

Press Release

Hamburg, March 5, 2025

New Era at The Hamburg Opera House: The Trio of New Directors Presents the Programme for The Hamburg Opera House's 2025/26 Season

Three outstanding artists representing a new generation deliver fresh impulses with visionary creativity: Tobias Kratzer (Artistic Director Designate of the Hamburg State Opera), Demis Volpi (Artistic Director of the Hamburg Ballet) and Omer Meir Wellber (General Music Director Designate of the Hamburg State Opera and the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra) lead the launch of a ground-breaking season with their ideas.

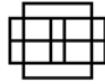
The new team of The Hamburg Opera House's directors presented the programme for the **2025/26 season today**. The event was opened by Dr. Carsten Brosda (Hamburg's Senator for Culture and Media), followed by introductory remarks by Dr. Ralf Klöter (Managing Director of The Hamburg Opera House). With a **triad of opera, ballet and concerts**, The Hamburg Opera House marks a **new beginning, with new accents in programming and visual communication**. Under the umbrella of "Die Hamburgische Staatsoper", the sections **Hamburg State Opera, Hamburg Ballet and Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra** present themselves jointly with a new visual identity and contemporary appearance. The programmatic goals of sociopolitical relevance and representation and reflection of the world as it is, as well as a close connection and openness towards the City of Hamburg are central to the new season, pursuing a sustainable perspective for the future.

Dr. Carsten Brosda, Senator for Culture and Media, Hamburg:

"Tobias Kratzer, Demis Volpi and Omer Meir Wellber are thinking big for their first joint season at The Hamburg Opera House. During its long history, this theatre has always offered ground-breaking impulses for musical theatre as an art form. The programme of the new leadership continues the great tradition of The Hamburg Opera House and offers its audiences artistic experiences that have probably never existed quite like that before. Kratzer, Volpi and Wellber are rethinking opera, ballet and concerts, reaching for the boundaries of these art forms – and possibly beyond, on occasion. They are unafraid to ask the really big questions, and to go in search of answers together with their audience. In doing so, they open the doors of The Hamburg Opera House even further, inviting the city's entire society to become part of it. I wish all three of them and their teams much success for their start in Hamburg and an open-minded, curious audience that is eager to discover a whole new view of musical theatre."

Dr. Ralf Klöter, Managing Director, The Hamburg Opera House:

"Such a comprehensive new beginning in all the artistic leadership positions of Hamburg's largest theatre within just two seasons is a very special occurrence. All those involved have managed to find a good balance between continuity and new beginnings, between our outstanding tradition and the impetuous joy of new discoveries. Together with all my



colleagues on staff at The Hamburg Opera House, I now look forward greatly to what the 2025/26 season will bring.”

Tobias Kratzer, Artistic Director Designate of the Hamburg State Opera:

“There is no medium in which the immediacy of sensuous experience, even of being physical overwhelmed, and the complexity of artistic form and sociopolitical content are so closely aligned as in opera! That, to me, is the beauty – and the justification – of the genre. My team and I would like to make these possibilities, these experiences, which exist here more than in any other art form, widely accessible during our first joint season:

EVERYTHING OPERA CAN DO!”

Demis Volpi, Artistic Director of the Hamburg Ballet:

“The Hamburg Ballet’s 2025/26 season is a **powerful affirmation of the diversity of our art form** and opens new perspectives on the urgent questions of our time. We dedicate ourselves to these ideas with three premieres, a revival and seven productions from our repertoire. Through intense dialogue with the audience and the City of Hamburg, we want to make dance accessible to everyone as a compelling experience. Therefore, I am particularly looking forward to the Dance Triennial, which will take place for the very first time in 2026 – in Hamburg. We invite you to explore the broad palette of dance we present. See you at the ballet!”

