

Premiere

# TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

Story in three acts by Richard Wagner

Libretto by the composer

based on the narrative poem *Tristan* (c. 1210) by Gottfried von Straßburg

Sung in German with German and English surtitles

Conductor: Sebastian Weigle

Director: Katharina Thoma

Set Designer: Johannes Leiacker

Costume Designer: Irina Bartels

Lighting Designer: Olaf Winter

Chorus Master: Tilman Michael

Dramaturge: Mareike Wink

Tristan: Vincent Wolfsteiner

Isolde: Rachel Nicholls

King Marke: Andreas Bauer Kanabas / Falk Struckmann (June, July 2020)

Brangäne: Claudia Mahnke / Tanja Ariane Baumgartner (June, July 2020)

Kurwenal: Christoph Pohl / Simon Bailey (June, July 2020)

Melot: Iain MacNeil

A Shepherd: Tianji Lin

Helmsman: Liviu Holender

A Young Sailor's Voice: Michael Porter / Michael Petruccelli (February 14th, 23rd 2020)

Oper Frankfurt's Male Chorus; Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester

*Tristan und Isolde* is regarded as one of the best operas written by **Richard Wagner** (1813-1883) and an enormous milestone in music. The way his „Tristan chord“ resolves towards the end of the work during Isolde's „Liebestod“ was unthinkable in those days. The composer was well aware how difficult it would be to stage this three act work: „Only mediocre productions might save me“, he wrote to Mathilde Wesendonck. The World Premiere on June 10th 1865 in the National Theatre in Munich, at the command of King Ludwig II, was a great success. The last production of *Tristan* in Frankfurt opened in 2003, directed by Christof Nel.

The story: Although Tristan killed Isolde's betrothed in battle, the Irish princess nursed the wounded knight back to health, incapable of carrying out her revenge. They meet again on board of a ship taking Isolde to Cornwall to marry King Marke. Isolde invites him to drink atonement to her, but her servant Brangäne swaps the death draught with a love potion, and they are engulfed in all-consuming passion for one another. In Cornwall they are caught by King Marke during one of their trysts, and Tristan is badly wounded by one of Marke's men. Feverish Tristan is waiting for Isolde in his castle, Kareol, but dies before she arrives. Isolde collapses beside his body.

Frankfurt's GMD **Sebastian Weigle** and the director **Katharina Thoma**, a former assistant in Frankfurt, are joining forces again, after Flotow's *Martha* in 2016/17, for this New Production of *Tristan und Isolde*. He works at leading opera houses as a renowned specialist for Strauss and Wagner, and she has enjoyed great success in Stockholm and Frankfurt with Barber's *Vanessa*, in Covent Garden and Glyndebourne. The British singer **Rachel Nicholls** (Isolde) is making her debut in Frankfurt with a role she recently enjoyed triumphs with in Rome and Turin. **Vincent Wolfsteiner** (Tristan) joined the Ensemble in Frankfurt in 2014/15, where he has thrilled audiences with roles including Lohengrin, Siegfried in the *Ring des Nibelungen* and Erik in *Der fliegende Holländer* / *The Flying Dutchman*. **Andreas Bauer Kanabas** (King Marke) joined the company in 2013/14, singing roles such as Daland (*Fliegender Holländer*), Heinrich der Vogler (*Lohengrin*) and Philip II in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, a role he is currently singing here again. **Claudia Mahnke** (Brangäne), joined Frankfurt in 2006/07, where her many successes have included Fricka and Waltraute in the *Ring*. She sings regularly in Bayreuth. **Christoph Pohl** (Kurwenal) has been a Member of the Ensemble at the Semperoper in Dresden since 2005, singing roles including Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* and Danilo in Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe* / *The Merry Widow*, which he sang in Frankfurt as his house debut last season. All the other roles – and changes in casts – are being sung by **Members of Oper Frankfurt's Ensemble, Opera Studio** and a few **Guests**.

**Premiere:** Sunday January 19th 2020, at 17.00hrs in the Opera House

**Further performances:** January 25th, February 1st, 9th (15.30hrs), 14th, 23rd (15.30hrs), 29th, June 12th, 20th, 28th (15.30hrs), July 2nd 2020  
Unless otherwise stated, all performances begin at 17.00hrs

**Tickets cost:** € 15 to € 165 (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)