

GEORGES BIZET

# Carmen

24 Juni 2025

25 Juni 2025



## Thank you to our Sponsors



## Thank you to our Venue:





## **About The European Union Youth Opera (EUYOP)**

The European Union Youth Opera (EUYOP) is a non-profit organization based in Vienna, committed to empowering and advancing emerging opera talent. It was founded by three young women—Heather Tan, Anija Lombard, and Amélie Alu—with the aim of giving young artists essential opportunities to step into meaningful operatic roles.

“It is incredibly difficult for young artists to gain a foothold... we want to give young artists the space and opportunity to take those first important steps.”

EUYOP provides a vital platform for singers to showcase their skills in prominent roles—including a symbolic honorarium for participants—while fostering growth, performance experience, and community within its international ensemble.

By uniting emerging artists from across Europe, EUYOP nurtures cultural exchange and actively brings Europe’s opera tradition to life—including intimate concerts of opera, lieder, and chamber music in rural and urban settings. Through collaborations with institutions and initiatives across the continent, the organization nurtures both artistic and intercultural connections .

In recent years, EUYOP has produced successful opera projects in Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands, engaging young artists and diverse audiences while strengthening international networks.

# Directing Concept

by Heather Tan

**“Theatre is a place of reflection of our society.”**

This adaptation of *Carmen* begins with the recognition that Carmen is, at her core, a migrant: a woman in constant motion, surviving in a world that commodifies her freedom and mistrusts her presence. The *Ausgangspunkt*, the starting point, is her work at the cigarette factory, where she is both labourer and object, desired and dehumanised. Cigarettes, like Carmen, are consumed, traded, and discarded.



The production draws a direct line between Carmen and the displaced, particularly Roma and migrant communities, people who, like her, must continually readapt to shifting realities, often under threat, often unseen. Carmen’s resilience is not romantic, it is necessary. She exists in a world that offers her little protection, but demands her performance.

Set designer **Felicia Gulda** has created a world that reflects these layered themes. The characters first appear inside **cargo boxes**, evoking the image of imported goods, echoing how labour, bodies, and even stories are packaged and transported across borders. These boxes become the raw material from which three distinct spaces are intelligently and fluidly built throughout the performance:

- the **cigarette factory**, evoking the rhythm and exploitation of industrial labour, bound up with female solidarity and rivalry;
- the **shower**, a stark transitional space — cleansing or preparation, vulnerability or rebirth;
- and **Escamillo’s bull steakhouse**, a world of hyper-masculinity, spectacle, and power, where Carmen’s agency begins to erode.

The final space is **Carmen’s dream** — a poetic, suspended place where the opera steps out of realism into the subconscious. Here, Carmen is no longer just the symbol others make her into. She becomes a person shaped by memory, fear, longing — and resistance.

This *Carmen*, adapted from Bizet and Peter Brook, is not about retelling a famous story, but about reclaiming it — and grounding it in the real lives it reflects. It speaks for the silenced, the displaced, the unprotected. It is not a spectacle, but a witness.

# Stage Design Concept

*By Felicia Gulda*

This stage design draws on a self-developed, experimental and modular 22-fold origami method to transform tobacco flowers into sculptural motifs, carrying both visual delicacy and thematic weight. The flowers appear just before they are picked for processing, marking a shift from organic form to object of labour. Their fragility is inseparable from the systems of extraction they are embedded in. At the centre of the stage stand three red wooden structures that function as modular cages. These forms define the spatial and emotional core of two acts. On the one hand, they create enclosed zones of intimacy and routine. On the other, they impose a sense of constraint and surveillance. Within these confined spaces, performers carry out repetitive gestures that evoke the physical and psychological burden of their work.

The cages are reconfigurable and shift slightly in formation, yet always maintain a sense of rigidity and containment. In the later acts, the visual focus turns toward the ephemeral. Large-scale banners, made from the same hand-treated paper as the origami flowers, dominate the stage. Their surfaces are inscribed with abstract patterns that generate a dreamlike and at times unsettling atmosphere. As light filters through these banners, the stage takes on a layered texture. The paper responds to the lighting design with subtle shifts in tone, allowing the space to flicker between warmth and tension.

Material repetition, constrained movement, and delicate ornamentation come together to create an uneasy interplay between craft control, and exploitation.