Omer Meir Wellber, General Music Director Designate of the Hamburg State Opera and the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra:

“The focus of the 2025/26 season is on the many-faceted **notion of play**: it is reflected both in the orchestra members’ music-making and in the creative act of composing. At the same time, the term ‘playing’ also refers to the world of theatre and the power of dramatic stagings. These diverse interpretations combine in one inspiring leitmotif which characterizes the entire season: a playful, fascinating dialogue between old and new, between the traditional and the contemporary, between context and subtext.”

The Hamburg Opera House in its new look:

www.die-hamburgische-staatsoper.de/vorschau

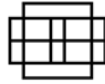
Press photos of the press conference on 5 March 2025:

<https://www.hamburgballett.de/en/press/index.php>

Hamburg State Opera

Exploring Genre Boundaries

The premieres of the first season – six on the main stage, three at the *opera stabile* – will explore genre boundaries in a joyful way. With their opening premiere, Tobias Kratzer and Omer Meir Wellber send a clear programmatic message: **“Seid uns willkommen! Seid uns begrüßt!” – “Be**



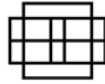
welcome! You're invited!"The new season begins on Sept. 27, 2025 with a three-day festival and the performance of Robert Schumann's secular oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri*. Director Tobias Kratzer and General Music Director Omer Meir Wellber consider this central work of the 19th century as a conscious statement – a grand choral work and a feast of vocalism, which also offers a space to reflect the possibilities of musical theatre, discovered jointly for the stage. The title role of Peri will be sung by Vera-Lotte Becker, named Singer of the Year in 2022 by *Opernwelt*. This choral work, which offers a new reflection on musical theatre and will be accompanied by a panel discussion with prominent participants, in Hamburg serves to reflect current crises: pandemic, war, climate change. The world is threatened, but the arts allow us to gain insights and develop empathy.

Another issue central to Tobias Kratzer's concept is to establish **opera for young audiences** as an important element of the main programme. This puts a spotlight both on Kratzer's own production of the children's opera *Die Gänsemagd* by **Iris ter Schiphorst** and on *Michaels Reise* by **Stockhausen**, directed by Elisabeth Stöppler, winner of the FAUST Prize.

Furthermore, Tobias Kratzer is keen to present musical theatre formats that plumb the depths of the genre time and again: in the production *Die große Stille*, renowned theatre director **Christoph Rüping**, joined by **Omer Meir Wellber**, poses the question of which importance Mozart's music has for us as a timeless cultural treasure, designing a musical theatre scenario in a faraway world. The focus is on the human individual, which hardly changes despite all our technological developments. Why do we insist on performing Mozart? How do we react to threats, opportunities – and to the silence of the universe?

With **Christoph Marthaler's production *Die Unruhenden***, a major theatre artist returns to Hamburg, launching a series geared towards the 350th anniversary of The Hamburg Opera House in 2028. Various projects pay homage to the ground-breaking general music directors and artistic directors of the State Opera: the first in the series is a **staged production of music by Gustav Mahler**, the star conductor who adopted Hamburg as his home for two years during his tenure as GMD. Mahler, described by his wife Alma as an "Unruhiger", or "restless character", created some of the most theatrical works of the early 20th century. His music reveals an impressive panorama of human experiences, oscillating between *joie de vivre* and death. Here, it is presented as an intense chamber evening under the baton of Johannes Harneit.

Director Tobias Kratzer's production *Frauenliebe und -sterben* further explores the depth of experience by combining three stylistically contrasting works: the staged prologue of **Schumann's *Frauenliebe und -leben*** is followed by **Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*** and **Zemlinsky's *Eine florentinische Tragödie***. The characters' supposedly individual fates are transformed into panoramas of the customs and morals of our past and present. The soloists include **Kate Lindsey, Annette Dasch, Marlis Petersen** and **Elsa Dreisig**. The internationally celebrated conductor **Karina Canellakis** leads the production.



