

**Concerto Copenhagen and its director Lars Ulrik Mortensen return to the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen with Handel's Saul by Barrie Kosky**

Concerto Copenhagen and its conductor Lars Ulrik Mortensen are returning to the Royal Opera in Copenhagen as an opera orchestra: George Frideric Handel's oratorio Saul, directed by Barrie Kosky, will celebrate its premiere in Denmark on March 20, 2024. The title role is performed by English bass baritone Christopher Purves, and David by Danish countertenor Morten Grove Frandsen. The ensemble for historically informed performance practice had already participated in Giulio Cesare in Egitto at the Royal Danish Opera in 2005 and has since been involved in many successful performances of baroque repertoire.

Saul is the best opera Handel never wrote – an intense, dramatic, magnificent musical tour de force that combines the best of both worlds. Handel lent his music to the tale of Saul from the Old Testament, a biblical figure who became so envious of the young David that he lost his wits and, like King Lear, ends up in a deranged state of madness of true Shakespearean calibre. Barrie Kosky was voted Director of the Year by Opernwelt in 2016 for his colourful and dazzling interpretation of the material, which was first performed at the Glyndebourne Festival in 2015. In order to fill the entire Opera House with Handel's music, Concerto Copenhagen will provide an orchestra of 43 musicians, which, in addition to strings, consists of flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, trombones, timpani, guitar, har – and a glockenspiel!

Concerto Copenhagen is a baroque orchestra that describes itself as an “ensemble for timeless music”. The ensemble members, under the artistic direction of conductor and harpsichordist Lars Ulrik Mortensen, play on baroque instruments and in historically informed performance practice, while at the same time making references to the present and the future. As ambassadors of Scandinavian Baroque music, they have long transcended the borders of the Nordic countries and sounds and build bridges to other (musical) worlds. Concerto Copenhagen has, over several years, engaged in various outreach and educational initiatives. These initiatives encompass a wide range of activities, including music performances accompanied by picture books for young children, appearances at hospitals and nursing homes, collaborations with the National Gallery of Denmark to provide educational programs for primary school classes, as well as partnerships with other organizations for special projects aimed at young audiences. Additionally, Concerto Copenhagen collaborates with the MGK programs in Copenhagen and St. Annæ Gymnasium on workshop projects for young talents and works together with the Royal Danish Academy of Music to conduct workshops and courses on baroque music for conservatory students. In 2023 the orchestra received the great acknowledgement of being adopted on the Danish Finance Act 2024.

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

also on:

Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUV5\\_CWPXOpwEzYgakpTDrA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUV5_CWPXOpwEzYgakpTDrA)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/concertocopenhagen/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/concertocopenhagen/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/concertocph>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/3bAYWBSC170iRoa7KEJu5p>

# CONCERTO COPENHAGEN

**Georg Fridrich Handel: Saul**

Staged oratorio

**Royal Opera, Copenhagen**

**Performances: 20 (premiere), 23 and 26 March, 3 and 5 April**

Director: **Barrie Kosky**

Revival director: **Donna Stirrup**

Conductor and harpsichord: **Lars Ulrik Mortensen**

Set and costume design: **Katrin Lea Tag**

Choreography: **Otto Pichler**

Lighting design: **Joachim Klein**

Revival lighting design: **Dave Manion**

Revival choreographer: **Merry Holden**

Chorus Master: **Steven Moore**

**Clara Cecilie Thomsen:** Merab

**Mirjam Mesak:** Michal

**Christopher Purves:** Saul

**Morten Grove Frandsen:** David

**Benjamin Hulett:** Jonathan

**Michael Kristensen:** The Witch of Endor

**Thomas Cilluffo:** Abner/High Priest/Amalekite/Doeg

**The Royal Danish Opera Chorus**

**Concerto Copenhagen**

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