

– PRESS RELEASE –

Göttingen, 8. Juli 2021

Finally a reason to celebrate!

Festival programme 2021 with *Anniversary Gala* and *Rodelinda*

Still a year later, a round affair: This is the Göttingen International Handel Festival 2021. Today, Thursday, July 8, 2021, Managing Director Jochen Schäfsmeier and his predecessor Tobias Wolff, in the presence of shareholders, cooperating partners and supporters, presented the programme for the anniversary, which, after two postponements due to the pandemic, will now take place from September 9 to 19. Laurence Cummings, who will end his ten-year engagement as Artistic Director this year with a solo concert on September 18, tuned in live from Great Britain.

The **Festival Opera *Rodelinda*** will take the stage at the Deutsches Theater Göttingen in five performances on September 9, 11, 17, 18 and 19. On September 12, a **family version** will also be performed in the Lokhalle. The premiere is being recorded by NDR Kultur, will be broadcast live on ARTE Live Web, and simultaneously broadcast as an **open public event** in the Lokhalle Göttingen. The director is Dorian Dreher; Hsuan Huang is responsible for the stage design. Laurence Cummings conducts the FestspielOrchester Göttingen (FOG).

The FOG/Cummings dream team will be on stage for two more productions: Following a concertante performance of the opera ***Ariodante*** on September 10 at the Lokhalle Göttingen, two performances of the **Anniversary Gala** will follow, at the same venue, on September 15 and 16. Three conductors will share the podium for this program. Laurence Cummings himself will perform excerpts from Handel's *Serse (Xerxes)*. His predecessor Nicholas McGegan, who shaped the Festival from 1991 to 2011, will perform concert excerpts from the production of the opera *Rinaldo*, whose 2019 performance at the elite Julliard School of Music in New York earned rave reviews. Third in line is George Petrou, Cummings' successor as Artistic Director beginning in 2022. He is making his first appearance as conductor of the FOG and has brought along Myrtò Papatnasiu, a musical compatriot of international renown, for excerpts from *Publio Cornelio Scipione*. Together with other world-renowned soloists, she will ensure a dazzling display of vocal artistry.

The Göttingen International Handel Festival will also be staging scenic musical theater with the production of **Ottone** (September 12, PS.Halle Einbeck) - in a co-production with the Festtage Alter Musik Innsbruck; the production of **Giustino** (September 11, Stadthalle Osterode am Harz) will be the first time in the long history of the Göttingen International Handel Festival, and also the first time in the local puppet theater tradition, that a Handel opera will be staged as a musical puppet show. The famous puppet company Carlo Colla e Figli has been making puppets dance for over 200 years; together with the lauten compagney BERLIN, fairytale-like music is imbued with a nimble charm.

The nature of this production reflects the high importance that the anniversary Festival places on young music enthusiasts; two large-scale youth productions have been transformed into film projects due to Covid-19: **EZIO: Game of Rome**, a HipHOpera, will be screened twice on September 13, at 5 and 8 pm in the Lokhalle Göttingen. And in **Handel goes film: Dancing Messiah** on September 17 features young talents who will be performing for an equally young audience on the screen of Göttingen's Méliès arthouse cinema (at 4 pm and 6 pm).

For the young and curious, the symposium **Oper als Geschäft – Händels Opernästhetik und die Prämissen der Aufklärung** (Opera as a Business – Handel's Opera Aesthetics and the Premises of the Enlightenment) held in German on September 18 in the Alte Mensa of the University of Göttingen will explore the question of whether, in view of the European context, there is such a thing as "the" Handel opera. The event will be led by Prof. Dr. Laurenz Lütteken and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sandberger. On the following day, Dr. Sandberger will hold a lecture in German entitled **Händel und wir? Kontinuität und Diskontinuität der Göttinger Händel-Festspiele** (Handel and Us? Continuity and Discontinuity of the Göttingen Handel Festival).

As a chamber music **opener**, Cummings will perform with Maurice Steger, the "Paganini of the recorder" (Neue Zürcher Zeitung), on August 25 in the Basilica of St. Cyriakus in Duderstadt. Other chamber concerts and crossover formats top off the programme.

The official advance sales will start on July 16, 2021 on www.hndl.de as well as in selected advance sales outlets. Early booking is strongly recommended: Depending on the current infection situation, the seating capacity of the venues continues to be considerably limited.