Mikhail Glinka's little-known *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, a musically vivid and political fairy-tale, launched the tradition of the Great Russian Opera. The **Hungarian directors Alexandra Szemerédy and Magdolna Parditka** peel back the magical façade of the mythical tale, illuminating the deepest fears and abysses of their protagonists. Under the baton of **Ben Glassberg**, they offer a reading of the story that takes us to the authoritarian systems of the past and present.

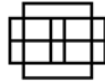
How do I become what I am not? **Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*** has remained a timeless comedy since 1816, taking aim at the struggle for love, success and recognition. In effervescent music, it unfolds a web of relationships full of false appearances, mirroring today's meritocracy. The internationally acclaimed **director Tatjana Gürbaca**, who will close a longstanding gap in the State Opera's repertoire with this production, seeks out the melancholy undertones behind the masks and vocal acrobatics. **Teresa Riveiro Böhm** conducts.

To Tobias Kratzer, exploring the boundaries of the genre means expanding the repertoire by at least one major **world premiere** every year, since operatic history is best viewed from the perspective of contemporary composing. According to Kratzer, it is a sensation that **Olga Neuwirth** (composition and libretto) and **Elfriede Jelinek** (libretto) are collaborating once again, after a hiatus of almost 20 years. The result is *Monster's Paradise* – a new work that has its finger on the pulse of our times! With *Monster's Paradise*, the two highly decorated artists – whose honours include the 2004 Nobel Prize for Literature for Jelinek and the 2022 Ernst von Siemens Music Prize for Neuwirth – create a very special work commissioned by the Hamburg State Opera. Two “vampirettes”, alter egos of the authors, travel the world, observing the downfall of humanity and a power struggle between a tyrannical king and a sea monster of his own creation. All hope rests on the grotesque Gorgonzilla – but can a world full of monsters still be saved? Tobias Kratzer directs this political grotesque, which weaves together tragedy and satyr play and is conducted by **Titus Engel**.

Every Night Is a Premiere

Under Tobias Kratzer's artistic directorship, the Hamburg State Opera remains a repertoire theatre, where approximately two thirds of the opera performances are part of the existing repertoire. Kratzer sees such a repertoire theatre as a repository of historical and contemporary experiences where each performance – including revivals – is viewed as a premiere. As part of this process, every production must be questioned continuously and considered from a fresh perspective.

To this end, the programme section *FRAMING the REPERTOIRE* is launched, highlighting past productions as an art form in its own right, approaching them from today's perspective. Repertoire series will be complemented by additional events, artistic interventions and introductions by student guides who promote dialogue with the audience and recontextualize productions. Conversations, lectures and essays illuminate the historicity and aesthetic dimensions of these productions, while central discourses and lines of interpretation are re-



examined. This creates a space that reflects proximity and distance to what has been presented, and provides a critical assessment of opera production as an historical art form.

One repertoire focus will be on *Dmitri Tcherniakov's Strauss Trilogy*, consisting of *Salome*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Elektra* – three psychologically profound, contemporary family dramas. These works are presented with extraordinary casts of singers and accompanying events. In *Salome*, conducted by Omer Meir Wellber, **Wolfgang Ablinger-Sperrhacke** is Herodes, **Doris Soffel** is Herodias and **Amber Braid** and **Asmik Grigorian** take on the title role. **Anja Kampe** will be Ariadne, under the baton of **Johannes Debus**. In *Elektra*, audiences may look forward to hearing the renowned mezzo-soprano **Violeta Urmana** as Clytemnestra and the outstanding Lithuanian soprano **Aušrinė Stundytė** in the title role, conducted by Anja Bihlmair.

Major works from the history of the Hamburg State Opera productions can be rediscovered in revivals of **Konwitschny's Lohengrin** and **Berghaus' Tristan und Isolde**, both under the baton of Omer Meir Wellber. Once again, both operas will feature outstanding soloists, including **Klaus Florian Vogt** (Lohengrin), **Sara Jakubiak** (Elsa), **Martin Gantner** (Telramund), **Samuel Sakker** (Tristan) and **Allison Oakes** (Isolde).

