

Théâtre National du Luxembourg and Musikkonzept Wien present

NEW ANGELS

THE STORY OF THE BLACK CAT



A Stage Work for tenor, two dancers and Baroque ensemble based on the novella »The Black Cat« by Edgar Allan Poe

Conceived by Martin Haselböck, Frank Hoffmann and Virgil Widrich

Musical conception by Martin Haselböck featuring the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and David Sylvian

Stage, visuals and film projections by Virgil Widrich



PREMIERE
Théâtre National du Luxembourg
19.11.2012

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THE STORY OF THE BLACK CAT



Stage Work for tenor, two dancers and Baroque ensemble based on the novella
»The Black Cat« by Edgar Allan Poe

Featuring the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and David Sylvian

CREATIVE TEAM

Concept: Martin Haselböck, Frank Hoffmann, Virgil Widrich

Music Director: Martin Haselböck

Director: Frank Hoffmann

Stage, visuals and film projections: Virgil Widrich

Digital painting and Animation: Oleg Prodeus

Costumes: Katharina Polheim

CAST

Singers: Christoph Genz or James Oxley

Dancers: Sylvia Camarda & Jean-Guillaume Weis

Ensemble (Luxembourg):

Soloists of Orchester Wiener Akademie & Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra Los Angeles

World premiere: November 19, 2012, Théâtre National du Luxembourg

Further dates: November 20. & 21., 2012 and December 18., 19. & 20., 2012

A co-production of Théâtre National du Luxembourg and Musikkonzept Wien
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<http://newangels.musikkonzept.org>

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CONTENT



A nameless person sits on death row, awaiting his execution. He has been convicted of murder. He has killed his own wife. But he does not understand: how did this happen? What possessed him to do this? He begins to tell his story.
The story of the black cat.

"... to-morrow I die, and to-day I would unburthen my soul. My immediate purpose is to place before the world, plainly, succinctly, and without comment, a series of mere household events. In their consequences, these events have terrified - have tortured - have destroyed me".
Edgar Allan Poe, »The Black Cat«

Three renowned artists in their respective creative fields – the Luxemburg-based theatre and film director **Frank Hoffmann**, Austrian conductor **Martin Haselböck**, and Academy Award-nominated Austrian film and multi-media artist **Virgil Widrich** – have created a multi-disciplinary project for music, dance and film. With a dramatic space created by Virgil Widrich, the acclaimed dancers **Sylvia Camarda** and **Jean-Guillaume Weis** perform to a soundtrack conceived by Martin Haselböck – using the unsettling music of contemporary English songwriter **David Sylvian** and arias from the cantatas of J.S. Bach, performed on stage by tenor and baroque ensemble – which underpins the journey into perdition and the abyss of a desperate murderer's soul as embodied in Edgar Allan Poe's novella.

The audience can expect an enthralling work of contrasts and extremes, from baroque ensemble (oboe, five strings and organ) to visual multi-media, from Bach to Rock, including singing, dancing and acting. The soundtrack incorporates additional music by Ernst Krenek, Martin Haselböck und Ülo Krigul.

After its opening in Luxembourg, New Angels will also perform in Vienna and Los Angeles. A world tour is planned during the following seasons.

NEW ANGELS by Edgar Allen Poe – Summary

A condemned man in a prison cell, who is awaiting his execution the following day, narrates the story of the black cat. Before he dies he wants to unburden his soul and give an account of the “mere household events” that have destroyed his life. Since the narrator does not trust his own senses any more he hopes his audience will have a more logical approach to the now unfolding story:

The narrator was always very fond of animals. He and his wife have many, including a black cat called “Pluto”. This cat was especially fond of the narrator and his wife. Their friendship lasts for many years, until the narrator’s character experiences a radical alteration for the worse due to his excessive use of alcohol. One night the narrator returns home intoxicated and believes the cat is avoiding his presence. Out of a fiendish malevolence he takes out a pen-knife and deliberately cuts out one of the cat’s eyes. When reason returns the following morning the narrator experiences horror and remorse for what he did, but drowns all memory of the deed in wine.

The cat recovers but flees in terror whenever his master approaches. In the beginning the narrator is remorseful but the feeling soon gives place to irritation: “And then came, as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of PERVERSENESS.” He leads the cat to the garden and suddenly kills it by hanging it on a tree.

That night the narrator is aroused from sleep by the cry of fire: The whole house mysteriously is burning. He escapes with his wife and with his servant.

The next day the narrator returns to the ruins of his house. On the last remaining wall he finds the imprint of a gigantic cat hanging by its neck on a rope. This image first horrifies him, and only gradually does he find a logical explanation for it: someone must have thrown the dead cat into the bedroom to wake him up during the fire. Still, for months the narrator cannot rid himself of the phantasm of the cat and he regrets its loss. He starts to look for a new cat, and one day, sitting drunken in a tavern, he finds one strikingly similar cat, which is even missing one eye. The new cat is delighted to be brought into the home of the narrator. Very soon the new cat starts to follow the narrator’s every step until he begins to fear the creature more and more. It is with terror that the narrator discovers a mark of white hair on the cat having formed the shape of the gallows!

