

Premiere

## LULU

Opera in three acts by Alban Berg (completed by Friedrich Cerha)

Libretto by the composer after Frank Wedekind

Sung in German with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Thomas Guggeis

Director: Nadja Loschky

Set Designer: Katharina Schlipf

Costume Designer: Irina Spreckelmeyer

Lighting Designer: Jan Hartmann

Concept Advisor: Yvonne Gebauer

Dramaturge: Mareike Wink

Lulu: Brenda Rae

Dr. Schön / Jack the Ripper: Simon Neal

Alwa: AJ Glueckert

Gräfin Geschwitz: Claudia Mahnke

Artist / Suitor: Theo Lebow

Animal Tamer / Athlete: Kihwan Sim

Schigolch: Alfred Reiter

Dresser / Schoolboy / Groom:

Bianca Andrew

Prince / Valet / Marquis: Michael Porter

Theatre Director / Servant: Božidar Smiljanić

Banker / Medizinalrat / Professor: Erik van Heyningen

Fifteen year-old girl: Anna Nekhames

Her Mother: Katharina Magiera

Artisan: Cecelia Hall:

Journalist / Clown: Leon Tchakachow

Dancer: Evie Poaros

Frankfurt Opern- und Museumsorchester

With generous support from the Frankfurt Patronatsverein (patrons) – Sektion Oper

20 year-old **Alban Berg** (1885-1935) was fascinated from the word go when he saw *Lulu* by **Frank Wedekind** (1864-1918) in Vienna. More than 20 years later, in 1928, the composer started working on his opera. He constructed it in a strictly symmetrical manner, following in the footsteps of his teacher Arnold Schönberg, using the twelve-tone technique. Berg played with a myriad of timbres and all kinds of musical forms, even jazz can be heard. He included interludes, melodramatic and recitative passages. The centrepiece of the work is taken by another strictly symmetrical interlude. Before Berg could complete his second opera, he died, aged 50, in 1935, from blood poisoning. After the World Premiere of the existing score Berg's wife Helene refused to allow it to be completed. Unbeknownst to her, the Austrian composer **Friedrich Cerha** (1926-2023) spent 12 years working on a performable version of the third act. For legal reasons it wasn't performed until Helene Berg had died. In February 1979 Pierre Boulez and Patrice Chéreau presented the first complete *Lulu*, the key work of the 20th Century, with which Alban Berg revolutionised music theatre. The last New Production in Frankfurt opened in 2003, directed by Richard Jones.

Editor-in-chief Dr. Schön rescued Lulu from the streets. They are inextricably bound by fate. Lulu is married to Dr. Goll. When he sees how an artist behaves while painting her portrait, he dies of a heart attack. Lulu is now married to the artist who kills himself when he finds out from Dr. Schön that he's been living a lie. Lulu persuades Dr. Schön to call off his engagement to another woman and marry her instead. One day, out of his mind with jealousy, he orders her to shoot herself. But Lulu points the gun at him and is arrested as a murderess. With the help of her friends – including Countess Geschwitz and Dr. Schön's son Alwa – she escapes from prison. She flees to Paris and then London, where she keeps herself and friends afloat with prostitution. Her last customer is the serial murderer Jack the Ripper ...

The conductor is Frankfurt's General Music Director **Thomas Guggeis**. The director is **Nadja Loschky**, who recently made her debut in Frankfurt with Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*. She took up the post of Co-Intendant of Theater Bielefeld in 2023/24 and will start running it alone in 2025. The title role brings the American coloratura soprano **Brenda Rae** back to Frankfurt, where she was a much loved Member of the Ensemble from 2008 to 2017. A regular Guest in the house on Willy-Brandt-Platz is British baritone **Simon Neal** (Dr. Schön / Jack the Ripper), who sang Nekrotzar in Oper Frankfurt's 2023/24 production of György Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*. Nearly all the other roles are being sung by **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble**.

**Premiere:** Sunday November 3rd 2024, at 18hrs in the Opera House

**Further performances:** November 7th, 9th (18hrs), 15th, 17th (18hrs), 23rd (18hrs), 28th 2024

Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19hrs

**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).