

ZÜRICH OPERA FESTIVAL

Sunday, June 30th through Monday, July 8th



Zürich on the Zürichsee

“Zürich is a beautiful city, sitting astride the Linmat River where it flows into the Zürichsee. Its charming Old Town is full of beautifully restored historic buildings and narrow, hilly alleys. In the distance, snowy mountains overlook the waters of the lake, and the shores are dominated by turn-of-the-century mansions.”
Fodor

Anne-Sophie Mutter: *“The first-rate performance of Mutter, who really understands Beethoven, makes for a riveting and insightful listening experience.”*
Audiophile Audition, Feb. '14

“The progress of Joyce DiDonato’s career... has been one of the happiest opera events of the past decade.”
Opera News

Klaus Florian Vogt (as Lohengrin, Berlin) *scored a success: his voice rang out with incredible beauty all evening long, and he received a tremendous ovation.”*
Opera News

Evelyn Herlitzius (as Strauss’s Elektra): *“The leading exponent of the title role today... It’s hard to think of any serious rivals – she’s a phenomenon ...”*
Opera, August '14

Diana Damrau (in the MET’s L’Elisir d’Amore): *“She played with Adina’s notes and words as though they were written for her. Her technical control was near-absolute.”*
NY Chronicle



Anne-Sophie Mutter

Pavol Breslik: *“Above all, his ability to touch us so deeply inside that our own eyes well up with bitter tears ...”*
Le Monde

“Elza van den Heever was brilliant, deploying her focused, penetrating instrument with urgency... and singing with ineffable beauty and poignancy”.
Opera News, Sept. '14

The German-speaking city of **Zürich** ranks as Switzerland’s leading cultural center. The picturesque setting on the clear waters of the **Zürichsee (Zürich Lake)** is enhanced by the dramatic overhang of the Uetliberg Mountain, while the city itself contains a wealth of major museums, Renaissance churches filled with art treasures, elegant shops and cafés, and beautiful performance venues.

Of particular interest for opera enthusiasts, the graceful Baroque **Opernhaus Zürich** ranks as the leading small opera house in Europe, mounting a plethora of important new productions every year featuring today’s foremost artists in their favorite roles. Our recent visits have included sensational stagings of Wagner’s ‘Der Fliegende Holländer’ and ‘Tristan und Isolde’, Richard Strauss’s ‘Intermezzo’ and ‘Der Rosenkavalier’, Giordano’s ‘Andrea Chénier’, and Donizetti’s ‘Poliuto’. The intimate auditorium is sumptuously decorated, and the state-of-the-art technical facilities allow for innovative concep-



Tonhalle

tions to combine with the superlative acoustics. For all of these reasons, Zürich is among a handful of our most preferred venues for encountering exceptional operatic experiences.

Our return in 2015 will be for the company's prestigious **Zürich Opera Festival** and will encompass the first week of July. An intriguing peak of creativity will include **four operas of unusual interest** – Bellini's melodic version of 'Romeo & Juliet', **I Capuleti e I Montecchi**, sparked by the artistry of **Joyce DiDonato** in the 'trouser role' of Romeo; **Donizetti's** 'bel canto' comedy **L'Elisir d'Amore**, starring **Diana Damrau** and **Pavlo Breslik** as Adina and Nemorino; Richard Wagner's lyric music-drama, **Lohengrin**, being mounted for the German tenor **Klaus Florian Vogt's** romantic portrayal of the title role; and Richard Strauss's searing psychological melodrama **Elektra**, showcasing **Evelyn Herlitzius** in her acclaimed assumption of Strauss's most challenging role. 'Lohengrin' and 'Capuleti' will both be staged in eagerly anticipated *new productions*. All performances are sung in the original language, *with surtitles in both English and German*.

In addition to the four operas, our week also coincides with a pair of remarkable concerts in the imposing **Tonhalle**, a comfortable summer walk along the Lake from our hotel. The glamorous German violinist **Anne-Sophie Mutter** will offer a **Recital** of works by Beethoven, Ravel, Respighi, and Bartok; and the **Tonhalle Orchester Zürich** will be led by the Finnish conductor **Esa-Pekka Salonen** in a varied program including Richard Strauss's tone poem *Ein Heldenleben* ('A Hero's Life').

