

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt

ALCINA

Opera in three acts by George Frideric Handel
 Libretto by an unknown adapter
 based on Antonio Fanzaglia and Ludovico Ariosto
 Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Julia Jones
 Director: Johannes Erath
 Set and Costume Designer: Kaspar Glarner
 Video: Bibi Abel
 Lighting Designer: Joachim Klein
 Dramaturge: Zsolt Horpácsy

Alcina: Monika Buczkowska-Ward
 Ruggiero: Elmar Hauser
 Bradamante: Katharina Magiera
 Morgana: Shelén Hughes
 Oberto: Clara Kim
 Oronte: Michael Porter
 Melisso: Erik van Heyningen

Oper Frankfurt's Extras
 Frankfurt Opern and Museumsorchester

With generous support from the Frankfurt Patronatsverein – Sektion Oper

Described by **George Frideric Handel** (1685-1759) as a „magic opera“ before the World Premiere at Covent Garden in 1735, his opera seria *Alcina* is about love and power, magic, manipulation and dissimulation. The title heroine, an unhappy sorceress from the Renaissance epic poem *Orlando furioso*, amuses herself on her magic island with one lover after another, before turning them into animals or stones. Sorcery aside, Alcina is a charismatic woman, whose own wiles and strengths won her political influence and countless lovers. But her magic dwindles, when she falls in love with Ruggiero, who found himself in Alcina's realm by chance, and falls for her charms. He might have suffered the same fate as his predecessors if his fiancée Bradamante (disguised as Ricciardo) hadn't decided to come and save him and destroy Alcina's powers. The dizzy-making merry-go-round of love keeps turning: Alcina's sister Morgana falls in love with „Ricciardo“, making her beloved Oronte jealous. The chaos of emotions becomes complete when Ruggiero thinks Bradamante, disguised as Ricciardo, wants to seduce Alcina ...

The opera's modernity shines through not least by having a powerful female protagonist, even though she's about to experience a tragic downfall. The action's accompanied by bouncy, rhythmic, tirelessly propelling forward baroque music, out of which the countertenor's sarabande „Verdi prati“ and soprano aria „Ah! mio cor! schernito sei!“ stand out in particular.

Alcina is **Monika Buczkowska-Ward**, a Member of the Ensemble at Oper Frankfurt since the 2020/21 season. Ruggiero is a guest, the young countertenor **Elmar Hauser**, who was recently nominated as „Up and coming Artist of the Year“ by Opernwelt magazine. He recently sang Orfeo and Ariodante and won 1st prize at the Concorso Lirico Internazionale „CLIP“ in Portofino in the summer of 2024. Bradamante is sung by **Katharina Magiera**, and Morgana by **Shelén Hughes**, who won the George and Nora Foundation Competition and reached the finals of the „Renata Tebaldi“ competition this year. Oberto, Oronte and Melisso are performed by a former member of the opera studio and ensemble members **Clara Kim**, **Michael Porter** and **Erik van Heyningen**. Conducting the Opern and Museumsorchester is **Julia Jones**, who recently led a revival of Cimarosa's *L'italiana in Londra* in Frankfurt. **Johannes Erath's** new production sees Handel's complex characters as people at a crossroads: how will they react in extreme situations? React to unexpected twists and turns? How do their (mistaken) paths, obsessions and emotions change at a given point on a „magic island“, where societal norms don't exist? How far reaching are Alcina's arts, the power of her „magic“?

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt: Sunday June 15th 2025, at 18 hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: June 22nd, 25th, 28th, July 2nd, 4th, 6th (15.30hrs) 2025
 Unless otherwise stated, all performance begin at 18hrs.

Tickets cost: € 16 to € 190 (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.