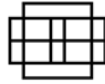
There will be revivals of two productions that have been seen in Hamburg over the course of almost 50 years: Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, staged by directing genius **Jean-Pierre Ponnelle** and featuring **Erwin Schrott** (Dulcamara) under the baton of Omer Meir Wellber; and the beloved 1972 production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* by Peter Beauvais, conducted by Killian Farrell.

This season sees the final run of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, directed by **Jette Steckel**, memorable not only for its spectacular LED show. Under the baton of Keren Kagarlitsky, it illuminates the life stories of Tamino, Pamina, Papageno and Papagena in retrospect, leading them through the labyrinths and illuminated stretches of human existence – at once seductive, sensual and full of detours.

We are also looking forward for **Omer Meir Wellber** as the new general music director to not only conduct legendary productions such as **Konwitschny's Lohengrin** and **Berghaus' Tristan und Isolde**, but to also dedicate himself to the core repertoire, including Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Strauss' *Salome* and Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*.

The ever-popular Italian repertoire is another focus of this season, seen and heard throughout the year and performed by extraordinary guest soloists.

Five **Verdi operas** – *Falstaff*, *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore* and *Luisa Miller* – will be at the centre of the programme, presented with additional events that offer further insights. Calixto Bieito's well-known production of *Falstaff* features **Wolfgang Koch** in the title role, one of today's leading dramatic baritones. The cast also includes the promising Ukrainian baritone **Andrii Kymach** and the young tenor **Granit Musliu** in his house debut.



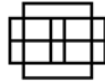
The radiant dramatic soprano of **Ewa Vesin** and the award-winning **Ewa Plonka** will be heard in **Robert Carsen's** acclaimed production of *Tosca*. In addition, the rising conductor **Carlo Goldstein** makes his company debut with the sensitive yet surreal production of *La Traviata* by Johannes Erath. In Immo Karaman's staging of *Il Trovatore*, audiences may look forward to the Russian baritone **Boris Pinkhasovich**, praised for the noble elegance of his timbre, and the renowned lyric soprano **Eleonora Buratto**. Andreas Homoki's successful production of *Luisa Miller* features a prominent cast as well: the exciting soprano **Elbenita Kajtazi**, a member of the State Opera ensemble, performs opposite the renowned tenor **Pavol Breslik**. Vincent Boussard's production of *Madame Butterfly* and **Karin Beier's** production of *Maria Stuarda*, under the baton of **Stefano Montanari**, round out the rich repertoire.

A House of Artists

As artistic director of the Hamburg State Opera, Tobias Kratzer pursues the goal of establishing musical theatre as an experience of one's self and the world. The heart of this concept is the ensemble with its 24 members, which shines in productions such as *Die Gänsemagd* with renowned artists including Hellen Kwon and Peter Galliard as well as newcomers Eliza Boom and Jonah Hoskins. Starting in 2025/26, the ensemble members will also present in solo recitals at the *opera stabile*. The International Opera Studio will be under the patronage of tenor Gregory Kunde from 2025/26 onwards, who supports the young talents through master classes and mentoring. **Alice Meregaglia** has been appointed the new **director of the Opera Chorus**, succeeding Eberhard Friedrich. New **guest conductors** such as **Karina Canellakis** and **Ben Glassberg** provide new musical accents, alongside rising young talents such as Keren Kagarlitsky (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Teresa Riveiro Böhm (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*).

