

# PRODUKTIONEN DER OPER KÖLN IN DER SPIELZEIT 2025/26

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

## DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE

WIEDERAUFNAHME: 31. AUG. 2025

## THEATERFEST DER OPER KÖLN

TERMIN: 21. SEP. 2025

GIACOMO PUCCINI

## MANON LESCAUT

PREMIERE: 28. SEP. 2025

SASHA WALTZ & GUESTS

## BEETHOVEN 7

TANZGASTSPIEL: 01. UND 03. OKT. 2025

ELISABETH NASKE

## DER

SATANARCHÄOLÜGENIALKOHÖLLISCHE

## WUNSCHPUNSCH

KINDEROPER PREMIERE: 25. OKT. 2025

RICHARD WAGNER

## DAS RHEINGOLD

PREMIERE: 26. OKT. 2025

## FEST DER SCHÖNEN STIMMEN

TERMIN: 07. NOV. 2025

GEORG FRIEDRICH HÄNDEL

## SAUL

PREMIERE: 23. NOV. 2025

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK

## HÄNSEL UND GRETEL

WIEDERAUFNAHME: 30. NOV. 2025

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

## LA CENERENTOLA

WIEDERAUFNAHME: 25. DEZ. 2025

HESSISCHES STAATSBALLET

## CORPS DE WALK

TANZGASTSPIEL: 04. UND 05. JAN. 2026

GIVLE KVERNDOKK

## MAX UND MORITZ

KINDEROPER PREMIERE: 24. JAN. 2026

GAUTHIER DANCE JUNIORS THEATERHAUS STUTTGART

## DREAM TEAM

TANZGASTSPIEL: 21. UND 22. FEB. 2026

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

## LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

PREMIERE: 01. MÄR. 2026

RICHARD WAGNER

## DIE WALKÜRE

PREMIERE: 29. MÄR. 2026

NACH „DER FREISCHÜTZ“ VON CARL MARIA VON WEBER

## FREIKUGELN

PREMIERE: 11. APR. 2026

IM COMEDIA THEATER KÖLN

GIUSEPPE VERDI

## ERNANI

PREMIERE KONZERTANT: 22. APR. 2026

GEORGE BENJAMIN

## PICTURE A DAY

## LIKE THIS

DEUTSCHE ERSTAUFFÜHRUNG: 10. MAI 2026

GIACOMO PUCCINI

## TURANDOT

WIEDERAUFNAHME: 21. MAI 2026

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

## TANCREDI

PREMIERE: 20. JUN. 2026

# ANDRÉS OROZCO-ESTRADA

**Chief Conductor Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai  
Designate GMD of the City of Cologne and  
Gürzenich-Kapellmeister (from 2025/26)**

Energy, elegance and spirit - that is what particularly distinguishes Andrés Orozco-Estrada as a musician. After a wonderful collaboration with the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai in May 2022, Andrés Orozco-Estrada was appointed the new principal conductor of the Rai Orchestra from the 23/24 season.



**From the 2025/26 season, he will take up the position of GMD of the city of Cologne and Gürzenich Kapellmeister. Orozco-Estrada attaches great importance to inspiring all the people of Cologne with music and for music, and to representing and presenting Cologne as a city of music internationally. This season, a series of performances of CARMEN will mark his opera-debut as GMD-designate.**

Right at the beginning of the 24-25 season, Orozco-Estrada makes his debut with performances of 'Le Nozze di Figaro' at the Semperoper Dresden. Further debuts will take him to the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, the KBS Symphony Orchestra in Seoul and the Spanish National Orchestra (OCNE) in Madrid.

Orozco-Estrada has been re-invited to the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Orchestre National de France, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Radio, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and the radio orchestras of SWR, WDR and the DSO Berlin. He will also return to the hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt (Principal Conductor 2014-2021) and the Houston Symphony Orchestra (Music Director 2014-2022).

Born in Medellín (Colombia), Andrés Orozco-Estrada began his musical education by playing the violin, receiving his first conducting lessons at the age of 15. In 1997, he moved to Vienna, where he was accepted into the conducting class of Uroš Lajovic, a student of the legendary Hans Swarowsky, at the renowned Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst.

