

Letters to our Friends

Dear Members,

The next signals have been set for the Festival Summer: at the end of April, the Administrative Council decided that the Bayreuth Festival will take place this year and that the planning for it can go ahead.

With today's electronic mail we should like to bring you up to date on the subject of Festival tickets, draw your attention to the beginning of advance sales for the children's opera and turn your eyes to a few more "new faces" on the Grüner Hügel.

We hope you enjoy reading the news.

With best wishes from Bayreuth,

*Ina Besser-Eichler
Kirsti Neumüller
Ágnes Lenkeit
Pierre Soldatenko*



THE LATEST FROM THE GRÜNER HÜGEL...

I. Tickets

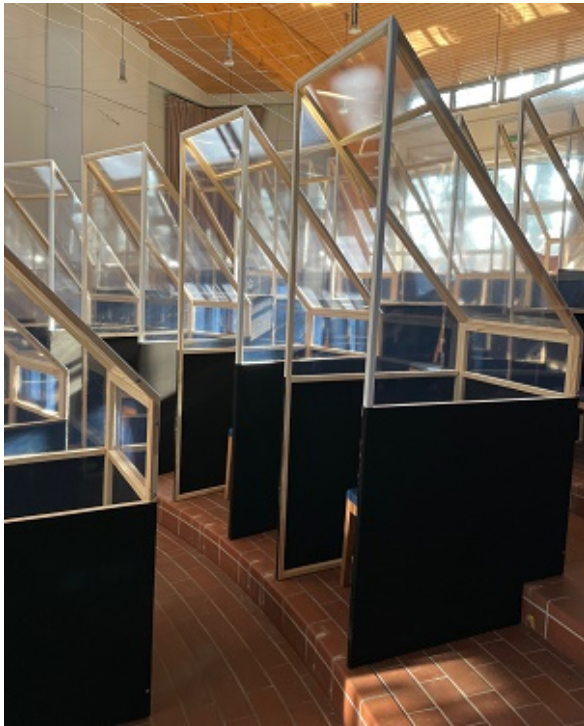
'Tis now the merry month of May, as the saying goes. But before too much merriment breaks out, we must ask you to be patient for a little longer until we can tell you whether the Winter storms will yield to the blissful moon. In our *Manual* we expressed the hope that we could begin processing the requests for tickets at the beginning of May. Unfortunately, we are still waiting for the authorities to decide on the number of seats they will permit in the Festspielhaus and hence the size of our ticket allocation. As soon as the decision has been made, we can begin sharing out the tickets. We shall need about four weeks to complete processing all the requests for tickets. It may well be that it will be June before you hear from us. If you have not yet sent in your requests for tickets, we shall still be happy to receive them. If the ticket allocation as of June is too short notice for you, or if you would prefer to cancel your requests for tickets for any other reason, please let us know.

In the *Manual*, we still mentioned the closing date for orders placed with the Festival box office, but there have been changes there in the meantime, as you may already have seen in the media. The Festival box office has decided not to send out any order forms and instead to sell all its tickets online. The date for the online immediate purchase procedure was planned for 6th June but has been postponed. We shall publicise the new date. The Festival will also inform its customers directly. It is our aim to inform you about the result of the ticket orders you have placed with the Friends before the Festival's online immediate purchase procedure.

There has been a further change regarding the seating plan. There will not be any double seats. All the seats in the Festspielhaus will be issued as single seats. That means that it will be easier to handle returns, because single seats can be passed on to other people at any time (even people from different households).

II. Hygiene measures





Work has begun on structural measures behind the scenes in order to comply with the current hygiene and social distancing rules and to protect those working at the Festival. The chorus room, for example, has been converted, its ventilation system augmented and individual changing rooms constructed for every singer in the chorus.

The hygiene concept for the audience is still being worked out. We shall be letting you know about the specific plans when we send out the ticket invoices or in the next electronic mail. What we do already know today, however, is that it will be mandatory to wear masks on the Festival premises. The obligation to wear a surgical mask will probably also apply during the performance.

In addition, it will be necessary to present a rapid lateral flow test which must not be more than 24 hours old in order to attend the Festival. The question whether the rules will also apply to those who have been vaccinated, and how they will be applied, is under discussion at present. We shall keep you posted.

III. The children's opera

We already mentioned the children's opera in the *Manual*. This year, Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* is to be staged in a version for children. The performances will take place in the Kulturbühne Reichshof in the town centre of Bayreuth.

Tickets for the children's opera can only be purchased online. Advance sales begin on 14th May. More information can be found [here](#). We have been able to reserve a ticket allocation for the youngest of our "Young Friends" in advance.



IV. The new faces on the Grüner Hügel



1. Christine Goerke
(Sieglinde, concert conducted by Andris Nelsons)



Christine Goerke was born in New York in 1969. She graduated from Stony Brook University in 1994 with a degree in voice. Until 1997 she was a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Young Artist Program and sang among other things the First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*), the High Priestess in Verdi's *Aida* and Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. In 1997 she sang her first major role outside the Metropolitan Opera, the title role of the opera *Iphigénie en Tauride* at Glimmerglass Opera, a part in which she also appeared at the New York City Opera and in a concert with the Boston Baroque Orchestra.