CLICK in

With its new, cross-genre education programme CLICK in, the Hamburg State Opera intensifies its connection with Hamburg's civil society, starting in the 2025/26 season. The programme is aimed at a broad audience, seeking to spark enthusiasm for opera and musical theatre among even more people. Through various thematic perspectives, CLICK in creates diverse avenues to approach the arts, inviting active participation. CLICK in – *communities* promotes exchange with sociocultural groups and creates new spaces for participation. Anyone interested in background and details will find intriguing discussion formats in CLICK in – *debate*. A formerly central programming line of the Hamburg State Opera is re-established and revived through CLICK in – *opera mobile*. This brings the arts to unusual places in the city, while CLICK in – *performance* broadens artistic horizons through curated events. CLICK in makes opera come to life – for everyone!



Hamburg Ballet

The Power of Diversity

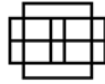
In his second season as Artistic Director, Demis Volpi and the Hamburg Ballet continue their trajectory of transformation. Demis Volpi offers both the audience and the company new choreographic voices while continuing to build upon the foundation of John Neumeier's work. **Three premieres and one revival** provide a harmonic balance between innovation and tradition. In total, the company will present works by **eleven different** choreographers during the 2025/26 season, reflecting the diversity of dance in all its forms.

With the premiere of the **quadruple bill** *POINT OF NO RETURN* (Feb. 22, 2026), Demis Volpi expands the repertoire with works by three very diverse artists, all of them working with the company for the first time: Marcos Morau from Spain and Xie Xin from China create one world premiere each; the renowned French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj presents his *Annonciation*. The evening is rounded out by *Aftermath*, an existing work by Demis Volpi that is inspired by the unhappy history of his homeland of Argentina. In this compelling work for 32 women, Volpi explores the emptiness which is left behind in society when the voice of an artist is silenced. The two commissioned world premieres by Marcos Morau and Xie Xin, two international artists who are part of a new generation of inspiring and extraordinary choreographers, continue the tradition, quintessential to Hamburg, of new creations. The quadruple bill takes as its starting point moments in life, in history or society from which there is no going back to the previous state of existence.

Created in Düsseldorf in 2024 and garnering enthusiastic accolades, Demis Volpi's ballet *Surrogate Cities* will be presented as a premiere in a new version for Hamburg. The eponymous musical cycle by Heiner Goebbels, created in 1994, is a profound exploration of the complexity of the city and life in urban spaces. It deals with the many facets of the dynamic between cities and the people who inhabit them. With his finger, directly on the pulse of the music and the times, Demis Volpi transforms the urban feeling of life in a metropolis into dance, with Goebbels' monumental, many-layered music driving the dancers and the dance relentlessly across the stage.

The highlight of the season will surely be the world premiere of *Wonderland* (June 20, 2026), a new ballet by Alexei Ratmansky inspired by Lewis Carroll's timeless classics *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. The Ukrainian-American choreographer, Artist in Residence of New York City Ballet, is world renowned for merging exquisite classical ballet with a modern sensibility. In *Wonderland*, Ratmansky's masterful story telling skills and innovative choreography, which have made him a celebrated and sought-after artist worldwide, will come together in a ballet for the whole family. The world premiere will kick off the 51st Hamburg Ballet Days.

A revival of **John Neumeier's** *The Seagull* will open the season (Sept. 21, 2025). Set to music by Dmitri Shostakovich the production honors the composer on the occasion of the 50th



anniversary of his death. The ballet, loosely adapted from the eponymous play by the Russian author Anton Chekhov, highlights John Neumeier's impressive ability to delve deeply into the complexities of human nature. His choreography focuses on the inner conflict and unfulfilled desires of the characters, bringing subtle feelings and the tragedy of the story to life.

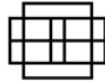
All three premieres and the revival are supported by the Foundation for the Promotion of the Hamburg State Opera.