## Members of the Production:

### Production Team

**Musikalische Leitung / Conductor** – David Holzinger

**Regie / Stage Director** – Heather Tan

**Bühne / Stage Design** – Felicia Gulda

**Maske / Make-up** – Jenny Brijance MUA

**Styling** – Petra Schnakenberg

**Choreography** – Nikolaos Doede

**Orchestra Manager** – Aleksandra Juszczak

**Production Team** – Anija Lombard, Heather Tan, Amelie Alu

**Intern** – Ekaterina Vakulenko

**Hospitant** – Danijaal Lombard

---

### Cast

**Carmen** – Helene Feldbauer

**Don José** – Luka Gudelj

**Micaëla** – • Gabriella Rea Fenyvesi (24.6) • Ekaterina Spiakovskaia (25.6)

**Escamillo** – Matthias Kofler

**Frasquita** – • Anija Lombard (24.6) • Olena Herneha (25.6)

**Mercedes** – • Milena Pumberger (24.6) • Amelie Alu (25.6)

**Zuniga** – • Alexander Dimitrov (24.6) • Benedikt Berndonner (25.6)

**Remendado** – Christoph Ungerböck

**Dancaïro** – David Höfel

---

### Orchestra Ensemble

**Violin** – Peeter Margus, Aleksandra Juszczak

**Viola** – Michalina Matias

**Cello** – Wiktoria Osinska

**Double Bass** – Nenad Marinkovic

**Flute** – Dietlind Haller

**Piano** – Chen Pang

**Rehearsal Pianist** – Chen Pang, Manqin Hui, Ueda Yu



## **Heather Tan**

director

Born 1996 into a non-artistic family, Heather found her way to becoming a (Opera/Musiktheater) Stage Director, Producer and founder of 2 Organisations through her youth education in Piano and Classical Singing, and her experience in choir as a conductor. She is the first Singaporean to receive formal education as an Opera Stage Director, with an Education of "Musiktheaterregie" at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.

Since 2017, she has been actively involved in assisting and directing stagework and since 2020, filmic works. Her passion to direct has also lead her to forming her own organisations "EU Youth Opera" and "Opera Festival Asia e.V". She has assisted and interned at productions, such as at Schlosstheater Schönbrunn, Neue Oper Wien and notably at Vienna State Opera for "Tristan und Isolde".

She has directed operas such as "Die Zauberflöte", "La Cenerentola", "La Boheme", "Don Pasquale", "Carmen", "Le nozze di Figaro" and oratorio "Händels the Messiah", "Pagliacci" and Pastiche, across the world, in countries Singapore, China, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium and Greece. Her work is heavily influenced by German and South East Asian Culture.

In 2024, she has her german major production, to stage "Mathildes Liebestod", a performative staged work of Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder and Schönberg's "The Book of the Hanging Gardens" at Staatstheater Augsburg, where she also holds a fixed contract for assisting. She directed "die Puppe", a combined Lieder Cycle evening of Schubert and Greek Folk Music at Festival Portoheli in Greece. She is also working with Youths, and directed "Le nozze di Figaro" at Conservatorium Brussels, Belgium. Heather organised the first Silk Road Format Festival with "Opera Festival Asia" with programmes internationally. In 2025, she is planned at the Tete-a-tete Festival in London and Bangkok, Don Giovanni in Vienna and Kuala Lumpur, and Carmen in Vienna. Heather's artistic perspective is heavily inspired by culture and people, and aims to take the untaken perspective but natural and to tell stories close to the heart. [www.heathertandirector.com](http://www.heathertandirector.com)



## **David Holzinger**

conductor

David Holzinger is a versatile Austrian conductor with a broad operatic and symphonic repertoire. Since the 2022/23 season, he has been a regular guest conductor at the Brandenburger Theater and with the Brandenburger Symphoniker, where he has led productions including *The Magic Flute*, *Ba-Ta-Clan*, and *Im Weißen Rössl*. He was also responsible for the musical preparation of a new *Elektra* production in 2023/24 and currently assists Andreas Sperling in productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Traviata*, and *Die Fledermaus*.

He made a notable international debut when he stepped in on short notice to conduct the Sofia Philharmonic, featuring members of the Vienna Philharmonic as soloists. Further engagements include concerts with the Sichuan Philharmonic in Chengdu and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the State Opera Ruse, where he previously conducted Gianni Schicchi. Holzinger is also the founder and music director of the EXEDRA Ensemble.

