

heim.spiele (home games), a cooperation with the Ensemble Modern at Oper Frankfurt

REDACCIÓN

From December 3rd 2016 to January 5th 2017 the [Ensemble Modern](#), in co-operation with [Oper Frankfurt](#), are in residence in the [Bockenheimer Depot](#) in their home town. They perform a revival of Peter Eötvös' opera *Der goldene Drache* (The Golden Dragon), two successful works by the composer Steve Reich, who celebrates his 80th birthday this year: *Music for 18 Musicians* and – for the first time in the Frankfurt Rhein-Main region – the video opera *The Cave* and the *Variété Programme Spectacle Spaces* in which music by Mauricio Kagel and Martin Matalon is combined with spectacular modern circus artistry.



The Cave

Multimedia Oratorio in three parts (1990-93) by Steve Reich (*1936) and Beryl Korot (*1945) With German surtitles. Conductor: Brad Lubman; Film projection: BIG cinema; Light design: Jürgen Koß; Sound direction: Norbert Ommer Performed by: Synergy Vocals, Ensemble Modern.

The Machpela Cave, also known as the Cave of the Patriarchs, in Hebron is the Sanctuary of Abraham and his descendants. The place has enormous religious significance for Jews and Muslims, who are both descended from Abraham. The documentary-like video opera *The Cave* by the composer Steve Reich (*1936) and video artist Beryl Korot (*1945) investigates the relationship between Jews and Muslims and the 4000 year old story of Abraham, his wives Sarah and Hagar and sons Ismael and Isaac. The Cave is based on recorded interviews with Israelis, Palestinians and Americans in which the same five questions are posed: „Who was Abraham? Who was Sarah? Hagar? Ismael? and Isaac?“.

The answers create a kaleidoscope of memories and reflections. In this work Steve Reich and Beryl Korot founded a „new form of opera“. The interviews can be seen on five large screens – with quotes from the Bible and Koran – overlapping, transporting us through time. Steve Reich based his music on these pictures and melodies of speech, doubling them up and harmonising them in different ways.

Performances: December 16th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 21st 2016, which all begin at 19.30hrs. Tickets cost: € 20 to € 65 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Music for 18 musicians

By Steve Reich (*1936) With German surtitles Sound. Director: Norbert Ommer Performed by: Synergy Vocals, Ensemble Modern.

The American composer Steve Reich (*1936) is one of the pioneers of minimal music. His *Music for 18 Musicians* (written between 1974 and 1976) is one of the key works of its oeuvre. A microcosm of rhythmical sounds and repetitive patterns creates a fascinating maelstrom in which the audience can immerse themselves and try to decipher its technical construction: each of the eleven sections are founded on their own chord, out of which the material for the instrumentalisation and four female singers emerges. Steve Reich was inspired by West African music and Indonesian gamelan drummers – so *Music for 18 Musicians* is performed without a conductor. The world premiere in 1976 in New York, performed by his own ensemble „Steve Reich and Musicians“, made Steve Reich known to a wider audience. 20 years later it found its way to Europe, where it was performed by the Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt. This would not have been possible without the composer being present as no proper score existed, only sketches for the musicians. Since working together to prepare a detailed score the Ensemble Modern and Steve Reich have enjoyed a long and fruitful artistic relationship and have given concerts all over the world.

Performances: December 25th, 26th 2016 at 18.00hrs. Tickets cost: € 20 to € 65 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Spectacle Spaces

First performance in Frankfurt *Morceau de Concours for one or two trumpets* (edition for trumpet and horn, 1972) *Variété. Concert-Spectacle for Artistes and Musicians* (1976/77) by Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008) World Premiere *Caravanserail* (Caravan Seraglio) (2016) by Martin Matalon (*1958). Conductor: Franck Ollu; Concept: Knut Gminder and Robin Witt; Director: Knut Gminder; Choreography: Aleksei Uvarov; Lighting concept and technique: Wiglev von Wedel Performed by: International Ensemble of Artistes, Ensemble Modern

A nostalgic funfair is somewhere nice to escape to in a gloomy, pessimistic world. *Spectacle Spaces* is a marriage between the Ensemble Modern and a top class group of international *Variété* stars, contemporary music and modern circus artistry. The starting point is *Concert-Spectacle for artists and Variété musicians* by Mauricio Kagel (1931-

2008), which reverses the rules of classical Varieté: it is the music that now stipulates the Varieté programme, instead of being mere accompaniment to scenic attractions. This is linked to a new work by the Argentinian composer Martín Matalon (*1958) – *Caravansserrail* (2016). The music, with its varying geometry, colours, forms and temporality fits together like a puzzle, with the dancers and acrobats interacting in counterpoint. In Spectacle Spaces musicians from the Ensemble Modern, performing two scores, become integral elements of the whole artistic concept. The differences between contemporary music and astonishing, entertaining artistry are solved in a playful way, boundaries between different fields of performance and formats are questioned, investigated: a spectacular evening full of enriching contrasts.