After her voice changed, Goerke moved to a different range of roles. In 2013, she sang the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Metropolitan Opera and in 2015 the title role in Puccini's *Turandot*, followed by Brünnhilde in the *Ring des Nibelungen* in the

2018/19 season. She has sung most of the major roles in her range, beginning with the powerful female portraits by Mozart and Handel, and continuing to the dramatic Strauss and Wagner parts. In addition to the roles mentioned, she has also sung the title roles in *Elektra* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* and also Kundry, Ortrud, Leonore (*Fidelio*), Eboli (*Don Carlos*), Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*), Alice in *Falstaff* and Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites*.

In Europe she has appeared at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, the Opéra de Paris, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Scala and the Teatro Real in Madrid. She has worked with such conductors as James Levine, Sir Charles Mackerras, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Andris Nelsons, Seiji Ozawa, David Robertson, Donald Runnicles, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Christian Thielemann.

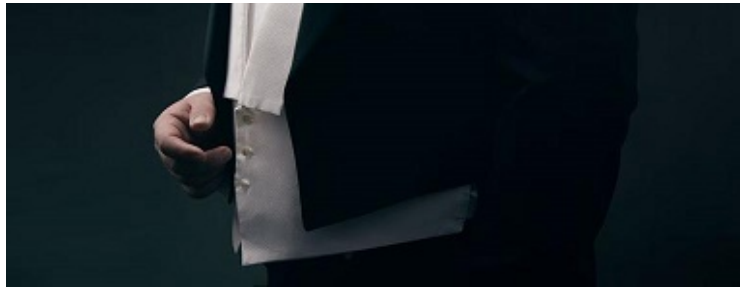
Her recording of Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra won the Grammy Award in 2003 for the best classical recording and the best choral performance. Christine Goerke was honoured with the *Richard Tucker Award* in 2001. In 2015 she received the *Musical America Vocalist of the Year Award*, and in 2017 the *Opera News Award*.

2. Dmitry Belosselskiy (Hunding, Die Walküre)

Dmitry Belosselskiy was born in Pavlohrad (Ukraine) in 1975 and studied singing at the Gnessin Institute in Moscow. From 2010 to 2013, he was a member of the ensemble at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, where he appeared as Escamillo (*Carmen*), Zaccaria (*Nabucco*) and Ferrando (*Il Trovatore*) and in the title role in *Boris Godunov*. His repertoire also includes such roles as Méphistophélès (*La damnation de Faust*), Talbot (*Giovanna d'Arco*) and Ivan Khovansky (*Khovanshchina*).



He made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Zaccaria in 2011. In 2013, he appeared at the Bayerische Staatsoper in the title role of Verdi's *Macbeth*, which was followed in 2014 by the title role in *Simon Boccanegra*, and in 2017 he sang Boris Godunov there.



The 2019/20 season saw him at the Teatro Real as Filippo II in *Don Carlos*, at Frankfurt Opera as Boris in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and at the Metropolitan Opera as Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*.

Guest appearances and concerts have taken him to the Vienna Staatsoper, the Opéra de Paris, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, The Washington National Opera, the Zürich Opernhaus the Salzburg Festival, the Vienna Konzerthaus and the Bregenz Festival.

He has worked with leading conductors, including Riccardo Muti, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim, Riccardo Chailly, Philippe Jordan, Gustavo Dudamel and Mikhail Pletnev.

He was a prizewinner at the international Tchaikovsky Competition (2007). In 2015 he was awarded the Russian *Golden Mask* theatre prize for his interpretation of Filippo (*Don Carlos*) at the Bolshoi.

3. Kelly God (Isolde, children's opera *Tristan und Isolde*; *Helmwige*, *Die Walküre*)



Kelly God was born in the Netherlands in 1975 and studied voice at the Academy of Music in Maastricht, where she passed the concert diploma and the opera examination with distinction.

Her first permanent engagement took Kelly God to Erfurt Theatre in the 2002/03 season, where she attracted attention as Adriana Lecouvreur, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Hanna Glawari in *Die Lustige Witwe*, Maria Stuarda and the Marschallin in

Der Rosenkavalier. At the Erfurt Domstufen Festival she portrayed Maria in Strauss's *Friedenstag* and Nedda in *I Pagliacci*.

For the 2006/07 season, she moved to the Hanover Staatsoper, which she made her home until 2019. There, she sang such roles as the Marschallin, Liù in *Turandot*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, Gutrunne in *Götterdämmerung*, Freia in *Das Rheingold*, Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes*, Katharina Ismailova in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Jenůfa and Tosca, Sieglinde in *Die Walküre* and Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*. In the 2018/19 season, she made her role debut as Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde*, a role which she repeated in May 2019 at La Monnaie in Brussels under the baton of Alain Altinoglu.

Recent guest appearances have seen Kelly God appearing as Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, as Sieglinde with the Nationale Reisopera and as Gerhilde (*Die Walküre*) at the Opéra National de Paris among other things.

... AND ELSEWHERE

16th May is International Museum Day. The Richard Wagner Museum has announced that it will be taking part, come what may – in digital or analogue form. If the 7-day incidence rate permits reopening, the museum will be open with admission free. Should an “analogue” museum visit still not be possible, because of the COVID-19 crisis, an interactive digital programme is planned. More detailed information is available on the [museum’s website](#).

Translation: Anthony Rich

Photos:

Chorus room: Bayreuther Festspiele

Christine Goerke (www.christinegoerke.com, photo: Arielle Doneson)

Kelly God (www.bayreuther-festspiele.de, photo: Lutz Edelhoff)

Dmitry Belosselskiy (www.bayreuther-festspiele.de, photo: Serj Longray)

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