

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt

MELUSINE

Opera in four acts by Aribert Reimann

Libretto by Claus H. Henneberg

after Yvan Goll's play by the same name

Sung in German with German surtitles

Conductor: Karsten Januschke

Director: Aileen Schneider

Set Designer: Christoph Fischer

Costume Designer: Lorena Díaz Stephens

Lighting: Olaf Winter / Jonathan Pickers

Dramaturge: Maximilian Enderle

Melusine: Anna Nekhames

Pythia: Zanda Švēde

Madame Lapérouse: Cecelia Hall

Oleander: Jaeil Kim

Count of Lusignan: Liviu Holender

Surveyor: Dietrich Volle

Bricklayer: Frederic Jost

Architect: Andrew Kim

Ogre: Morgan-Andrew King amongst others

Frankfurt Opern and Museumsorchester

Aribert Reimann's (1936-2024) legacy lives on at Oper Frankfurt. His *Melusine*, first performed in 1971, seems like a fairy tale, but it soon becomes obvious that important political conflicts simmer beneath the surface. Claus Henneberg's libretto draws the title figure as a young married woman, stifled by her nonchalant, middle-class relations. Melusine retreats to another world in an overgrown park, ruled by Pythia, „Queen of the Willows“. With her help she manages to delay, but not prevent a castle being built on the land, then falls in love with the owner, the Count of Lusignan, when it's opened. Pythia's swears to avenge Melusine's betrayal.

Aileen Schneider's production of *Melusine* portrays an idealistic, finding a solution for everything society that could be seen as a coming of age process, transferring the action to somewhere in the future when resources are scarce and there's almost no water left. In this timeless, hopeless world the audience become part of it, and the core of the piece, seated in a circle around the stage, as silent observers of a struggle between desperate rebellion and a mystic acceptance of the inevitable.

Aileen Schneider, who has been rehearsing revivals and assisting directors at Oper Frankfurt since 2020/21, recently directed works including Philip Glass' *In the Penal Colony*, based on Kafka, at the Staatstheater in Augsburg and *The Sound of Voice*, also by Glass, at the Hamburg State Opera. The conductor is **Karsten Januschke**, a former Kapellmeister at Oper Frankfurt, where he recently conducted a New Production of Offenbach's *The Bandits*. Engagements last season included projects at the Stuttgart State Opera, the Semperoper in Dresden, Komische Oper in Berlin and several operas at the National Theatre in Prague. The title role is sung by the soprano **Anna Nekhames**, whose roles this season included Aksinja (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*) and a 15 year-old girl (*Lulu*). She recently appeared at the Rheingau Festival and sang in Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Orchestra e Coro Sinfonica di Milano under Emmanuel Tjeknavorian. Pythia is **Zanda Švēde**, a Member of the Ensemble at Oper Frankfurt since 2018/19, who's been thrilling audiences here with roles including Carmen, Xerxes and Herodias (*Salome*). Led by **Liviu Holender** as the Count of Lusignan, nearly all the other roles are sung by Members, or former Members, of the Frankfurt Ensemble.

Premiere / First ever performance in Frankfurt: Friday June 6th 2025, at 19hrs in the Bockenheimer Depot

Further performances: June 8th, 11th, 13th, 15th, 17th, 22nd, 25th 2025
which all 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.