July is a quiet time to visit the priceless museums and friendly restaurants of Zürich before the busy tourist season. With a program showcasing some of today's biggest operatic stars, we expect a sold-out response for this sensational week of six performances in the Swiss cultural capital.

Tuesday, June 30th, departure from New York's Kennedy Airport at 6:10 pm on Swiss Airlines flight #17, arriving in Zürich at 8:00 am on the morning of July 1st. Or independent travel to Zürich.

Accommodations for **seven nights** with **buffet breakfast** at the **Hotel Opera**, conveniently located only a block behind the



Esa-Pekka Salonen



Fabio Luisi

Zürich Opera House. This is a small, personal and very well-managed hotel which suits us perfectly because of its characteristic Swiss efficiency and ideal location. Our travelers are always delighted to

discover this small and friendly property within easy walking distance of the Lake and many of the city's monuments and shops. **IMPORTANT:** *If you wish to arrive a day early to adjust to the time change, we will be happy to reserve your room for the early night of June 30th.*

Wednesday evening, July 1st, a **cocktail reception** is arranged in a private entertainment area of the hotel. This will be an opportunity to meet other members of the Tour. *No performance this evening.*

On Thursday afternoon, July 2nd, following a free morning to recover from jet lag, an introductory **guided walking tour** will take us through the neighborhood of the **Old Town** and along the imposing **Bahnhofstrasse**, among the most attractive shopping avenues in the world. We will also indulge in the European tradition of '**coffee and cake**' at the city's famous pâtisserie, the **Café Sprüngli**.

At 7:30 pm on Thursday evening, our first performance will be an orchestral concert by the **Tonhalle Orchester Zürich**. We are always pleased when we are able to include a program in this traditional 19th century venue on the shore of the Lake. Tonight, the Finnish conductor **Esa-Pekka Salonen** will be on the podium for his own composition entitled **Nyx (2011) für Orchester**, the Polish composer Karol Szymanowski's *Violin Concerto No. 1*, and Richard Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* ('A Hero's Life'). Maestro Salonen is currently Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of London's Philharmonia Orchestra and Conductor Laureate of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The German violinist **Christian Tetzlaff** will be the soloist.

Friday morning, July 3rd, we will enjoy a **guided visit** to the city's principal **Kunsthau Art Museum**, about a ten-minute walk from our hotel. The collection is rich in French Impressionism and German Expressionism, with priceless paintings by Monet, van Gogh, Picasso, and Matisse. The museum is also noted for its important holdings of Switzerland's national artists, the painter Ferdinand Holder and the sculptor Alberto Giacometti.

Friday evening at 7:00 pm, the **Zürich Opera** will present Richard Strauss's emotionally shattering **Elektra**, which followed 'Salome' by only a few years and was premiered in Dresden (1909). Inspired by Hugo von Hofmannsthal's psychological libretto, Strauss surpassed even 'Salome' in this searing score depicting the revenge of Elektra and her siblings against their mother and her lascivious lover. Sophocles' Greek legend comes to life as Elektra struggles vainly to



Old Town



Evelyn Herlitzius



Emily Magee



Hanna Schwarz

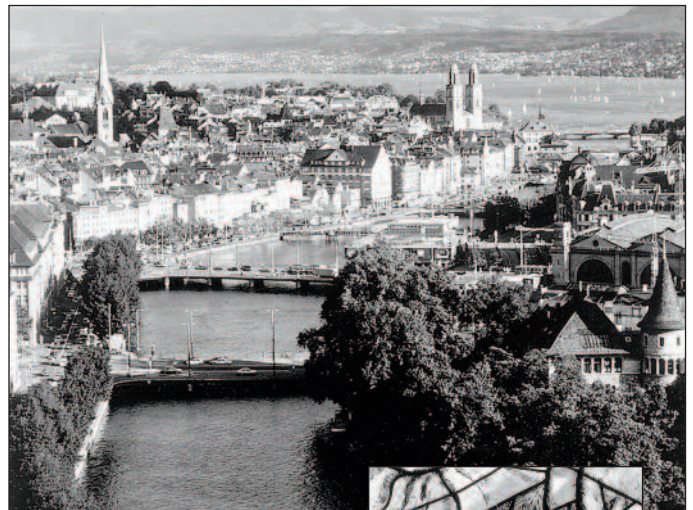
entreat her tender-hearted sister Chrysothemis to confront Clytemnestra for her sins, but it is only with her brother Orestes' long-awaited return to Mycenae that she forges the alliance which leads to both matricide and the murder of Aegisthus. The three principal female roles offer histrionic opportunities for superior singing actresses, on this occasion to be performed by the German dramatic soprano **Evelyn Herlitzius** reprising her sensational Elektra, American soprano **Emily Magee** as a sympathetic Chrysothemis, and the veteran German mezzo-soprano **Hanna Schwarz** as a distraught Clytemnestra. The male contingent will feature Germans **Christof Fischesser** as Orestes and **Michael Laurenz** as Aegisthus. The conductor will be **Lothar Koenigs**, and the staging is by director **Matin Kusej** and set designer **Rolf Glittenberg**. No less a critic than George Bernard Shaw hailed 'Elektra's first London performance as "a historic moment in the history of art in England, such as may not occur again in our life-time."

