



DROTTNINGHOLMS
SLOTTSTEATER

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Staffan Valdemar Holm directs Handel at Drottningholms Slottsteater

For the 2020 season, the well-known theatre duo Staffan Valdemar Holm and Bente Lykke Møller will be taking over Drottningholms Slottsteater with a production of Handel's opera *Agrippina*, featuring the internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Ann Hallenberg in the title role. The opera premieres on 8 August.

Agrippina is an ironic comedy of power and eroticism with a strong woman in the title role. The plot is borrowed from Roman history and centres on the megalomaniac empress Agrippina, who is plotting to secure the imperial throne for her son Nerone following the death of the emperor Claudio. Despite its 300 years, the opera still packs an appeal for modern audiences.

"We see this type of powerplay still going on," says Staffan Valdemar Holm. "You just have to turn on the TV and watch the British parliament or the Swedish Riksdag. The backstabbing hasn't changed. The thirst for power and dominion is a universal human trait."

Agrippina was composed by Handel for the 1710 Carnival of Venice. Now, the baroque music is to be performed by the Drottningholm Theatre Orchestra on period instruments led by Francesco Corti, the acclaimed Italian harpsichordist who has recently embarked on a career as a conductor for the world's leading houses.

Ann Hallenberg is Artist in Residence at Drottningholms Slottsteater and has been involved in the choice of work, singers and artistic team. In the role of Agrippina, she propels the narrative forwards with her ambition and lust for power, at whatever the cost.

"Audiences will take away a picture of an inverted gender hierarchy that, although already inherent to the work, we enhance in way that's explicit and fun," says Staffan Valdemar Holm.

Staffan Valdemar Holm is an award-winning stage director with a string of public and critical hits to his name. His wife Bente Lykke Møller is a stage designer and costumer, and together they have brought much-lauded productions to many of Europe's major theatres.

Ann Hallenberg is a distinguished international opera star who has sung for the world's leading opera houses, festivals and concert halls. She is a lyrical mezzo-soprano and has made a name as one of the world's leading baroque singers. This summer she won considerable praise for her performance in Handel's *Ariodante* at Drottningholms Slottsteater. Other members of the cast include Sweden's own Kristina Hammarström and an ensemble of outstanding international opera singers.

Tickets go on sale 18 March 2020.

The full programme for the season will be presented in March.

Agrippina

Premiere 8 August 2020, performed every other day until 22 August.

Music: Georg Friedrich Handel

Libretto: Vincenzo Grimani

Conductor: Francesco Corti

Director: Staffan Valdemar Holm

Stage design and costumers: Bente Lykke Møller

Lighting: Torben Lendorph

Performers: Ann Hallenberg, Bruno de Sá, Giulia Semenzato, Kristina Hammarström, Renato

Dolcini, Emil Næshagen with several

Drottningholm Theatre Orchestra

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

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Press photographs and further information may be obtained from:

www.mynewsdesk.com/se/drottningholms-slottsteater