



Premiere of Richard Strauss's *Intermezzo* on 1 November 2024

PRESS RELEASE



Premiere poster for *Intermezzo*, © Semperoper Dresden

One hundred years after its world premiere, the Richard Strauss opera “Intermezzo” returns to Dresden – Richard Strauss Cosmos at the Semperoper: The Semperoper is celebrating the 100th anniversary of “Intermezzo” with a new production by Axel Ranisch, an exhibition exploring the opera’s world premiere, a revival of “Salome” and many other events. – Richard Strauss’s great-granddaughters Christine Meyrahn and Marie Theres Strauss-Leeb as well as other members of the Strauss family will attend the premiere evening at the Semperoper.

Dresden, 23 October 2024: Richard Strauss’s *Intermezzo*, which premiered at the Dresden Schauspielhaus in November 1924, is regarded as one of the most fascinating operas of the early 20th century. In contrast to the great, mythical dramas of Strauss’s earlier period, this autobiographical conversation piece takes as its subject the trials and tribulations of a contemporary marriage. With its mix of humour, emotional intimacy and musical sophistication, *Intermezzo* is unique in the Straussian oeuvre.

For the Semperoper Dresden, Berlin filmmaker, director, podcaster and opera aficionado Axel Ranisch dissects the hearts of the protagonists in this bourgeois comedy with his customary gentle wit. Together with set designer Saskia Wunsch and video artist Falko Herold, he recreates the historic Dresden premiere evening in the Semperoper, during which the audience is given the chance to view the “Storch” (or in reality the Strauss) marriage drama from various perspectives. Maria Bengtsson and Christoph Pohl will interpret the roles of the seemingly betrayed and cheating spouses, into whose life enters James Ley, playing a rather hapless Casanova who strives to gain a financial foothold.

Musically, *Intermezzo* is a masterpiece of orchestral tonal painting. As in most of Strauss’s works, the orchestration is both subtle and highly complex. Reflecting the psychological undercurrents of the characters, the intricate score combines the lively dialogues of the libretto (which Strauss wrote himself) with symphonic interludes. The orchestral passages that connect the scenes – the “Intermezzi” – are musical highlights that translate the inner emotional worlds of the characters into sonic images. The Staatskapelle Dresden will interpret Strauss’s composition under the baton of Austrian conductor, pianist and composer Patrick Hahn, who will make his Semperoper debut on the premiere evening.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the original premiere of *Intermezzo*, Strauss fans have the chance to explore the work of this composer so closely linked to Dresden at numerous Semperoper events. On the morning of Saturday, 26 October 2024, an *Intermezzo Teaser* offers an early glimpse of the much anticipated premiere. Then, in the evening, Axel Ranisch will reveal amusing facts from his personal world of opera at a musical talk held in the Semper Bar. The following Sunday morning, a Semper matinée about love entitled *Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen* will feature works by other composers as well as the song *Cäcilie*, Op. 27, which Richard Strauss presented to his fiancée Pauline de Ahna on their wedding day. Following the matinée, the exhibition *100 Years of Intermezzo*, celebrating the opera's world premiere in Dresden on 4 November 1924, will open on Sunday, 27 October 2024. The conductor of the premiere of this new production of *Intermezzo*, Patrick Hahn, will then display his vocal talents as a brilliant interpreter of Georg Kreisler's songs in the Semper Bar on 7 and 9 November 2024.

Intermezzo by Richard Strauss

Premiere at 7 pm on Friday, 1 November 2024, in the Semperoper

Additional performances on 4, 8, 21 & 24 November as well as 4 & 9 December 2024

With Maria Bengtsson, Christoph Pohl, Ute Selbig and James Ley as well as actors Erik Brünner and Katharina Pittelkow in the roles of Richard and Pauline Strauss.

The Staatskapelle Dresden will be conducted by Patrick Hahn.

Project partners:

Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe Sachsen, Ostsächsische Sparkasse Dresden,

Sparkassen-Versicherung Sachsen, LBBW

Semper Bar – *Musical Talk* with Axel Ranisch

At 8 pm on Saturday, 26 October 2024, in Semper Zwei

Opening of the exhibition *100 years of Intermezzo*

At 1 pm on Sunday, 27 October 2024, in the upstairs foyer of the Semperoper

Semper Matinée – *Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen*

At 11 am on Sunday, 27 October 2024, in the Semperoper

Semperoper Bar – *Patrick Hahn interprets Georg Kreisler*

At 7 pm on Thursday, 7 November 2024, in Semper Zwei

Tickets for the Semperoper events can be purchased from the Schinkelwache box office on Theaterplatz (+49 (0)351 4911 705). Alternatively, book your tickets and seat reservations via the Semperoper's online ticket shop, which offers a 3D-seating plan.

Please send any requests for review tickets (along with details of the editorial brief and likely publication dates) to presse@semperoper.de.

High-quality photos and other press materials can be downloaded from our password-protected press page at semperoper.de/presse.

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