Since October 2022, Orozco-Estrada has been professor of orchestral conducting at the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts.

Season 2024/25

[www.orozco-estrada.com](http://www.orozco-estrada.com)

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# PRESS INFORMATION

## SEASON 2025/26

It is with great anticipation that we present to you the programme of the Cologne Opera for the 2025/26 season, which we will be spending once again in our interim venue Staatenhaus. During the months of transition, Cologne Opera will continue its programme in the Staatenhaus in coexistence with ATG Entertainment.

The new season will also be the first for the newly appointed General Music Director of the City of Cologne and Gürzenich Kapellmeister: Colombian-born **Andrés Orozco-Estrada** will devote himself to two new productions and one revival in this Cologne opera season. We are looking forward to this collaboration!

The 2025/26 season will not only see the beginning of **DAS RHEINGOLD** and **DIE WALKÜRE**, thus launching a new production of Richard Wagner's tetralogy **DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN**; the other premiere titles cover a wide range of subjects, from grand Italian opera (Giacomo Puccini's **MANON LESCAUT**, Gioacchino Rossini's **TANCREDI** and Giuseppe Verdi's **ERNANI**) to George Frideric Handel's baroque drama **SAUL** and the German premiere of George Benjamin's **PICTURE A DAY LIKE THIS**.

The award-winning performances of the Cologne Children's Opera, international dance companies as well as popular and new audience formats open the theatre to young and old. The theatre festival for the whole family at the start of the season (21 September 2025) and the extensive range of activities offered throughout the season by our theatre education department 'Oper.Stadt.Schule' are particularly representative of this.

# OPERA PREMIERES

Cologne's new GMD **Andrés Orozco-Estrada** will open the season with **MANON LESCAUT**; the internationally acclaimed Venezuelan director Carlos Wagner will stage the production for the first time at the Cologne Opera. The title role will be performed by the award-winning young soprano Carolina López Moreno, who specialises in the Italian repertoire. The co-production with the Teatro Real Madrid celebrates its premiere on 28 September 2025 at the Staatenshaus.

The award-winning director Paul-Georg Dittrich, who presented himself very successfully in Cologne in 2022/23 with his sensitive but colourful interpretation of Alexander Zemlinsky's **DER ZWERG**, has been engaged for the new production of **RING DES NIBELUNGEN**.

In the 2025/26 season, star conductor Marc Albrecht will conduct the Gürzenich Orchestra, who made his brilliant debut at Cologne Opera with **DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN**. Also known from this production at the house, the sought-after bass-baritone Jordan Shanahan will sing the role of the Wanderer/Wotan in the complete cycle, giving his role debut; his daughter Brünnhilde will be embodied by the Danish soprano Trine Møller, who has been awarded for this very role. She made her Cologne opera debut last December as Abigaille in **NABUCCO**.

In the 2025/26 season, **DAS RHEINGOLD** (premiere: 26 October 2025) and **DIE WALKÜRE** (premiere: 29 March 2026) will be presented.

For his dazzling opera adaptation of Handel's oratorio **SAUL**, which was first brought onto the Glyndebourne Festival stage, star director Barrie Kosky was voted 'Director of the Year' at the time. On the podium of the Gürzenich Orchestra: baroque expert Rubén Dubrovsky, known in Cologne for **GIULIO CESARE** and **IDOMENEO**, holding the title Principal Guest Conductor of the Cologne Opera since this season. Christopher Purves has been engaged for his signature role, the mentally deranged Saul (premiere: 23 November 2025).

The second new production of the new GMD Andrés Orozco-Estrada in the upcoming season will be one of the most popular operas of all: Mozart's **LE NOZZE DI FIGARO**. Katharina Thoma will direct the production; the Cologne Opera opened its 2023/24 season with her **DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN** (Richard Strauss). Internationally acclaimed lyric soprano Selene Zanetti and Mexican baritone Germán Olvera, celebrated for this role, will be welcomed to the house for the first time as the Countess and Count Almaviva (premiere: 1 March 2026).