He has worked with ensembles such as the Amsterdam Chamber Orchestra (China tour), Neue Oper Wien, and Junge Oper Rhein-Main. His training includes studies in Vienna and Dresden, and masterclasses with leading conductors such as Jorma Panula, Sir Mark Elder, Nicolás Pasquet and Alexander Polishchuk.

[www.davidholzinger.com](http://www.davidholzinger.com)



## **Nikolaos Crist Doede**

choreography

Nikolaos Crist Doede was born in Los Angeles California where he began his dance training at Le Studio Dance, under the direction of Philip and Charles Fuller. He studied at Los Angeles County High School for the Arts and graduated in 2008. He was awarded a place in the prestigious competition, Prix de Lausanne, in 2008 where he was rewarded with an opportunity to study at the Hamburg Ballet School.

In 2011 he was engaged with Ballet Kiel, under the direction of Yaroslav Ivanenko and Heather Jurgenson, where he had many opportunities to explore choreography as well as dancing. Nikolaos moved to Ballet Hagen, under the direction of Ricardo Fernando and Carla Silva from 2015-2017, where he continued to choreograph works and compose original music. During this time he became interested in filming dance and working with video and photography as another medium to create.

In 2017 he then moved to Ballet Augsburg, where he is currently dancing and choreographing.



**Felicia Gulda**  
scenography

Felicia Gulda is a Vienna-based multimedia artist with Turkish and Japanese roots. Her work focuses on concepts such as transformation, folding, and belonging, integrating cultural and political themes with a diverse range of artistic expressions. Her artistic research primarily explores topics of diaspora, examining issues of transculturality, the fold, and the moral tensions of dual nationalities. With a classical education in violin and piano, Felicia brings a strong affinity for music into her interdisciplinary projects, exploring connections between musical and visual forms of expression.

Her works have been showcased at prestigious events, including the Angewandte Festival, Podium Festival Esslingen, :alpenarte, Galerie Petra Seiser, and at Minerva Art Academy in Groningen. After graduating with distinction in Cross-Disciplinary Strategies from the University of Applied Arts Vienna, she recently completed her master's degree in arts, Cognition and Criticism at the University of Groningen. Alongside her artistic practice, she is also engaged in cultural and music management, further expanding her involvement in interdisciplinary production and curatorial work.

[www.feliciagulda.com](http://www.feliciagulda.com)

## **Petra Schnakenberg**

stylist

Petra Schnakenberg is a Vienna-based set and costume designer, as well as a model maker for film and theatre. She studied scenography at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna under Prof. Anna Viebrock, the Mozarteum University Salzburg, and ENSAD Paris. Her education was supported by scholarships from the Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport (Start Scholarship), the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Mentoring Program), and the Deutsche Bank Foundation (Akademie Musiktheater heute).

Following her studies, Petra gained extensive experience as a stage and costume assistant at leading institutions such as the Bregenz Festival, Salzburg Festival, Bavarian State Opera, Zurich Opera House, Frankfurt Opera, and Opéra national du Rhin. Her own set and costume designs have since appeared in productions and exhibitions for Deutsche Oper Berlin, Theater Dortmund, Mecklenburgisches Staatstheater, Fabriktheater Zurich, Theater am Werk Petersplatz, Dschungel Vienna, and Elektrohalle Rhomberg Salzburg.

Petra's artistic practice places a strong focus on the model as a conceptual and material tool in the performing arts. Through her work, she blends design with spatial storytelling, creating imaginative worlds for both stage and screen. She currently lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

[www.petraschnakenberg.com](http://www.petraschnakenberg.com)

## **BRIJANCE**

Make Up Artist

As a professional make-up artist, Brijance stands for individual beauty, style and precision. Whether bridal styling, event or photoshoot - every make-up is realized with passion, creativity and an eye for detail. The aim is to perfectly showcase your natural charisma.





## **CARMEN**

### **Helene Feldbauer**

mezzo-soprano

Austrian mezzo-soprano Helene Feldbauer began her musical journey studying music and instrumental pedagogy at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. She then pursued vocal studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, where she studied with Margit Klaushofer (voice), Florian Boesch (art song), and Christoph Ulrich Meier (opera), graduating with highest honors (summa cum laude).

