

# FESTSPIELE ZÜRICH:

Media information

Zurich, 12 March 2015

## **MoneyPowerLove – Shakespeare and other forces**

Festspiele Zürich Programme 2015

**The Festspiele Zürich 2015, held from 12 June to 12 July, is dedicated to the theme of “MoneyPowerLove – Shakespeare and other forces”. Providing a stage for the world of the great playwright, and consequently the world of the Renaissance, it invites visitors to come and discover not only theatrical performances but also opera, concerts, dance, exhibitions, debates and much more.**

The year 2015 lies exactly between the 450th anniversary of William Shakespeare’s birth (1564) and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death (1616). The Festspiele Zürich draws inspiration from this occasion not only to reflect on the course of his life and career but also on his epoch. The spotlight is shone on the fundamental themes of social co-existence in the Renaissance – money, power and love – and their corresponding representation in Shakespeare’s work. The cultural institutions taking part in the festival focus partly on historical and partly on contemporary aspects of these widely applicable themes around which the world continues to revolve today. With his opening address to the festival, Adolf Muschg will draw attention to the timeless significance of Shakespeare’s universal spirit and work.

Over 150 events held by 34 organisers at 26 different venues in the city will reflect the rich cultural life of Zurich and offer something to suit every taste.

## **Romeo and Juliet and other Shakespearean material in the Opera House and theatres**

The Opera House Zurich’s festival premiere, Bellini’s *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, was based on the same Italian source as Shakespeare’s tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. The Schauspielhaus hosts the most contemporary production of this work - directed by Jette Steckel from the Hamburg Thalia-Theater and set to music from the present day - at their Pfauen venue. Shakespeare’s tragedy *Hamlet* plunges the Schiffbau into a display of musical and visual fireworks when the British cult band The Tiger Lillies and the Danish Theater Republique join forces. At Theater Neumarkt, *Hamlet* is viewed from the perspective of two minor characters in Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencranz and Guildenstern are dead*. Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* can be seen not only at the Pfauen in Daniela Löffner’s revival of the opulent Schauspielhaus production, but also in the form of a musical midsummer night’s trauma entitled *My friend Puck!* in which Dominique Horwitz presents love’s confusion at the Theater Rigiblick. Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* provides the impetus for a display of “the ghostly spirits of Swiss colonialism” presented by Niklaus Helbling with the drama group Mass & Fieber in the Villa Patumbah and its park. Shakespeare’s sonnets form the background for *When love no longer is that which once it was*, a contemporary artistic exploration, created by the Gessnerallee Zürich and the Zurich drama group kraut\_produktion led by Michel Schröder. Shakespearean literary motifs serve as the reference for a number of highly popular performance poets in a slam poetry show at the Pfauen theatre. Around 500 film versions of Shakespeare’s works have been made, of which a small selection will be shown by the Filmpodium. Nothing less than the complete works of Shakespeare is what the ambitious Theater Rigiblick has in mind. During the course of just one evening, they will perform his entire output – “slightly abridged”, as one might expect.

## **Shakespeare in music and music without Shakespeare**

Shakespeare has inspired composers to put pen to paper throughout the ages – and not only with *Romeo and Juliet*. Resounding interpretations by Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn und Prokofiev will be given by the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra under conductors Lionel Bringuier, Gustavo Dudamel and Karlheinz Steffens. The Zürich Festspiele symposium will reflect on Shakespeare’s role in inspiring grand, mostly symphonic instrumental music in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Performances of Shakespeare’s plays without music are unthinkable. This is demonstrated by the Zurich Sing Academy with a Shakespearean programme featuring songs by Henry Purcell and John Dowland as well as choral compositions and even jazz. Those seeking to immerse themselves in a full immersion in

Renaissance music can do so at the Renaissance day in the Tonhalle. For a full day, choral music, lieder and instrumental music of the Renaissance in England and Italy can be heard, while readings and lectures expand upon the historical background. The leading roles here are taken by Hille Perl and her viola da gamba ensemble together with the Schola Heidelberg. The popular concert programme held again by Moods and the Museum Rietberg in the Summer Pavilion will fuse Renaissance music with jazz and improvisation.

A musical highlight of the festival will undoubtedly be the three piano matinées at which Sir András Schiff turns his attention to the three last sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. In the opening concert, Julia Fischer plays Beethoven's violin concerto.

### **Money, power and love in their varied historical facets**

By holding courses, debates, guided tours and much more, a range of cultural and educational institutions in Zurich examine the many different facets of the festival's theme. "MoneyPowerLove – the Renaissance world in dialogue" is the name given to a three-part event designed to give us a better understanding of the world of Renaissance Italy and Shakespeare's England. At the Zurich Börse (Stock Exchange), the subject is the finance industries of today and of that era; in the Rathaus, the relationships throughout the ages between art and power and power and morality plus Machiavellianism's role in politics is explored; and in the Summer Pavilion of the Museum Rietberg, Shakespeare's most famous and blissfully innocent lovers have their say. A star-studded panel discussion (Elisabeth Bronfen, Peter von Matt and Nike Wagner) chaired by Martin Meyer will embark on literary excursions into the history of the all-too-human, discussing "The power of love – and money" at the Pfauen theatre. A predominantly contemporary artistic view is presented by the Kunsthaus with the exhibition of a private collection of artworks looking at the connections between soul, spirit and physical expression – leading us to "Sense Uncertainty".

### **Midsummer night dreams**

It is not just theatres that will transport us to the land of midsummer night dreams. Within the context of "Opera for all", the Opera House Zürich's live transmission of "Aida" transforms the Sechseläutenplatz into an open-air venue with a summer festival atmosphere. A particularly inventive idea from Zurich University of the Arts in the Toni Areal leads to its celebration of the summer solstice on 21 June at 21.26 a.m. with a nocturnal musical-theatrical excursion following Shakespeare's trail. Anna Viebrock's stunning stage designs are given special recognition when this great artist is awarded the Zürich Festspiele Prize. The hall of the Main Station will once again serve as a grand and glitzy ballroom until the early hours of the morning with the Midsummer Night's Ball.

Dance until you drop is also on the programme for the finale celebration at the Gessnerallee Zürich. Tipped as a highlight is the performance of *As It Empties Out*, the greatest of dancer and choreographer Jefta van Dinther's own projects, whose wild and extremely physical style enjoys international acclaim. This will be followed by a lavish party with art interventions, bands and dance in and around the Gessnerallee.

### **Media contact**

Festspiele Zürich

Nicole Schwyzer, Communication and Marketing

Rämistrasse 4, 8001 Zürich

Tel: +41 44 269 90 92; Fax: +41 44 269 90 99

E-Mail: [nicole.schwyzer@festspiele-zuerich.ch](mailto:nicole.schwyzer@festspiele-zuerich.ch)

The Zurich Festival is organised jointly by Zurich Opera House, Schauspielhaus, Tonhalle Orchestra, Kunsthaus, and other cultural institutions within the city and canton of Zurich. Dedicated to a common theme, the festival provides the occasion for an annual summer meeting of the arts which reflects the diversity of Zurich's cultural life. [www.festspiele-zuerich.ch](http://www.festspiele-zuerich.ch)