Saturday, July 4th, is left free for independent shopping and for exploring the city on your own before tonight's long opera. Under the dramatic **Uetiberg Mountain**, the beautiful **Linmat River** flows through the center

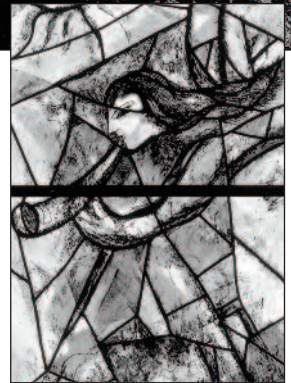
of Zürich. Among the many towering steeples are the **Grossmünster Cathedral** with its twin bell campaniles and the **Fraumünster** with its spectacular stained-glass windows designed by Marc Chagall. You may wish to take advantage of ideal summer weather for a convenient **Zürichsee Lake Cruise**. This is the most accessible and enjoyable means to view the many villas, gardens and small villages which line both shores of the Lake on either side of the city.

Early Saturday evening, we will celebrate our national holiday with a pre-theatre **dinner** at **Belcanto**, the Italian ristorante specializing in imaginative pasta entrées. Belcanto is ideally located for opera patrons, adjacent to the front entrance of the Opernhaus with an open view of the Zürichsee.

Alberto Giacometti's Dog in the Kunsthaus Art Museum, with its new wing



Linmat River; Chagall's stained glass window, in the Fraumünster Cathedral



At 7:00 pm on Saturday, we will return to the **Zürich Opernhaus** for a *new production* of Richard Wagner's **Lohengrin**. The most Italianate and lyrical of the major Wagner operas, 'Lohengrin' opens with Elsa's mystical 'Dream' and proceeds from the rapturous wedding and love-duet to the culminating introspective Narration 'In fernem land' sung by the swan-knight. The cast of seasoned Wagnerians is headed by the handsome German tenor **Klaus Florian Vogt** in the romantic title role (Mr. Vogt is a famously lyric Lohengrin – with a cult following



Elza van den Heever



Klaus Florian Vogt

in Berlin, Munich and Vienna – rather than a hefty heldentenor), South African soprano **Elza van den Heever** as Elsa, Germany's dramatic mezzo-soprano **Petra Lang** as Ortrud, German baritone **Martin Gantner** as the malevolent Friedrich von Telramund, and German bass **Christof Fischesser** as King Heinrich. Our conductor tonight is the Australian maestra **Simone Young**, and the team of director **Andreas Homoki** and set designer **Wolfgang Gussmann** are responsible for the important co-production with the Vienna State Opera.

Sunday, July 5th, is a busy day with a pair of 'bel canto' operas at the **Opernhaus**. At 2:00 pm, we will enjoy Gaetano Donizetti's **L'Elisir d'Amore**. 'Elisir' maintains its popular position in the operatic repertoire by virtue of Donizetti's melodic genius in this charming comedy. "Ultimately, the work's continuing appeal lies in the appropriateness of Donizetti's music to the 'male Cinderella' myth. Nemorino's good-heartedness and his single-mindedness of purpose win out in spite of potions and unforeseen inheritances." (*New Grove Dictionary of Opera*). Zürich's cast will be headed by the peerless German coloratura soprano **Diana Damrau** as Adina, the popular Slovakian tenor **Pavo Breslik** as



Diana Damrau



Pavlo Breslik



Zürich Opera House

Nemorino, Italian baritone **Massimo Cavalletti** as Sergeant Belcore, and Italy's sought-after Verdi baritone **Lucio Gallo** as the 'buffo' charlatan Dr. Dulcamara. The conductor will be **Giacomo Sagripanti**, and the refreshingly traditional production is directed by **Grischa Asagaroff** with scenic designs by **Tullio Pericoli**.

