

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt

ASCANIO IN ALBA

Festa teatrale by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Giuseppe Parini

Sung in Italian with German surtitles

Conductor: Alden Gatt / Lukas Rommelspacher (December 28th, 30th 2023)

Director: Nina Brazier

Set Designer: Christoph Fischer

Costume Designer: Henriette Hübschmann

Lighting Designer: Jonathan Pickers

Dramaturge: Deborah Einspieler

Venus: Kateryna Kasper

Ascanio: Cecelia Hall

Silvia: Karolina Bengtsson

Aceste: Andrew Kim

Fauno: Anna Nekhames

Oper Frankfurt's Extras; Frankfurt Opern und Museumsorchester

After his huge success with *Mitridate* 15 year old **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791) only had a few weeks to finish *Ascanio in Alba* in time for a wedding in the Habsburg family: Maria Theresia commissioned the work for her son's Ferdinand Karl's marriage to Maria Beatrice d'Este, one of the Duke of Modena's daughters. Mozart's librettist came up with an ingenious combination of mythology, praise of the monarchy and allegory. The very successful first performance of this Festa teatrale took place at the Teatro Regio Ducale in Milan in 1771, and is now being heard in Frankfurt for the first time.

Venus informs her son Ascanio that Silvia is his intended bride. He's a bit nervous about this as he's never met her. The Goddess reveals that Amor, in the form of Ascanio, has been appearing in Silvia's dreams for four years. He's allowed to meet her to sound her out, but not say who he is. Silvia falls in love with stranger, but spurns him out of loyalty to her future husband Ascanio, who she's never met. Venus triumphantly marries the young couple.

It's conducted in the Bockenheimer Depot by Kapellmeister and Assistant to the GMD **Alden Gatt**, who then leads performances of the New Production of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and soloists' coach **Lukas Rommelspacher** (December 28th, 30th 2023). **Nina Brazier**, a director's assistant at Oper Frankfurt since 2018 is making her directorial debut for the company. All roles are sung by **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble and Opera Studio**: The Ukrainian soprano **Kateryna Kasper** (Venus) also sings Micaëla in *Carmen* this season and Aci (role debut) in Handel's *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* in Montréal – a role she then performs in concert in Basel and Vienna. Her American Ensemble Colleague **Cecelia Hall** (Ascanio) can be heard soon singing roles including Marzelline (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and 2nd Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*), as well as her first Angelina in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* at Boston Lyric Opera. Furthermore she performs in Mozart's Requiem with the New York Philharmonic. Swedish soprano **Karolina Bengtsson** (Silvia) repeats her portrayal of Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) and then sings more new roles, Belisa and a Young Shepherd in New Productions of Wolfgang Fortner's *Don Perlimpín's Love for Belisa in his garden* and Wagner's *Tannhäuser* here. A Member of the Opera Studio, **Andrew Kim** (Aceste) can be heard singing roles in *Salome* and *Carmen* this season. Soprano **Anna Nekhames** (Fauno) follows Venus and the Chief of the Gepopo (*Le Grand Macabre*) up with Belisa's Mother in *Don Perlimpín's Love for Belisa in his garden* – all role debuts.

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt: Sunday December 17th 2023, at 18hrs
at the Bockenheimer Depot

Further performances: December 21st, 26th (18hrs), 28th, 30th 2023, January 1st (18hrs), 3rd 2024
Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19hrs

Tickets cost: € 20 to € 80 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Tickets can be obtained from the usual outlets, by telephone +49 (0)69 – 212 49 49 4 or online www.oper-frankfurt.de.

We do hope you might be able to publish this event. For further information, ordering photographs and reserving press tickets please contact Holger Engelhardt (Leitung Pressereferat) on +49 (0)69 – 212 46 727. His fax number is +49 (0)69 – 212 37 164 or you can email him on holger.engelhardt@buehnen-frankfurt.de.