Performances: December 31st 2016, January 1st (18.00hrs), 3rd, 4th, 5th 2017 Unless otherwise stated, performances begin at 19.30hrs. Tickets cost: € 25 to € 80 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

Der Goldene Drache (The Golden Dragon)

Opera (2013/14) by Peter Eötvös. Conductor: Nikolai Petersen; Director: Elisabeth Stöppler With (all playing multiple roles): Karen Vuong (Die junge Frau / The young woman), Hedwig Fassbender (Die Frau über sechzig / The 60+ woman), Ingyu Hwang (Der junge Mann / The young man), Hans-Jürgen Lazar (Der Mann über sechzig / The 60+ man), Holger Falk (Der Mann / The man), Ensemble Modern.

After it was made known that one of the most performed present day German dramatists – Roland Schimmelpfennig (*1967) – was to provide the literary basis for a new opera by one of the most successful composers of our times – Peter Eötvös (*1944) – everybody looked forward eagerly to the World Premiere of the work on June 29th 2014 in the Bockenheimer Depot. Schimmelpfennig's *Goldener Drache* (Golden Dragon) was invited to the 2010 Berlin Theatertreffen and critics from the magazine Theater heute voted it „Play of the Year“. Eötvös' previous opera *Paradise* reloaded (Lilith) was an enormous success when it was performed for the first time in 2013, in the New Opera in Vienna. Now both artists collaborated to create a work commissioned by Oper Frankfurt – a co-production with the Ensemble Modern.

The World Premiere was an enormous success with the public and press, with critics writing: „Unanimous applause in the Bockenheimer Depot for the fabulous achievements of everyone involved, music impeccably paced. (...) Not to be missed!“ – „Magnificent opera, music and wonderfully directed by Elisabeth Stöppler.“ – „But it would not have been such a success without the music written with light sovereignty by Peter Eötvös. It is not about creating new sounds or experimental theatre. At the beginning it sounds as amusing and succinct as an opera for children. It is one of Eötvös' principles of style to allow the text to remain as concise as possible and flow at a natural tempo, so nothing is lost in Schimmelpfennig's droll turns of phrase. The masterful playing of the Ensemble Modern did not only provide an illustrative carpet of sound, it also gave the whole work a rhythmical, forward driving pulse and, above all, colourful and rhetorical variety. Thrilling glissandi, gongs, chorale, recitar cantando à la Monteverdi, all conjured up by Eötvös.“ The story – with its theme of refugees, more relevant than ever today, and a suitable portion of

black humour – tells of the shady side of a globalised world, of exploitation, greed and brutality: A young man from China has his painful tooth removed with pliers in „*Der goldene Drache*“, a Chinese-Vietnamese-Thai snack bar, because he is in the country illegally and cannot go to the dentist. The tooth lands in a bowl of soup and then in the mouth of a stewardess, one of the snack bar's regular customers. She throws the tooth into the same river where the young man's body, he bled to death, was disposed. He shall find his way back home wrapped in a carpet emblazoned with a dragon. Interwoven into the story is the fable of the industrious ant and amusing, but lazy grasshopper – a simile for exploitation and abuse.

New Members in the Cast since it was first performed in 2013/14 – it also enjoyed great success on tour to the 2015 Bregenz Festival – include Ensemble Member Karen Vuong (Die junge Frau / the young woman and other roles). This American soprano enjoyed great success in Frankfurt in 2015/16 singing Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen*; a role she sings again this season, during which her roles include Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The Korean tenor Ingyu Hwang (Der junge Mann / The young man and other roles), a Member of the Opera Studio since 2015/16, recently sang Sam Sharkey in the new production of Britten's *Paul Bunyan* and has taken part in many operas for children. Conducting the Ensemble Modern in this production for the first time is Kapellmeister Nikolai Petersen. Later in the 2016/17 season, which he began by conducting the new production of Britten's *Paul Bunyan* in the Bockenheimer Depot, he will lead performances of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni* in the main house. All other roles are being performed by artists who took part in the first run of performances.

Performances: December 3th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 10th 2016 Unless otherwise stated, performances begin at 19.30hrs Commissioned by Oper Frankfurt and the Ensemble Modern Co-production with the Ensemble Modern. Tickets cost: € 20 to € 65 (with a 12.5% pre-booking fee when not purchased direct from the theatre)

heim.spiele (home games) is a co-operation with the Ensemble Modern at Oper Frankfurt's with generous support from the Kulturfond Frankfurt RheinMain, the Aventis Foundation, Deutsche Bank Stiftung, Crespo Foundation, the Dr. Marschner Stiftung, Stiftung Polytechnische Gesellschaft Frankfurt am Main, the Friends of the Ensemble Modern e.V. and the city of Frankfurt.