During her studies, she appeared in numerous productions at the Schönbrunn Palace Theater, performing roles such as the Composer, Hänsel, and Marcellina a.o.. From 2022 to 2024, she was a member of the Opera Studio at Oper Frankfurt, where she made her debut in Johannes Erath's production of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* as one of the apprentices. Further roles included Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), the Second Maid in Claus Guth's *Elektra*, the Second Maid in *Daphne*, and The Boy in Weill's *The Tsar Has His Photograph Taken*.

Since 2022, she has been a frequent guest at the Tiroler Festspiele Erl, performing roles such as Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*, 2022), the Innkeeper's Daughter (*Königskinder*, 2023), *Ljubov* (*Mazeppa*, 2024), and Siegrune (*Die Walküre*, 2024). In concert, she regularly performs with Ensemble Minerva,

presenting specially arranged songs and chansons across Austria and Germany – most recently at the Musikverein Vienna.

Helene Feldbauer is the recipient of several competition prizes and was awarded the prestigious Richard Wagner Scholarship and the Anna Grobecker Prize in 2023. She has worked with renowned conductors including Thomas Guggeis, Sebastian Weigle, Maxime Pascal, Erik Nielsen, and Karsten Januschke, and with directors such as Claus Guth, Matthew Wild, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Keith Warner. Despite her international engagements, she always returns with great joy to perform on stages in her Austrian homeland.

## **DON JOSÉ**

### **Luka Gudelj**

Tenor

Luka Gudelj is a tenor based in Vienna. He studied classical singing at the Art Academy in Split from 2004 to 2008 and continued his education in operatic repertoire at the Conservatory in Vienna from 2008 to 2011. As a soloist, he has performed in a wide range of operatic and concert works. His notable roles include Gherardo in "Gianni Schicchi" (2011), Rodolfo in "La Bohème" (2018), Basil in "Mavra" (2013), Fileno in "La fedeltà premiata" (2015), and Barinkay in "The Gypsy Baron" (2016), with appearances in Austria, Croatia, Germany, and China. He has sung at events such as the Croatian Ball in Vienna and has performed frequently in the Regional Court Hall and other concert venues.



In addition to his solo career, Luka has been an active member of the Extra Chorus of both the Vienna State Opera and the Split State Opera from 2012 to 2024. From 2019 to 2024, he also performed with the Concert Association of the Vienna State Opera, participating in productions like "Lohengrin", "Aida", "Parsifal", "Otello", and major choral works including Mozart's and "Requiem".



**DON JOSÉ**

**Michael Long**

Tenor



Michael Lóng was born in Shenyang, China on August 17, 1987, formerly known as Yu Jianlan. He received his first musical education, including piano lessons, with his mother. In 2003 he began his studies at the Shenyang Music University. After completing his studies, he learned his basic skills in singing techniques at Liu Songhu (Baritone). In 2008 he moved to Vienna and began to study at the Conservatory of the City of Vienna and a year later at the Gustav Mahler Conservatory in Vienna. Since 2010 he has studied singing with Anna Ryan (lyric - dramatic Soprano). In 2011, he began his studies at the Prayer Conservatory in Vienna and in September, one year later, the opera class. Since 2013 to 2016, he has expanded his repertoire at the Prayner Conservatory with Maestro Maksimilijan Cenčić.

Since summer 2015 he sings as a soloist with the Vienna Imperial Orchestra in the Haus der Musik. At Viennese chamber music gala concerts he sang Mozart arias, duets and Italian opera arias. Since the summer of 2016, he has also been guesting at the Vienna Royal Orchestra in the Haus der Industrie.

After the beginning of his operatic career he was invited in October 2018 by the Austrian conductor David Holzinger to sing the titular role "Caliban" in the theater Rüsselsheim and in the city theater Aschaffenburg in Germany. The opera was edited and composed by the renowned German composer Moritz Eggert from a Shakespeare literary work. Due to the great success in Germany, he was invited by the Tirol Festival in Erl, to take over again in July 2019, the title role of the opera "Caliban".

## ESCAMILLO

### Matthias Kofler

Baritone



The 31-year-old baritone hails from Tyrol, Austria, and began his vocal journey at the age of six with the renowned Wiltener Sängerknaben (Wilten Boys' Choir). Over the years, he achieved notable success both as a boy alto and later, following his voice change, as a male soloist. His early repertoire focused heavily on sacred oratorios by Bach, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Handel. In addition, he regularly performed in operatic productions and at prestigious festivals across Europe.

