

**gerhard schedl**  
**contemporary opera award**  
of the BNP Paribas Foundation

An International Contemporary Opera Award  
by Neue Oper Wien

**Press kit**





## Press-text

Gerhard Schedl Contemporary Opera Award of the BNP Paribas Foundation  
An International Contemporary Opera Competition by Neue Oper Wien

„Wherever Schedl`s notes sound out, theatre is born.“

Gerhard Schedl was one of the greatest Austrian composers of musical theatre works: he knew intimately the needs and possibilities of the not-so-simple task of combining theatre and music.

Not only with a multitude of premières, but also by commissioning new works on a regular basis Neue Oper Wien and Musikverlag Doblinger aim to give young composers the opportunity to deal with the difficult genre of contemporary opera without being forced to work with no prospect of an actual performance.

In keeping with our ideal, according to which a work of music theatre is a mutual and balanced combination of text and music, this competition is directed at composer-librettist teams. In December 2009 the jury will announce the winners. The prize consists of a cash award from the BNP Paribas Foundation, a première of the new work by Neue Oper Wien in 2011, and the work`s publication by Musikverlag Doblinger.

Further information: [www.neueoperwien.at](http://www.neueoperwien.at)

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**About the competition**  
**Neue Oper Wien**

neue **O**per wien

“Whenever I create a piece, I ask the following question: what does it actually have to do with my life? For me, music is not merely something that is thought—even if I certainly don’t deny the phenomenon of thought in music. In the final consequence, music is about the ability to experience via the senses—based on the idea that you should think with your heart and feel with your intellect. And that one is tempted to connect the two.”

Gerhard Schedl was one of the greatest Austrian composers of musical theatre works: he knew intimately the needs and possibilities of the not-so-simple task of combining theatre and music. Schedl’s works for the stage allow one to experience in an immediate manner his very special sense for the creation of moods and images, and particularly for doing that which he considered to be especially important: telling stories.

Not only with a multitude of premières, but also by commissioning new works on a regular basis, Neue Oper Wien aims to give young composers frequent opportunities to deal with the difficult genre of contemporary opera without being forced to work with no prospect of an actual performance. But at the same time, of course, we are always looking for “good stories”, for dense and true musical theatre, for musical theatre with a heart and an intellect.

In order to do full justice to this search and to this idea of advancement, it seemed a logical step to institute a contemporary opera award in Gerhard Schedl’s memory. In keeping with our ideal, according to which a work of music theatre is a mutual and balanced combination of text and music, this competition is directed at composer-librettist teams. The goal is the creation of a full-length work for the stage in German, English or French. The award is divided between a cash prize in the amount of 25,000 euros, a première of the new work by Neue Oper Wien in 2011, and the work’s publication by Musikverlag Doblinger.

**Patron Makes  
Major Commitment  
BNP Paribas Foundation**

The various projects of the BNP Paribas Foundation aim to preserve museums' rich holdings and make them accessible to the public, as well as to support artists, advance cutting-edge medical research and facilitate new projects in the fields of education and social integration.

A special priority is the dissemination and advancement of contemporary music. **For this reason, the BNP Paribas Foundation is supporting the inaugural year of the Gerhard Schedl Contemporary Opera Competition.**

This initiative of Neue Oper Wien and its artistic director Walter Kobéra is remarkable in several respects. It is the first time that a collaborative effort between a composer and librettist is to be recognized as a whole by a musical and literary jury. The award-winning work will be published by Musikverlag Doblinger and be given its world première by Neue Oper Wien.

The BNP Paribas Foundation has agreed to sponsor the commission to compose the winning work.

[www.mecenat.bnpparibas.com/en/](http://www.mecenat.bnpparibas.com/en/)

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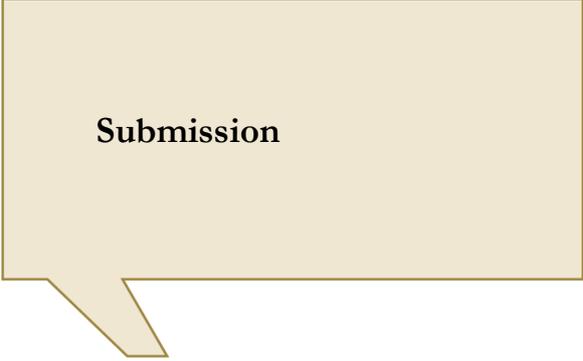
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## Call for Submissions

The event at hand is an anonymous, one-round international **music theatre competition** for teams of a composer and librettist or individuals who embody both roles. None of the participants may have exceeded the age of 45 on the day of submission.

