

Premiere

**ELEKTRA**

Tragedy in one act by Richard Strauss

Libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal based on Sophocles

Sung in German with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Sebastian Weigle

Director: Claus Guth

Set Designer: Katrin Lea Tag

Costume Designer: Theresa Wilson

Lighting Designer: Olaf Winter

Chorus Master: Tilman Michael

Dramaturge: Konrad Kuhn

Elektra: Aile Asszonyi

Clytemnestra: Susan Bullock

Chrysothemis: Jennifer Holloway

Aegisthus: Peter Marsh

Orestes: Kihwan Sim

Orestes' Companion: Franz Mayer

Young Servant: Jonathan Abernethy /

Theo Lebow (May 1st, 5th 2023)

Old Servant: Seungwon Choi

Overseer: Nombulelo Yende

1st Maid: Katharina Magiera

2nd Maid: Helene Feldbauer

3rd Maid: Bianca Andrew

4th Maid: Barbara Zechmeister

5th Maid: Monika Buczkowska

and others

Oper Frankfurt's Chorus and Extras

Frankfurt Opern und Museumsorchester

With generous support from the Frankfurt Patronatsverein – Sektion Oper

After the resounding success of *Salome* in 1905 at the Royal Opera in Dresden, which broke all musical boundaries, **Richard Strauss** (1864-1949), looking for something new to get his teeth into, found Hugo von Hofmannsthal's play *Elektra*, which he first saw, directed by Max Reinhardt, at the Deutsche Theater in Berlin. Apart from a few cuts and changes – in particular expanding the scene when Elektra and her brother recognise each other – Strauss remained true to the libretto. The first time the Bavarian composer and Austrian writer worked together marked the beginning of a fruitful collaboration which resulted in *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1910 and five further works. Sigmund Freud's and Josef Breuer's *Studies of Hysteria*, published at roughly the same time, were reflected in Hofmannsthal's characterisation of the title figure and intensified by Strauss' avant-garde music. This New Production by **Claus Guth** succeeds Falk Richter's staging, which was first seen at Oper Frankfurt on October 2nd 2004.

The plot: Since King Agamemnon was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus, Elektra has been obsessed with thoughts of revenge but can't persuade her sister Chrysothemis to help her. She gradually realises that a stranger with a message is her believed to be dead brother Orestes. When he takes revenge – egged on by Elektra - she has achieved her goal. She dances herself to death in ecstatic frenzy.

Conductor of this New Production, in his fifteenth and final season as General Music Director, is **Sebastian Weigle**, during whose career Strauss' works have been constant companions. His last new opera as GMD in Frankfurt is Rudi Stephan's *Die ersten Menschen / The First People* at the end of the season. Claus Guth is one of the Germany's best-known directors. His eight productions at Oper Frankfurt in nearly twenty years include *Daphne* (2009/10) and *Der Rosenkavalier* (2014/15). Other works by Richard Strauss have taken him to many leading international opera houses and festivals. The title role is sung by the Estonian soprano **Aile Asszonyi**, making her house debut with a role she has sung at houses from Bonn to Erfurt. Plans include the Empress (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) and Brünnhilde (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*). The career of British soprano **Susan Bullock** (Clytemnestra) has long been linked to Oper Frankfurt, where she sang many roles including Elektra and Brünnhilde in the *Ring*, which started in 2010. American soprano **Jennifer Holloway** (Chrysothemis) made her debut here in 2019 as Grete in Schreker's *Der ferne Klang / The Elusive Sound* – a role she just enjoyed great success with here again in a revival. Led by **Peter Marsh** (Aegisthus) and **Kihwan Sim** (Orestes) nearly all the other roles are sung by **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble, Opera Studio or Chorus**.

**Premiere:** Sunday March 19th 2023, at 18hrs in the Opera House

**Further performances:** March 24th, April 1st, 7th (18hrs), 16th (18hrs), 21st, May 1st (18hrs), 5th 2023  
Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19.30hrs

**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](http://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](mailto:holger.engelhardt@buehnen-frankfurt.de).