In 2016, Matthias began his formal vocal studies in the Konzertfach (concert singing program) at the Tyrolean Conservatory under the guidance of Martin Senfter. Even during his studies, he received professional engagements — among them, a guest appearance in Nuremberg as Bonafede in Haydn's *Il mondo della luna*, as well as performances at the Tyrolean State Theatre.

After earning his bachelor's degree in 2021, Matthias continued his education at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. There, he completed his Master's degree in Vocal Performance — now as a baritone — with distinction.

Following his performance in *Carmen*, new exciting projects await him. This summer, he will appear in Bad Ischl, before taking on the role of Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

**MICAËLA**

**Gabriella Rea Fenyvesi**

Soprano



Gabriella Rea Fenyvesi started her studies in Miskolc at the Egressy Béni Music School with prof. Emese Simon Istvánné Balogh. During this time, she won in several music school singing competitions. At the age of 18, she was admitted to the classical singing department of the Liszt Academy of Music, where her teachers were Andrea Meláth and János Ferenc Szabó.

In 2020, she continued her studies with a master's degree in Oratorio and lied, in 2022 she obtained a pre-eminent degree, and in 2023 she also completed a master's degree in Opera singing under the direction of András Almási-Tóth and Szabolcs Sándor. Her teachers included Miklós Harazdy, Katalin Alter, Piroska Molnár, Miklós Szinetár and Bence Varga. In 2023, she won the Weingarten scholarship, so she studied for half a year at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in Birmingham, under the guidance of a British soprano Anne Dawson.

In 2021, she made her debut at the Hungarian State Opera in Levente Gyöngyösi: The Master and Margarita, but also sang roles in Benjamin Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream, Christoph Willibald Gluck's Iphigenia in Tauris, Daniel Auber's Fra Diavolo, Mozart's Bastien und Bastienne, Menotti's The telephone and Mozart's The Magic Flute. In January 2025, she jumped in as Musetta in La Bohème.

In 2024, she won the Fischer Annie Scholarship.

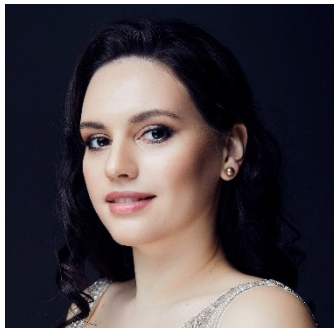
In 2025, she received the Junior Prima Award.

She is currently a student at the Éva Marton Operastudio. She participated in the master classes of Éva Marton, Klára Kolonits, Elaine Kidd, Michael Pandya, Claudio di Segni, Anatoli Goussev, Paul Wingfield, Massimo Morelli, André Heller-Lopes and Dominic Wheeler.

## MICAËLA

### **Ekaterina Spivakovskaia**

Soprano



Ekaterina Spivakovskaia, born in 1995 in St. Petersburg, Russia, began her musical education at the N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov Music College and later completed her studies in choral conducting at the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory in 2019. She continued her vocal training at the Music and Arts Private University of the City of Vienna (MUK) under KS Univ.-Prof. Mag. Elena Filipova.

A prizewinner and finalist of several international competitions, she has appeared in numerous concert and stage productions. Notable performances include the soprano solo in Mahler's *\*Symphony No. 4\** (Vienna Radiokulturhaus, 2019), Suschen in Marschner's *\*Der Holzdieb\** (MUK Theater, 2020), the opening concert of the Salzburg Festival with Plattform K+K Vienna (2021), Mozart's *\*Exultate, Jubilate\** with the PolyMuse Orchestra, Grille in Ch. Dienz's *\*Pinocchio\** (MuTH Vienna), Tatiana in a concert performance of Tchaikovsky's *\*Eugene Onegin\** (Schönbrunn Palace Theater), and the soprano solo in Verdi's *\*Messa da Requiem\** at the Vienna Musikverein (2022).

Upcoming engagements include her role debut as Micaëla in Bizet's *\*Carmen\** (Vienna and France, summer 2025), and Donna Anna in Mozart's *\*Don Giovanni\** (autumn 2025).