The objective of this competition is the creation of **a stage work with singer(s) and orchestra** (and, if required, electronics), based on a libretto written specifically for this work. The stage work and the libretto, as well as all their constituent parts, must not have ever been published or performed prior to submission. Participants may submit only one work.



## **Submission**

### **Submissions are to include ten copies each of:**

- A scene from the new work between eight and twelve minutes in length (text and music)
- a preliminary version of the libretto
- a treatment of the instrumental score with exact indication of the forces required, including any electronics
- a closed envelope marked with only the title of the work on the outside, containing the personal information and a short curriculum vitae of the submitter(s), as well as the signed declarations of agreement with regard to the conditions of participation and the guaranteeing of rights.

Neue Oper Wien is not obligated to send the submitted media back to the submitter(s). Submissions should be made by mail to the following address:

### **Formal requirements**

The work to be submitted is to be for an orchestra that does not exceed 17 instrumentalists plus a maximum of seven vocal soloists and without a choir. The work should be of full length, between 60 and 90 minutes. The libretto can be written in German, English or French. Contestants are free to choose the content of the work, but in no case should it be an opera for children.

### **Guarantee of performing rights**

Prior to submission, all questions regarding rights must be resolved by the submitter, who must present written confirmation of the rights in question concerning any use of existing texts/text passages or compositions in original or modified form. Should existing text passages, original or modified, be incorporated, all rights (to use, to modify, to copy, to publish) must be obtained from the original publisher. A written declaration that rights have been obtained and of the original publisher's having granted gratis permission must be included with the submitted work.

Neue Oper Wien shall receive the following rights of use: exclusive recording and broadcast rights (video and audio), the exclusive right to première the work, and all rights of duplication.

The winner(s) of the award are obligated to make available in a timely fashion the score, a piano reduction, the libretto and the individual parts for copying purposes - either as clearly legible manuscripts or computer-generated notation.

Musikverlag Doblinger  
c/o Renate Publig  
Dorotheerg. 10  
A-1010 Vienna

## Jury and Timetable

### Timetable

**Submissions** must be postmarked no later than 12 October 2009.

The jury shall convene late November 2009, and the winner(s) of the award shall be announced early December 2009.

The winning work will be recognized via a cash award from the BNP Paribas Foundation (25,000 €). The work commission issued at that point must be completed by December of 2010.

The winning work will be published by Musikverlag Doblinger.

The **world première** of the winning work by Neue Oper Wien shall take place in 2011.

### Jury

The jury consists of:

Johannes Erath (Stage director)

Christian Gangneron (Stage director, Founder and Artistic director of ARCAL)

Detlev Glanert (Composer)

Paul Griffiths (Librettist and Author)

Hannes Heher (Composer, Austrian Composers' Association, Vienna: Vice-president)

Dr. Peter Keuschnig (Conductor)

Walter Kobéra (Artistic director of Neue Oper Wien)

Dr. Hans Landesmann (Artistic director of Salzburg Biennale)

Dr. Birgit Meyer (Head dramaturge at the Vienna Volksoper, designated Artistic director of the Cologne Opera)

Dr. Angela Pachovsky (Editorial manager Musikverlag Doblinger)

The jury may refrain from conferring the award. Decisions by the jury are final. Any recourse to courts of law is excluded.

## Biographies

### Gerhard Schedl / Composer

Gerhard Schedl was born in Vienna in 1957 and studied violin, guitar, piano and music theory. In 1976 he began studying composition with Erich Urbanner at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, from which he received his diploma with honours in 1980. In 1981, he was appointed instructor for music theory, counterpoint and composition at Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany, where he was to lead the “Frankfurter Kurse für Neue Musik” [Frankfurt Courses for Contemporary Music] together with Claus Kühnl from 1987 onward.

It was during the same year that Schedl also achieved his breakthrough as a composer with the world premières of his staged oratorio, *Der Großinquisitor*, the children’s opera *Der Schweinehirt* and the orchestral work *Tango*. One year later, his chamber opera *Kontrabass* was awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Carl Maria von Weber Competition for chamber opera (no 1<sup>st</sup> place was given). From 1982 to 1984, Schedl was an instructor for music theory at Gutenberg University in Mainz. His numerous successful concert works were performed by orchestras and ensembles including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony, the Saxon State Orchestra of Dresden, ensemble modern and Ensemble Kontrapunkte under conductors including Leonard Slatkin, Peter Keuschnig and Christoph Eschenbach.