Multifaceted Repertoire

Apart from the diversity of new choreographic voices, the Hamburg Ballet also stands for a multi-faceted repertoire, including, of course, the oeuvre of its founder John Neumeier. Apart from *The Seagull*, the company will dance four of John Neumeier's iconic story ballets during the coming season: the dramatic tale of *Lady of the Camellias*, the ever-popular classic *The Nutcracker*, the profound exploration of Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, and the moving homage to an exceptional dancer with *Nijinsky*. Demis Volpi's first evening-length new creation for the Hamburg Ballet, *Demian*, based on the eponymous novel by Hermann Hesse, takes the audience on a psychological journey of self-discovery. The quadruple bill, *THE TIMES ARE RACING* with works by Pina Bausch, Hans van Manen, Demis Volpi and Justin Peck, and the double bill *SLOW BURN* with choreographies by Aszure Barton and William Forsythe, reflect the broad spectrum of works being presented. The latter productions had their highly successful premieres at the Hamburg Ballet during the 2024/25 season and inspired the audience to rave reactions with their variety and unique, individual approach to dance.

Established formats also return as part of the season's programming. Thus, there will once again be **four Ballet Workshops** in which Demis Volpi invites artists of the season to offer glimpses into the development of and inspiration for their works, in an informal workshop atmosphere on stage at The Hamburg Opera House. The Ballet Workshop in November 2025 will be a benefit for the Foundation TANZ (Nov. 16, 2025). At the close of the season, the **51st Hamburg Ballet Days** (June 20 – July 5, 2026) offer two weeks of inspiring ballet performances, including a two-day guest appearance by an international guest company (to be announced at a later date). In addition, the Ballet Days offer a concentrated overview of the season. On July 5, 2026, the Hamburg Ballet will present the **Nijinsky Gala** as the culmination of the 2025/26 season.

During the 2025/26 season, the Hamburg Ballet will also be touring in Germany and abroad. The first stop in October is the dance festival *The World of John Neumeier* in Baden-Baden, where the Hamburg Ballet is an annual fixture. This year, the company presents a Ballet Workshop (Oct. 2, 2025) and a total of three performances of John Neumeier's ballet *Nijinsky* (Oct. 3-5, 2025) as well as three performances of *Epilogue* the following week (Oct. 10-12, 2025). The Ballet School of the Hamburg Ballet is also in Baden-Baden, giving a performance of *Absprung V* (Oct. 6, 2025). Further **guest appearances of the Hamburg Ballet** during the 2025/26 season will be announced at a later date.



An Eye on New Talent

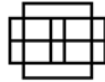
Another focus of the 2025/26 season is the support and creative development of young dancers. With the program *Erste Schritte* ("First Steps"), the Ballet School of the Hamburg Ballet offers its young talents a chance to gather valuable stage experience and present themselves to a wide audience. All students of the Ballet School – from the youngest in the preparatory classes to the graduates of the theatre classes – will perform in the program on the main stage of The Hamburg Opera House, allowing them to demonstrate their prowess (May 29 & June 22, 2025). As the director of the Ballet School, Demis Volpi will create a new work for this occasion together with the students. The graduates of the theatre classes also have the opportunity to present the final projects of their choreography course on stage at the Ernst Deutsch Theater at the *Workshop of Creativity XVI* (Feb. 23 – March 1, 2026).

Furthermore, the **evenings of Young Choreographers** (April 23 & 24, 2026) will once again give the dancers of the Hamburg Ballet company the chance to discover their creative voices, developing their own choreographies, experimenting with various idioms of movement and presenting the results to an audience. The venue will be announced at a later date.