Verdi's early, captivating drama **ERNANI**, based on the work by Victor Hugo, will be performed in concert from 22 April 2026, conducted by one of the most renowned conductors of the Italian repertoire and regular house guest (A MASKED BALL, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR), Giuliano Carella. In the role of Ernani: Korean tenor Young Woo Kim from the opera ensemble, who is also in great demand at other major theatres; Ernani's lover Elvira will be sung by Marta Torbidoni, who embodied a blazing Abigaille in last season's NABUCCO in Cologne.

The German premiere of George Benjamin's enigmatic work PICTURE A DAY LIKE THIS promises to become one of the highlights of the season and deals with the most existential questions in just one hour, staged by the French directing team Daniel Jeanneteau and Marie-Christine Soma for the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence. Emily Hindrichs and KS Miljenko Turk from the opera ensemble, specialists in the contemporary repertoire, will take to the stage (premiere: 10 May 2026). The conductor will be Christian Karlsen from Sweden, who will introduce himself to the house just in May 2025 with Kaija Saariaho's LA PASSION DE SIMONE.

The 2025/26 season closes with a vibrant production of Rossini's early work **TANCREDI**, which director Jan Philip Gloger has brought to the stage in a contemporary interpretation for the Bregenz Festival. Adriana Bastidas-Gamboa plays the title role, and therefore a trouser role, alongside Kathrin Zukowski as Amenaide. The musical director is Georges Petrou, a specialist in historically informed performance practice, and who was most recently a guest of the Cologne Opera with L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA, MIRANDA and IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA (premiere: 20 June 2026).

## REVIVALS

Almost legendary productions by Oper Köln such as Mozart's **ZAUBERFLÖTE** directed by the late Michael Hampe (from 31 August 2025), Engelbert Humperdinck's **HÄNSEL & GRETEL** by Jürgen Rose - this time conducted by GMD Andrés Orozco-Estrada (from 31 November 2025) - or Lydia Steier's bold interpretation of Puccini's **TURANDOT** (from 31 May 2026) will be revived in 2025/26, flanked by Rossini's LA CENERENTOLA in an acclaimed production by Cecilia Ligorio (from 25 December 2025), whose DON GIOVANNI is currently on the program.

## DANCE

In the dance department, the guest performances **BEETHOVEN 7** by Sasha Waltz & Guests (1 and 3 October 2025), **CORPS DE WALK** choreographed by Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar and danced by the Hessisches Staatsballett (4 and 5 January 2026) and **DREAM TEAM** (21 and 22 February 2026), performed by the Dance Juniors from Eric Gauthier's Dance Company Theaterhaus Stuttgart, will once again be performed by top artists from the international scene.

The biennial cooperation between the Cologne Opera and the independent dance scene will also be continued: This year, **Brig Huezo** [they/them] was chosen to realise the next co-production with the Cologne Opera. Brig Huezo, a post-digital choreographer, dancer and performer, won out against nine competitors who responded to the joint call for proposals from the City of Cologne and the Cologne Opera. As part of the cooperation, Brig Huezo will receive a ready-to-perform stage as well as staff support and a budget for equipment. The Cultural Office is contributing a subsidy to the production budget totalling 30,000 euros plus performance funding (11-14 April 2026).

## CHILDREN'S OPERA

The children's opera is launching its season with a new production of Elisabeth Naske's **DER SATANARCHÄOLÜGENIALKOHÖLLISCHE WUNSCHPUNSCH** based on the classic children's book by Michael Ende, staged by Eike Ecker and musically directed by the longstanding musical director of the children's opera, Rainer Mühlbach (premiere: 25 October 2025). In spring 2026, the team led by children's opera director Brigitta Gillessen will venture into new territory with **FREIKUGELN** and work on an inclusive version of Carl Maria von Weber's **FREISCHÜTZ** by and for people with and without hearing impairments in cooperation with Cologne's COMEDIA Theatre (premiere: 11 April 2026 at COMEDIA).

A new mobile children's opera **MAX UND MORITZ** by Gisle Kverndokk will premiere at the Staatenhaus on 24 January 2026 before travelling to primary schools, and daycare centres can once again be visited by Thierry Tidrow's mini-opera **NILS KARLSSON DÄUMLING**.