Beginning in 1990, Gerhard Schedl was Composer in Residence at Salzburg’s Landestheater [State Theatre], for which he wrote works including *Glaube Liebe Hoffnung* (1993), *...fremd bin ich eingezogen* (1997) and *Julie und Jean* (1999). It was also in 1990 and at the Landestheater that the first complete and staged production of his “trptych” of three chamber operas—*Pierre et Luce*, *Kontrabass* and *S.C.H.A.S.* was mounted. Gerhard Schedl’s final project was his fourth symphony, *Belfast*, which was to have received its première in 2001. Schedl took his own life on 30 November 2000.

## Biographies / Jury

### Johannes Erath / Stage Director

Erath, born in Rottweil, studied violin at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna and the Academy of Music in Freiburg (earning his diploma in 2000). He has worked with the stage director Willy Decker, Guy Joosten, Nicolas Brieger and Peter Konwitschny at various theatres in Europe. In the season 2002/03 he was producer at the Hamburg State Opera, 2005-07 he was fellow of “Academy Opera Today” of the Deutsche Bank Foundation.

His previous stage directions include the world premiere of “*Drei Helden*” in Rheinsberg, “*Un Ballo in Maschera*” in Bremerhaven, “*Cendrillon*” and “*Les Contes d’Hoffmann*” in Bern as well as “*Triptychon*” by Gerhard Schedl for Neue Oper Wien. His work with “*Cendrillon*” was awarded with the “Götz-Friedrich-Regiepreis” in 2008. In the same year he was staging “*Angels in America*” by Peter Eötvös in Frankfurt. Future projects include stage directions in Cologne and in Graz.

### Christian Gagneron / Stage Director, Founder and Artistic Director of ARCAL

First specialized in philosophy, Christian Gagneron was a dramatist at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels and at the Ballet du XXème siècle, then stage director assistant at Opéra de Nancy. In 1983, he founded ARCAL, an institution dedicated to chamber operas, with which he has staged operas from the Baroque and Contemporary repertoire. Between 1988 and 1990, he directed the Centre National d’Artistes Lyriques (CNIPAL).

Gagneron was part of the crew at the Innsbruck Festival, with René Jacobs, in operas by Cavalli, Haendel and Mozart. At the Festival d’Avignon, he directed the world premiere of *Le Miracle Secret*, by Martin Matalon. He then directed number of pieces in several opera houses in France and abroad, with a special attention to contemporary chamber operas.

In 2003, *Opérette* by W. Gombrowicz and music by O. Strasnoy was produced at the Grand Théâtre de Reims. This production is emblematic of the turn made by ARCAL, which saw a developing project with amalgamated the lyric art with other disciplines of the performing arts. As part of this concern, Christian Gagneron set up and staged at the request of the Centre Dramatique National de Sartrouville, three small theatrical forms. Gulbenkian Foundation, in association with the Teatro Nacional de San Carlos, invited Gagneron to Lisbon in 2004 to supervise a course of training in staging opera. For ARCAL, he directed *Têtes Pansues*, a lyrical farce by Jonathan Pontier and Eugène Ionesco, and *Riders to the Sea*, a play by JM Synge set to music by Ralph Vaughan Williams. In 2008, he staged *Les Sacrifiées*, a chamber opera by Thierry Pécou based on a text by Laurent Gaudé.

## **Detlev Glanert / Composer**

Detlev Glanert made his first composing attempts and began taking instrumental lessons at the age of twelve. He went on to study composition with Diether de la Motte, Günter Friedrichs and Frank Michael Beyer, as well as with Hans Werner Henze in Cologne. In 1986 Glanert was invited to participate in the courses at the Tanglewood Summer Music Festival (USA), where he received instruction from Oliver Knussen. He also received several grants, including the Bach Prize of the City of Hamburg, the 1988 Berlin Senate Fellowship for Berlin artists in Istanbul, and the 1989 fellowship from the Rolf Liebermann Opera Prize competition. From 1989 to 1993, Glanert worked continuously with the Cantiere Internazionale D'Arte in Montepulciano (Italy), where he also headed the local music school. In 1990 he received a Berlin Senate Composition Grant, and in 1992/93 he was a guest of the German Academy at the Villa Massimo in Rome. He has been a member of Hamburg's Free Academy of the Arts since 2002. In 2003 he was composer in residence in Mannheim, a title he also held in Sapporo in 2005 and with the WDR Radio Orchestra of Cologne in 2008/09. The composer assumed artistic direction of the Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte in Montepulciano in 2009.