CLICK in

The expansion of integrative and accessible programmes and projects remains a central element of Demis Volpi's artistic vision and is reflected in the cross-genre **programming line CLICK in**, which has been newly established together with the Opera and Orchestra. Here, dance is considered as an art form for - and accessible to - everyone. In the dance workshops *Tanz für mich (Dance for me)* and the multi-generational project *Die Stadt in mir (The City in me)*, people of all ages and levels of experience are invited to dance together, discover their enjoyment of movement and become part of an inclusive community. No experience is required, only the curiosity of delving into the adventure of dance. For schools and young people, CLICK in offers multiple formats and backstage glimpses which promote exchange, spark interest and inspire a journey of discovery through the world of dance and movement. Whether they gather unfiltered impressions at a stage rehearsal as part of the **Ballet Testers** programme, become **Ballet Insiders** by attending three performances and discussing them, take a look behind the scenes at the **Cafeteria Talks**, get to know the company's daily routine by signing up to be a **Mentored Class**, or attend the **school performance of Wonderland** (June 26, 2026) – young people receive comprehensive insights into the fascinating world of ballet through active experiencing and experimenting. In the new project *Tanz mal mit! (Dance with us!)*, dance pedagogues inspire students from elementary-school age up to discover their love of dance by offering workshops at local schools, conveying creativity, body consciousness and the joy of movement. The project is supported by Playmobil's foundation Stiftung Kinderförderung and the Foundation for the Support of The Hamburg Opera House.

The 2026 Dance Triennial



The Dance Triennial is a new international event funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. It will take place for the first time in Hamburg in June 2026, celebrating diversity and innovation in the art of dance. The programmatic and organizational inclusion of the Hamburg Ballet fosters artistic exchange across genres, offering creative impulses both for the city of Hamburg and dance as an art form.

A selection of **current ballet production photos for the 2025/26 season** may be used free of charge, provided the respective copyright is stated, and can be found in the press area on the Hamburg Ballet website and under this link:

<https://www.picdrop.com/hamburgballet/Pboaj1AN6e>

Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra

ZeitSpiele / Playing with Temporal Concepts: Breaking through Traditions

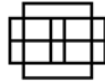
The new general music director Omer Meir Wellber and the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra invite the audience to **ZeitSpiele / Playing with Temporal Concepts** – inspiring musical interlocutions between past and present. The concept transcends the boundaries of the ordinary, going far beyond merely performing new works loosely associated with “classics” – instead, original works by great masters are adapted: contemporary composers have been commissioned to create new works to be interpolated into a classical work instead of one of the original movements. The rules of the game demand that the new movement conforms to several conceptual, aesthetic or stylistic principles of the original piece. This results in a conscious dialogue, in which **ten contemporary composers** from different countries engage in an exchange with their musical role models: **Stephen Hough, Aziza Sadikova, Ella Milch-Sheriff, Detlev Glanert, Mikhail Pletnev, Giorgi Gigashvili, Sally Beamish, Richard Dubugnon, Daniela Terranova and Barbara Assiginaak.**

For the first Philharmonic Concert, Omer Meir Wellber collaborates with Stephen Hough, who will perform Beethoven’s Third Piano Concerto, both as a pianist and composer. The second movement will be replaced by a newly-composed piece by Hough that was inspired by Beethoven’s masterwork. We encounter Beethoven as a mirror of the past, and thanks to Hough, also as part of the “here and now”!

This musical game without reservations opens new perspectives on our musical culture, our thinking and being, our way of hearing music. Hamburg, the cultural beacon, stands for originality and innovation within the musical scene, and in this spirit, the vision of a playful dialogue between past and present developed.

Blue Week

Under the baton of Omer Meir Wellber, the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra introduces a new accent to the season: **BLUE WEEK.** This short festival takes the place of the former



Academy Concerts, combining unique works and programmes on the one hand, while also showcasing special qualities of the orchestra's musicians on the other. The first edition is dedicated to transformations of all kinds: instruments become voices, humans become animals, oboe notes turn into abstract sound worlds, and four seasons are transformed into eight.

The first Blue Concert is dedicated to **Pierre Boulez** on the occasion of his 100th birthday, featuring a performance of his ground-breaking work *Le Marteau sans maître* for alto and six instruments. In the second Blue Concert, chamber music dedicated to metamorphoses is the theme, including **Benjamin Britten's** *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid* Op. 49 for solo oboe. The third Blue Concert is an invitation to an extraordinary stylistic mashup: *The Eight Seasons* – an impressively arranged combination of **Antonio Vivaldi's** masterwork and **Astor Piazzolla's** tango classic *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*, with Hamburg's general music director playing accordion and harpsichord.