We will return to the **Opernhaus** at 8:00 pm on Sunday evening for a second 'bel canto' opera, Vincenzo Bellini's **I Capuleti e I Montecchi**. Bellini's melodic triumph dating from 1830 is filled with mellifluous arias and duets depicting the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet and the opposing Verona factions of the Capulets and Montagues. Today promises to be an immersion in 'bel canto' artistry with the American mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** 'trouser' specialist as Romeo. Miss Donato has recently conquered MET audiences in her title portraits of 'Maria Stuarda' and 'La Cenerentola', and a highlight of the MET's spring season will be her eagerly awaited star turn in Rossini's 'La Donna del Lago'. Opposite her as Giulietta will be Rumanian soprano **Anita Hardig**, and the male contingent is headed by French/Swiss tenor **Benjamin Bernheim** as Tebaldo. The conductor will be the company's Music Director **Fabio Luisi**, the esteemed Principal Conductor of the MET since 2011. Zürich's *new production* will be directed by **Christof Loy** and is designed by **Christian Schmidt**.



Joyce DiDonato

Monday, July 6th, a leisurely lunch will be served at the **Ambassador Hotel**, sister to the Hotel Opera and directly across the street. The Ambassador's Swiss menus of veal strips and 'rösti' potatoes have been consistently praised on our previous visits. (*Most museums are closed on Monday.*)

There is no performance on Monday evening, when you will be free to enjoy one of the interesting cafés and small restaurants in the neighborhood of our hotel and the Opera House. The hotel's gracious staff will be happy to assist you with suggestions and reservations.

On Tuesday evening, July 7th, we will again walk to the **Tonhalle** for our final performance, a **Recital** by the enormously talented German violinist **Anne-Sophie Mutter**. Her imaginative programs of the classical, romantic and contemporary violin literature are always sold-out in New York and throughout the world's music capitals, and her reviews are invariably adulatory. With the piano accompanist **Lambert**

Orkis, her program tonight will include Bela Bartok's *Violin Sonata No. 2*, Beethoven's *Violin Sonata No. 10*, Ottorino Respighi's *Violin Sonata in B-Minor*, and Maurice Ravel's virtuoso *Tzigane - Rhapsodie de Concert*.

Wednesday, July 8th, departure from Zürich's international airport at 1:00 pm on Swiss Airlines flight #14, arriving at New York's Kennedy Airport at 3:50 pm. Or independent departure.

Zürich

Price per person	
based on double occupancy	\$ 5,850*
Single room supplement	\$ 580

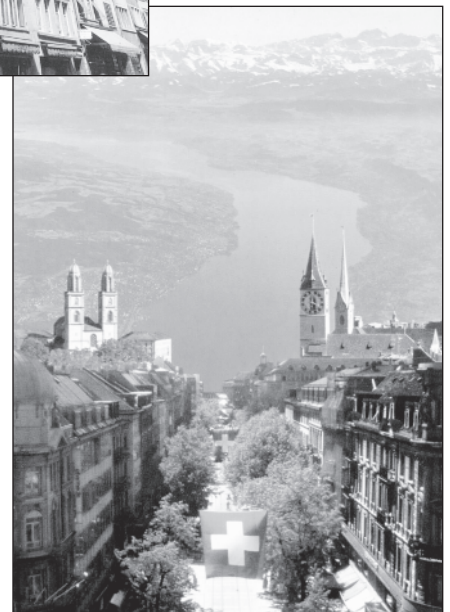
*Our six performances are unusually expensive. Zürich is well-known for its high prices.

Airfare NOT included.

Air fare: Prices are subject to change depending on time of booking. Please contact our agent Linda Botros (back-page cover) for lowest current fares.



Old Town



View of the Alps from Zürich