The Hamburg native has placed opera at the centre of his creative output, which also includes the most various forms of works for orchestra and chamber music ensembles. He is regarded as a melodic and gestural talent, and furthermore as a masterful orchestrator. Glanert's works reflect his fascination with the Romantic and Expressionist traditions as viewed from a present day standpoint.

In 1993, *Der Spiegel des großen Kaisers* was awarded the Rolf Liebermann Opera Prize, and 2001 saw him receive the Bavarian Opera Prize for *Scherz, Satire, Ironie und tiefere Bedeutung*. The world première production of his opera *Die drei Rätsel* was invited to the 8<sup>th</sup> International Music Theatre Workshop in Munich in 2004. Glanert's orchestral works include three symphonies as well as solo concerti for piano and violin. July of 2006 witnessed the British territorial première of his *Vier Präludien und ernste Gesänge* at the BBC Proms. In 2006 his opera *Caligula*, commissioned by the operas of Frankfurt and Cologne, was premièred with great success.

## **Paul Griffiths / Librettist and Author**

Paul Griffiths was born in Bridgend, Wales in 1947. He studied biochemistry at Oxford and joined the editorial team of The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians in 1973. Around the same time he began writing for numerous London newspapers and music periodicals. He served as head critic of the London Times from 1982 to 1992, followed by the same post at the New Yorker from 1992 to 1996. His first book, *A Concise History of Modern Music*, was published in 1978 and has since been translated into numerous languages. His numerous other publications include studies on Boulez, Cage, Messiaen, Ligeti, Davies, Bartók and Stravinsky. Literary works by Griffiths include the novels *Lay of Tristram* and *Myself and Marco Polo*, for which he received the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1989. He has also produced English translations of libretti, including those of *La Bohème* and *Die Zauberflöte*. Alongside the libretto to Elliott Carter's *What next?*, Paul Griffiths also authored the text for Tan Dun's opera *Marco Polo*, which was premièred in 1997 at the Munich Biennale of New Music Theatre and received its Austrian territorial première by Neue Oper Wien in 1999.

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

### **Mag. Hannes Heher / Composer**

Born on March 26, 1964 in Vienna, he went to school in Neunkirchen, Lower Austria. During high school he received private piano and music theory lessons with pianist and composer Wolfram Unger, and at that time he made his first attempts at composing. After his school-leaving certification in 1982 he studied at the Academy for Music and the Performing Arts in Vienna (electro-acoustic and electronic music, music theory, music education, singing teaching), at Vienna University (history) and at the Vienna University of Technology (chemistry). He graduated with a Master of Arts in 1992. Since 2006 he has been working towards completing a doctorate at the Vienna University for Music and at Vienna University. Major influences as regards his compositions were gained through working with professors Karl Heinz Fuss and Heinz Kratochwil. Heher also paid great attention to the political and musical ideas of Hanns Eislers. In addition to his activities as a composer he has put a lot of energy into organising concerts of contemporary music (founder and chairman from 1988 to 2000 of "MUSIC ON LINE"), since 1999 staff member of ORF/Ö1 as music review editor, and, in addition, piano and singing teacher and musicologist (among other things, publisher of a work by E. Wellesz and K. Weigl). In the field of computers and new media, he has been the vice-president of the Austrian Composers' Association since 2006, board member of the IGNM/Section Austria from 2004 to 2006, board member of the Egon Wellesz Fund with the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna since 1998.

### **Dr. Peter Keuschnig / Conductor**

Conductor Peter Keuschnig was born in Vienna and studied at Konservatorium Wien University, at Vienna's University of Music and Performing Arts and at the University of Vienna, where he earned a doctorate in musicology.

He continued his conducting studies with Ferenc Fricsay and Bruno Maderna.

In 1965, he brought together members of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna Symphony to found Ensemble Kontrapunkte, which repertoire ranges from Classicism to the most extreme reaches of the avant-garde. With this ensemble, Peter Keuschnig has for over 30 years now been featuring 20<sup>th</sup> century works in the "Kontrapunkte" concert series for the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Musikverein) in Vienna. Guest performances have taken him to Europe, the USA and Japan.

