

Premiere

OTTONE

Opera in three acts by George Frideric Handel

Libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym after Stefano Benedetto Pallavicini

Sung in Italian with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Václav Luks

Director: Jetske Mijnsen

Set and Costume Designer: Ben Baur

Choreography: Dustin Klein

Lighting Designer: Jan Hartmann

Chorus Master: Manuel Pujol

Dramaturge: Mareike Wink

Ottone: Yuriy Mynenko

Teofane: Monika Buczkowska-Ward

Gismonda: Paula Murrihy

Adelberto: Iurii Iushkevich

Matilda: Cecelia Hall

Emireno: Jonas Müller

Frankfurt Oper and Museumsorchester

With generous support from the Frankfurt Patronatsverein – Sektion Oper

George Frideric Handel's (1685-1759) opera *Ottone* was a major milestone in baroque theatre. Performed for the first time in London in January 1723, it was composed at a time when Handel, artistic director of the newly founded Royal Academy of Music, raised the meaning of stardom on the banks of the Thames to a new level, as he travelled regularly, signing up the most talented singers in Europe. In *Ottone* the composer untangled a psychologically complex web of relationships linked to an historical marriage in the year 972, from which librettists created a fictional, highly dramatic tale of misappropriated identity. Handel's score captivates with elegant, passionate arias and melodies which linger long in the mind. It was the composer's biggest box-office hit during his lifetime, only topped by *Rinaldo*, which was revived many times.

The plot: Ottone, the rightful King, is to marry Teofane, but nobody reckoned with ambitious Gismonda, plotting away in the background to put her son Adelberto on the throne and steal the bride. Easy for Adelberto to pass himself off as Teofane's bridegroom Ottone, because bride and groom have never met. But the fraud's soon exposed ...

Václav Luks is back to conduct, following on from last season's wonderful production of Steffani's *Amor vien dal destino*. He founded Prague's Collegium 1704 Baroque Orchestra and Collegium Vocale 1704 in 2005, with whom he appears at leading festivals and concert halls throughout Europe. France awarded him the *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* in 2022 for his contribution to the arts. Director **Jetske Mijnsen** is making her debut at Oper Frankfurt. Last season she staged works including *Ariodante* at Covent Garden in London, the *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Semperoper in Dresden and *Simone Boccanegra* at De Nationale Opera in Amsterdam, following on from productions for the Aix-en-Provence Festival and Glyndebourne. **Yuriy Mynenko**, who enjoyed great success here last season as Cesare, is back to sing the title role. Teofane is sung by **Monika Buczkowska-Ward**, our wonderful Bellezza in Handel's *The Triumph of Time and Enlightenment* last June. **Paula Murrihy** (Gismonda) and **Iurii Iushkevich** (Adelberto) return as Guests. Paula Murrihy's many roles while a Member of the Ensemble until 2017 included Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Octavian in Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* and, most recently, Dejanira in Handel's *Hercules*. Iurii Iushkevich, a regular Guest at leading European Opera Houses, and equally at home in baroque and contemporary music, enjoyed great success here last season as 1st Angel / The Boy in George Benjamin's *Written on Skin*. **Cecelia Hall**, Matilda, and **Jonas Müller**, Emireno, complete the Cast for the first of three Handel operas during the 2026/27 season.

Premiere: Sunday October 11th 2026, at 18hrs in the Opera House

Further performances: October 18th (18hrs), 24th, November 1st (15.30hrs), 7th, 12th, 15th (18hrs), 21st 2026
Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 19hrs.

Tickets cost: € 16 to € 198 (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.