## ZUNIGA

### Alexander Dimitrov

bass

The young bass, born in Vienna, is currently studying at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (MDW) under Professor Karlheinz Hanser.



He is a prizewinner of several competitions, including the internationally renowned "Toti Dal Monte" in Treviso, "Alpe Adria Young Voices" in Graz, the "Franz Schubert Competition" in Ruse, among others. Last year, he was also awarded a scholarship by the Richard Wagner Association. In the summer of 2022, he made his debut at the Mozart Academy in Tyrol, performing as "Bartolo" and "Antonio" (Le Nozze di Figaro).

The following year, he debuted as "Sarastro" (Die Zauberflöte) at the Bad Hall Summer Festival. This year, he will appear at the Schönbrunn Palace Theatre as "Betto di Signa" (Gianni Schicchi), as "Zuniga" (Carmen) at the OFF Theater, and at the Vienna Opera Summer as "Dottore Grenvil" and "Marchese d'Obigny".

## ZUNIGA

### Benedikt Berndonner

bass

Benedikt Berndonners love for opera was sparked while studying "Energy Engineering" at Montanuniversität Leoben, singing „La traviata" with the local choir. In the following years he had the opportunity there to sing roles in "Der Zigeuner- baron" and "Lucia di Lammermoor". Finishing his engineering diploma he wanted to make a passion into a profession. He currently studies singing at MUK and recently sang the 2. Man of Jones in Animal Farm at vienna state opera.

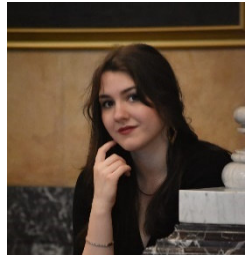


## FRASQUITA

### Anija Lombard

soprano

Anija Lombard is an Austrian with South African routes, currently completing her Master of Music in Vocal Performance at the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien in Vienna, following a Bachelor in Voice from the Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel. She is a member of the Éva Marton International Opera Studio at the Hungarian State Opera, where she portrayed Seconda Apparizione in Verdi's 'Macbeth' and Barbarina in Mozart's 'Le nozze di Figaro' during the 2024/25 season. For the 2025/26 season she has been re-invited to the Hungarian State Opera to perform eight roles: Barbarina in 'Le nozze di Figaro', Lauretta in Puccini's 'Gianni Schicchi', Papagena in Mozart's 'Die Zauberflöte', Countess Ceprano in Verdi's 'Rigoletto', II./2. Blumenmädchen in Wagner's 'Parsifal', Zerlina in Mozart's 'Don Giovanni', Seconda Apparizione in 'Macbeth', and Kate Pinkerton in Puccini's 'Madama Butterfly'. She is one of the co-founders of the European Union Youth Opera and co-producer for the production Carmen by Bizet.



## FRASQUITA

### Olena Herneha

soprano

Olena Herneha, born in 1999 in Ukraine, began her classical vocal training in Kyiv. She continued her studies in Munich and is currently pursuing her degree at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw) under the guidance of Rainer Trost.



She has performed in various productions. In 2020, she performed the role of Amor in Gluck's Orphée et Eurydice in Kyiv. In 2022, she took on the roles of Sandmännchen and Taumännchen in Humperdinck's Hänsel und Gretel at the Schlosstheater Schönbrunn (Vienna), and portrayed Suor Genovieffa in Puccini's Suor Angelica in Saluzzo, Italy. In December 2024, Olena made her debut in a leading role as Gretel in Hänsel und Gretel at the Schlosstheater Schönbrunn. In February 2025, she returned to Gluck's music as Eurydice in Orphée et Eurydice with the Opera Studio of the National Music Academy of Ukraine in Kyiv. Most recently, in May 2025, she performed Pamina in Mozart's Die Zauberflöte at the Neue Studiobühne in Vienna

## MERCÉDÈS

### Milena Pumberger

mezzo-soprano



The mezzo-soprano was born in Prague, Czech Republic, and grew up there, as well as in Austria and Italy. She began playing the violin at the age of five and later attended the Vienna Secondary School for Students of Music (Musikgymnasium Wien) and the Liceo Musicale in Florence, Italy. She was part of the youth opera "Jugend an der Wien" at the Theater an der Wien for two years, was a member of the Youth and Children's Choir of the Vienna State Opera and member of the Youth Theater "Junge Burg" at Burgtheater.

