle, who is also a former Artistic Director of the Easter Festival. Together they will perform Gustav Mahler's Sixth Symphony.

In 1990, the year after the death of the Festival's founder, Herbert von Karajan, the **Vienna Philharmonic** was a guest at the Salzburg Easter Festival. The Philharmonic gave four concerts in that year, two each under the baton of Sir Colin Davis and Claudio Abbado. For the 50th anniversary of the Salzburg Easter Festival, the Vienna Philharmonic will perform Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under the baton of **Christian Thielemann**. The soloists will be **Anja Harteros, Christa Mayer, Peter Seiffert** and **Georg Zeppenfeld**, and they will be joined by the **Singverein of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna**.

The Salzburg Easter Festival would like to thank **Eliette von Karajan** for her extremely generous support of the two Special Concerts.

Reduction in ticket prices for the Choral Concert

We are delighted to announce that the **ticket prices** for the **Choral Concert** in the subscription will be **reduced** significantly in 2017 (between 10.– and 40.– euros), and brought closer in line with the ticket prices for the orchestral concerts in the subscription. It is hoped that this step will make it easier for people to attend the Choral Concert. The prices are now as follows:

Cat. I 230.–	Cat. II 190.–	Cat. III 150.–	Cat. IV 120.–
Cat. V 80.–	Cat. VI 40.–	Cat. VII 30.–	