# THEATRE EDUCATION

In the coming season, the theatre education team at Oper.Stadt.Schule will once again be offering its usual diverse programme of projects, events and workshops for all generations that revolve around the repertoire, but also around the art form of opera itself. With five episodes per season, the team will now be entering the world of podcasts for the first time, with an unconventional look at selected opera pieces and everything that goes with them. Another new feature will be the ‘guided tours with all senses’: individual, barrier-free and in simple language, as well as a participatory “artistic music theatre laboratory”, with Cologne citizens in cooperation with Schauspiel Köln.

## EXTRAS

Special formats and events have a constant place in the programme: The FESTIVAL OF BEAUTIFUL VOICES with the presentation of the OFFENBACH PRIZE by the Friends of Cologne Opera Association (7 November 2025), the Christmas RED CROSS MATINEE (14 December 2025) and the Christmas concerts of the youth choir St. Stephan, SING HALLEUJA! (6/7 December 2025) have a long tradition; information about other special events can be found in the season booklet and on the Cologne Opera website.

Before most performances of new productions and selected revivals, the dramaturges present informative introductions to the works; in addition, the popular soirées with public rehearsals give an impression of the work and production in advance. Post-performance discussions are also offered on selected dates, providing an opportunity for direct personal feedback after a performance.

# 2025/26 ZU GAST AN DER OPER KÖLN



**MANON LESCAUT**

**Carolina López Moreno**  
(„Manon Lescaut“)

## DAS RHEINGOLD / DIE WALKÜRE



**Jordan Shanahan („Wotan“)**  
© Adrian Beck



**Marc Albrecht (Musikalische Leitung)**  
© Marco Borggreve

## DIE WALKÜRE



**Trine Møller**  
(„Brünnhilde“)  
© Jeanette Philipsen



**Daniel Johansson**  
(„Siegmund“)  
© Nadja Sjostrom





## ERNANI

**Marta Torbidoni („Elvira“)**

© Michele Monasta

## SAUL

**Rubén Dubrovsky  
(Musikalische Leitung)**

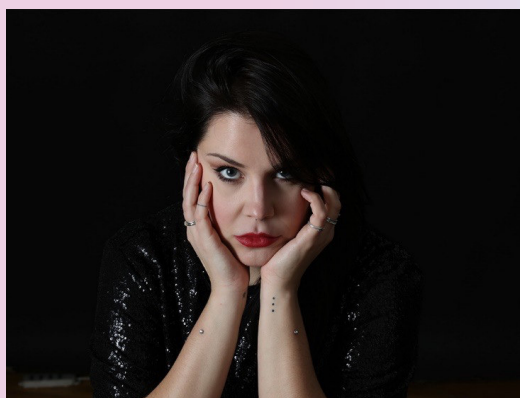
© Jan Frankl



**Christopher Purves („Saul“)**

© Chris Gloag

## LE NOZZE DI FIGARO



**Selene Zanetti  
(La Contessa di Almaviva)**



**Germán Olvera  
(Il Conte di Almaviva)**

© Jesús Cornejo

# ADVANCE TICKET SALES

Advance ticket sales for the first part of the 2025/26 season start on 07 April 2025 for performances until 11 January 2026. Tickets for DAS RHEINGOLD (premiere: 26 October 2025) and DIE WALKÜRE (premiere: 29 March 2026) can be booked together as a package.

Advance bookings for the months of February to July 2026 can be submitted to the Bühnen Köln box office from 07 April 2025.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION:

[www.oper.koeln](http://www.oper.koeln)

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All information about our subscriptions, ticket orders, prices, travelling to and from the theatre and other useful tips can also be found in our **season booklet**, which is available in the Staatenhaus and online.

## **Press room**

In the section [www.oper.koeln/de/presse](http://www.oper.koeln/de/presse) you can find images of the productions for use for press purposes in the course of the season and more.

You can find photo material of protagonists from the 2025/26 season already now.

Press kit as of 01 April 2025, subject to change.