Keuschnig established the "Neue Reihe" [new series] of the Berlin Philharmonic in 1988. He has been president of the Austrian division of the International Society for Contemporary Music and is a 3-time recipient of the Alban Berg Prize. He furthermore served as musical director of the Theater des Westens in Berlin between 1984 and 1994. Keuschnig conducts leading orchestras in Europe, Japan and America, and is a frequent guest at venues including the opera houses of Vienna and Berlin as well as various international festivals.

### **Walter Kobéra / Artistic Director of Neue Oper Wien**

Walter Kobéra began studying violin at Vienna City Conservatory at the age of seven. From 1978 to 2002 he was a member of the Tonkünstler Orchestra of Lower Austria, where his activities also included work as a conductor and a musical assistant to Isaac Karabtchevsky and Fabio Luisi. In 1986 he founded his amadeus ensemble-wien, which repertoire ranges from baroque sacred music to Viennese Classicism and on to symphonic music and opera – particularly that of the 20th and 21st century. His constant care and attention in the performance of contemporary and twentieth century

music theatre led him to the renowned productions of Alban Bergs “Lulu”, Benjamin Brittens “Billy Budd” – the startingpoint for the great Britten-boom in Vienna lasting until today – Helmut Lachenmanns “Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern” und Gerhard Schedls “Triptychon”. Recently he conducted a new production of Strauss’ “Ariadne auf Naxos” in Bratislava and Prague, that will be presented in the Opera of Ireland in Dublin Later this year.

His artistic work with KlangBogen Festival in Vienna and the Vienna Festival goes back many years. Since 2005 Walter Kobéra and Neue Oper Wien are permanent guest of the International Chamber Opera Festival in Zwolle/NL.

With the world première of Richard Dünser’s “Radek” in 2006, which was highly acclaimed by public and press, Neue Oper Wien started a co-operation with the famous Bregenz Festival. This summer, the succesfull co-operation will be continued by the production of the world première of Isidora Zebeljans “A marathon family”.

Walter Kobéra is artistic director of the concert cycle „Klangerlebnis Stephansdom“ starting in 2008. He has led numerous concerts with Austrian and European symphony orchestras such as the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, the Tonkünstler Orchestra of Lower Austria, the Bratislava RSO, the Baltic Philharmonic and the ensemble „die reihe“. Alongside numerous concerts and opera performances, he also has CD and broadcast recordings to his credit, with programmes including motets and arias by Mozart and Salieri, Brahms’ “Ein deutsches Requiem”, Verdi’s “Macbeth”, Wolfram Wagner’s “Endlich Schluss”, Thomas Pernes’ “Zauberflöte 06” and Richard Dünser’s “Radek”.

Walter Kobéra lectures on modern music at the Music University of Vienna.

### **Dr. Hans Landesmann / Artistic Director of Biennale Salzburg**

Hans Landemann was born in Vienna in 1932 but for the period 1938-45 he lived in Budapest. He completed degrees in piano in both cities before continuing his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris and studying chemistry in New York. In 1957 he entered the family business.

He was already a member of the Konzerthausdirektoriums (Board of Concert Halls) when he became the secretary general of the Wiener Konzerthaus in 1977, where he played a definitive role in the establishment of Viennese concert productions of 20th century music. Among other achievements, he founded the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra with Claudio Abbado, organised two Webern festivals, and led his audiences step-by-step towards more contemporary programs, with patience and a fine sense for the programmatic. He was repeatedly called upon to advise international cultural politicians and program-makers. He was an integral part of the founding of the festival Wien Modern. In 1989 he changed roles and became the commercial and concert director of the Salzburg Festival where he initiated the structural reforms after Karajan and made the Mortier era possible.

With concert projects centered around Pierre Boulez, Maurizio Pollini, György Ligeti and György Kurtág, he emphasised contemporary music and facilitated the Zeitfluss festival directed by Markus Hinterhäuser and Thomas Zierhofer-Kin.

He left the Salzburg Festival with Mortier in 2001 and became the music director of the Wiener Festwochen. Here too he supported contemporary music. Hans Landesmann has been the artistic director of the Salzburg Biennale since 2007.

## **Dr. Birgit Meyer / Head Dramaturg at Volksoper Wien**

After completing her schooling in 1979, Cologne native Birgit Meyer began studying medicine at the University of Regensburg, studies which she completed with honours at Munich's Ludwig Maximilian University in 1986. There followed work as a scientific employee at the clinic "Klinikum rechts der Isar" in Munich (1988–89), as well as her doctorate in medicine (1989).