After graduating from secondary school, Milena Pumberger moved to Zurich, Switzerland, to study Eastern European Studies. Winning the Swiss Youth Competition at the cantonal level (Zurich) in the singing category, she began her vocal studies at the Zurich University of Arts (Zürcher Hochschule der Künste) and continued her studies at the Anton Bruckner Private University of Linz, Austria.

She is currently studying for her master's degree with Professor Karl-Heinz Hanser at the MDW.

Milena Pumberger won the prestigious special prize of the Erzgebirgische Theater- und Orchester GmbH at the Austrian Operetta Competition. The mezzo-soprano was also awarded the Bayreuth scholarship by the Richard Wagner Association Linz.

Past engagements have included the Landestheater Linz and Innsbruck, the Hohe Tauern Festival with KS Michael Schade, as well as the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (IT) and the Winterstein Theater (DE). Her most important roles have included the 3. Dame in Mozart's Zauberflöte, Cherubino in Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro, Carmen and Mercedes in Bizet's Carmen, Rosina in Rossini's Il barbiere di Siviglia, Oreste in Handel's Oreste, Hansel in Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel and Orlofsky in Strauss' Die Fledermaus.

## MERCÉDÈS

### **Amélie Alu**

mezzo-soprano

Amélie Alu discovered music at an early age through the violin, and joined the Grenoble Conservatoire choir at the age of 7. After studying science, she turned fully towards music and joined the municipal Paris Conservatoire, where she studied singing. At the same time, she is studying choral conducting.



As a soloist, she made her debut in the role of Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, produced in Brussels and the Netherlands. She played the role of Miss Todd in Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and was invited to record Britten's *Folksongs* with orchestra.

With a passion for early music, she has performed in a number of churches in Paris, including Notre-Dame de Versailles and Saint-Roch, as well as in Burgundy and Normandy.

She has also been invited to sing private recitals at prestigious events such as the Grand Bal de mécénat du Ballet Impérial, at the Château de Fontainebleau and at the Hôtel Poulpry in Paris.

In August 2024, she shared the stage with other singers in South-East Asia, in Singapore, Cambodia and Malaysia.

Currently studying at the Haute École de Musique in Lausanne, she is continuing her training in opera singing with Jeanne-Michèle Charbonne.

## LE DANCAÏRE

**David Höfel**

baritone

Austrian baritone David Höfel studied Music Education (BA) with Judith Bechter at the Mozarteum University Salzburg in cooperation with the Vorarlberg State Conservatory. Since autumn 2024, he has been pursuing his Master's degree in Opera Performance at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (mdw), studying with Helen Malkowsky, Hartmut Keil, and Jörg Schneider.



He has performed at the Bregenz Festival, Vorarlberger Landestheater, Tonhalle St. Gallen (CH), and the International Lake Constance Festival (GER). In March 2025, he made his debut as Marco in Puccini's Gianni Schicchi in an mdw production at Schönbrunn Palace Theater. In May, he appeared as Papageno in The Magic Flute for Children at mdw's new studio stage in Vienna-Penzing. In June 2025, he will debut as Dancaïro in Bizet's Carmen at Vienna's OFF Theater.

A sought-after concert soloist in his home region of Vorarlberg, Höfel has also taken part in masterclasses with Johannes Michael Blume, Sascha Wienhausen, Hartmut Zabel, and Karlheinz Hanser. He was a finalist in the 2024 Tiroler Klassik Sängerprijs and in the 2025 Zukunftsstimmen competition, initiated by Elina Garanča.

## LE REMENDADO

**Christoph Ungerböck**

tenor

Christoph Ungerböck, born in southern Lower Austria, began musical training at the local music school, where he quickly gained recognition through the Prima la musica competition. He went on to study voice at the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 2019. He received further artistic inspiration through masterclasses with Irina Gavrilovici and Kurt Widmer, and private lessons with Brigitte Poschner-Klebel.

He has appeared as Tamino in The Magic Flute for Children at Theater an der Rott and performed regularly in church music settings around Linz. As a chorister, he sang with the Festival Choir Bad Ischl and took on small solo roles. He has been engaged with the Philharmonia Choir Vienna in productions at the Opera in Steinbruch and has collaborated since 2023 with the vocal ensemble of the Heidenheim Opera Festival.