Philharmonic Chamber Concerts

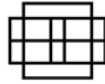
Music as a Parlour Game – A Journey through Sound Worlds

Featuring a plethora of different works, the Chamber Music Concerts of the 2025/26 season build a fascinating bridge between familiar masterworks and rarely-performed treasures of chamber music literature: from impressive arrangements such as **Rossini's** *Overture to Guillaume Tell* in Thomas Horch's version to contemporary highlights such as **Jörg Widmann's** mesmerizing *180 beats per minute*. Sonic diversity and technical brilliance are on display in pieces such as **André Caplet's** *Conte Fantastique* for harp and string quartet. Extraordinary combinations of instruments, such as in **Herbert Howell's** *Rhapsodic Quintet for Saxophone and String Quartet* Op. 31, as well as works from the classical and romantic era by Brahms and Smetana round out the programme.

Special Concerts

The **New Year's Eve Concert** presents an unusual and colourful mix of virtuoso vocalism, imaginative sonic idioms and humorous expressivity. That's all we're willing to reveal, except: Psst! Ppsst! Ppspsst! Shshsht! – Another highlight is the performance of **Leonard Bernstein's** *Mass – A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers* as part of the **International Hamburg Music Festival**.

Classical meets Hamburg's "Kiez": a cooperation with Schmidts Tivoli. This season, the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra performs in the heart of the St. Pauli district for the first time: in *Peter und der Wolf von St. Pauli*, **Prokofiev's** music for *Peter and the Wolf* is presented at the Tivoli-Theater in a unique staging. The conductor Omer Meir Wellber, the journalist Axel Brüggemann and Martin Lingnau, composer and artistic director of Schmidts, recount the spectacular criminal case of Werner "Mucki" Pinzner, the contract killer working for the pimp known as "Wiener Peter". Original documents, witness testimony and film material



make the murders, the violence among pimps and the tragic love story of Pinzner and his wife Jutta come to life. Prokofiev's music gives the thriller emotional depth and makes for an unforgettable launch for this cooperation.

CLICK in

In the orchestra department, **CLICK in** offers young people intensive musical experiences tailored for this dialogue group – unconventional, open and aiming to create lasting relationships. The goal is an authentic encounter at eye-level, creating proximity – both among participants and with the musicians. The projects focus on participatory approaches, paying particular attention to the diversity of the city. The new series **CLICK in – KIDS ONLY**, **CLICK in – CLUB ZONE** and **CLICK in – education** are aimed at young people and institutions of cultural education.

Orchestra Academy – Supporting Young Orchestra Musicians

The renowned Orchestra Academy of the Philharmonic State Orchestra remains in place, preparing talented young musicians for an orchestra career. The 15 academy members take part in rehearsals, concerts and performances, receiving individual lessons and coachings. An annual chamber concert completes their training. Founded in 2011 as Hamburg's first orchestra academy, the project is supported by the Hapag Lloyd Foundation, Hamburg's Department of Culture and the Philharmonic Society Foundation.

Advance ticket sales

Advance ticket sales for the 2025/2026 season will start on Monday, 19 May 2025 at 11.00 a.m. (additional subscription tickets will be available from Thursday, 15 May 2025, 11.00 a.m.). Separate regulations apply to all ballet workshops and the Nijinsky Gala, which will be announced at a later date. All subscriptions for the 2025/2026 season can be ordered online from 6 March 2025 at abo.die-hamburgische-staatsoper.de or from the Hamburg State Opera's subscription service.

You can take a look at the 2025/26 season brochure at this link:

https://www.hamburgballett.de/downloads/vorschau/vorschau_25_26.pdf

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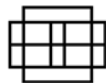
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