Beginning in 1986 and likewise in Munich, Meyer began studying theatre sciences with a specialisation in music theatre. Finally, in September of 1992, she accepted an offer to work as a dramaturge at the Tiroler Landestheater (State Theatre of Tirol), where she advanced to the post of lead dramaturge and continued working until 1999. Since September, Meyer has been head dramaturge and a member of the directorate at the Vienna Volksoper (1999–2003 under the artistic direction of Dominique Mentha, 2003–2007 under Rudolf Berger, and since 2007 under Robert Meyer).

During the summers of 1997 to 2001, Meyer worked regularly for the Salzburg Festival together with figures including Silvain Cambreling, Gustav Kuhn, Sir Simon Rattle, Michael Giehlen, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Kent Nagano, Peter Mußbach, Karl-Ernst and Ursel Herrmann, Christoph Marthaler, and Peter Sellars. In October of 2004, Meyer staged an international symposium entitled "Entartete Musik – Wieder entdeckt" [Degenerate Music Discovered Anew] at the Volksoper. In August of 2005 she held the concluding lecture of the symposium "Musiktheater heute—Was ist erlaubt?" [Music Theatre Today—What is Permitted?"] at the Salzburg Festival.

She has been an instructor for dramaturgy students at the Bavarian Theatre Academy in Munich since the spring/summer semester of 2004. For the autumn/winter semester of 2008/09, Meyer will also be teaching at the Institute of Musicology at the University of Vienna on the topic of programme design after the example of *Kebraus um St. Stephan* by Ernst Krenek.

June, 2009 will see the publication of her biography of the composer Walter Braunfels. Birgit Meyer is the designated artistic director of the Cologne Opera, a post which she will be assuming at the beginning of the 2009/10 season.

Vienna, March 2009

## **Dr. Angela Pachovsky / Editorial Manager of Musikverlag Doblinger**

\* 1964 in Vienna. Pachovsky studied musicology and Romance studies at the University of Vienna and received instrumental instruction on the piano and the cello. She completed her Dr. phil. in 1991. From 1991 to 1993 she was a research fellow at the Austrian Historical Institute in Rome (where, together with Leopold M. Kantner, she published a study on the history of the Sistine Chapel during the 19<sup>th</sup> century), and from 1994 to 1999 she worked on the FWF (Austrian Science Fund) research project on musical relationships between Austria and northern Italy during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which involved spending time in Milan and Venice. Pachovsky worked from 1995 onward as an editor at the publishing house Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag (on complete editions of the works by Anton Bruckner and Hugo Wolf), and she has been its Director of Publications since 2003. Since 1999, she has also been a member of the directorate of the publisher Musikverlag Doblinger (Vienna).

She has published herself on the topics of church music, opera history, orchestral practice and Anton Bruckner, as well as taken on the role of editor for the Anton Bruckner Complete Edition as well as for chamber music works at Doblinger.

## Neue Oper Wien



Neue Oper Wien was founded in 1990. It specialised in modern music theatre, thus ending the almost complete absence thereof in Vienna and in Austria at the beginning of the 1990s. Since 1994, Neue Oper Wien has adhered to the uncompromising policy of programming only works of the 20th and 21st centuries. New discoveries as well as world and territorial premières are central to the company's work. An additional aspect is the revival of modern opera repertoire that has disappeared from the stage over time. The longstanding Viennese enthusiasm for works by Benjamin Britten was touched off by Neue Oper Wien, which mounted the first Austrian performance of "Billy Budd" in 1996. And the first staged presentation of Lachenmann's "Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern" was realised by Neue Oper Wien in 2003 - this production was a sensational success and drew much international attention.

With neither its own venue nor a constant ensemble, Neue Oper Wien wishes to remain unburdened and flexible; its credo is not only to explore new worlds of sound, but also new spaces and locations. With the concept of seeking out venues according to the works to be performed, the spaces become part of the ensemble, the scenery is adapted closely to the space, and the acoustics of the new space are tried out and developed.

Under the leadership of Walter Kobéra, Neue Oper Wien demonstrates that innovation and audience acceptance are not mutually exclusive, and that "modern opera" and innovative stagings need not pose a "threat" to music lovers, but much rather give birth to intense discussion. Neue Oper Wien lives music theatre as a place to confront topical and social policy issues. The laboratory of "new music", where the composer, librettist and producer work together closely, will be continued and developed further in the years to come.



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