One day the cat accompanies the narrator into the cellar of the house. It gets under his feet and almost trips him down to the floor. The narrator takes an axe and tries to kill the cat, but his wife stops him. In a “rage more than demoniacal” he hits his wife’s head and kills her with one stroke. The narrator removes bricks from a wall to conceal the body, hides the remains of his wife inside, and walls the whole up again. He leaves no trace and is satisfied with the result. He intends to kill the cat as well, but the cat has disappeared.

On the fourth day after the murder the police come into the house. The narrator shows them the cellar from end to end with highest confidence in his safety. The police find nothing. “By the bye, gentlemen, this – this is a very well constructed house.” To prove it he knocks against the wall with a stick on the spot where his wife is buried. Suddenly a wailing shriek like a cry from hell can be heard. The police destroy the wall and uncover the wife’s body. In horror the narrator sees the cat on the corpse’s head and realizes his deadly mistake: “I had walled the monster up within the tomb!”

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NOTES FROM CREATORS



Martin Haselböck:

The music of the narrator-protagonist was penned by J.S. Bach. Seven of the most beautiful tenor arias, accompanied by baroque ensemble, enable the sentenced murderer in his cell to reflect on the monstrous events that led to the dreadful deed. The music of the descriptive flashbacks is by David Sylvian, one of the most unique, unconventional, and uncompromising songwriters of our time. Together with virtuoso instrumental works of Bach, the work features four big dance scenes. Dramatic highlights of the narration are emphasized by the overlaying of additional sound treatments. This remix was developed by me, incorporating some additional music and sonic elements by Ernst Krenek, myself und Ülo Krigul.

Frank Hoffmann:

The stage design is foremost a film – moving images, scenes, stories. The film opens up to the stage via three screens. In the third dimension, the singer, the dancers and the musicians merge with the virtual space in order to become one total spatial experience, acting on the audience as a single entity. Right out of that space – the traumatic place of the dark romantic Poe – the directing follows the emotional, the unconscious lead towards J.S. Bach's celestially desperate music and the sinister melancholic sounds of David Sylvian.

Virgil Widrich:

The challenge of the film for "New Angels" was to create a work that escapes the rectangular screen and its conventional cinematic rules. Our film is the stage set – representing the state of mind of an alcoholic going completely mad.

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ABOUT THE TITLE

The title **New Angels** refers to a painting by Paul Klee called *Angelus Novus*, and represents, according to Walter Benjamin, the Angel of History, who is blown backwards into the future by a storm, as in front of him, the heap of debris grows into the sky:

"A Klee painting named Angelus Novus shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress".

from Walter Benjamin: Thesis on the Philosophy of History

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LIST OF MUSIC USED AND ADAPTED

J. S. Bach	Und wenn der harte Todesschlag, aria from Cantata BWV 124 <i>Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht</i> Gavotte 1 and 2 from the the Suite D- Major, BWV 1068
David Sylvian	Wonderful World (taken from Nine Horses album <i>Snow Borne Sorrow</i>)
Bach	Hebt euer Haupt empor, aria from Cantata BWV 70 <i>Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!</i>
Sylvian	Serotonin (taken from Nine Horses album <i>Snow Borne Sorrow</i>)
Bach	Seht, seht wie reisst wie bricht, wie fällt die Welt, aria from Cantata BWV 92 <i>Ich hab in Gottes Herz und Sinn</i>
Sylvian	The Good Son (taken from the album <i>Blemish</i>)
Bach	Allegro (3rd Movement) from the Concerto c-Minor for Oboe, Violin and Strings, BWV 1060
Sylvian	Snow Borne Sorrow (taken from Nine Horses album <i>Snow Borne Sorrow</i>)
Sylvian	Department of Dead letters (taken from the album <i>Manafon</i>)
Bach	Oh Ewigkeit du machst mir bange, aria from Cantata BWV 20 <i>O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort</i>
Bach	Forlane from the Suite C-Major, BWV 1066
Bach	Bäche von gesalznen Zähren, aria from Cantata BWV 21 <i>Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis</i>
Sylvian	Blemish (taken from the album <i>Blemish</i>)
Bach	Allegro (1st Movement) from Concerto for Violin and Orchestra d-Minor, BWV 1052R
Sylvian	Anomaly at Taw head (taken from the album <i>Manafon</i>)
Bach	Es reisset euch ein schrecklich Ende, aria from Cantata BWV 90 <i>Es reißet euch ein schrecklich Ende</i> Choral „Brunnquell aller Güter“, BWV 445 from <i>Schemelli's Musicalischem Gesangsbuch</i>
Sylvian	Atom and Cell (taken from Nine Horses album <i>Snow Borne Sorrow</i>) 125 Spheres (taken from the album <i>Blemish</i>)
Bach	Bleibt ihr Engel, bleibt bei mir, aria from Cantata BWV 19 <i>Es erhub sich ein Streit</i>

Musical Arrangement of Bach BWV 445, 1052 R, 1060, 1068, 1066: Martin Haselböck

Additional Music used in the Soundtrack:

Martin Haselböck: Prelude

Excerpts from:

Ernst Krenek: Orga-Nastro for Organ and Electronic Tape, op. 212

Ülo Krigul: Rocks and Rolls for Electric Guitar and Organ

Martin Haselböck: Organ Improvisations

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MAKING OF



NEW ANGELS

BIOGRAPHIES

Martin Haselböck Music Director



The Austrian conductor Martin Haselböck hails from a famous family of musicians. Early in his career he gained an international reputation as an organ soloist, working with conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Lorin Maazel, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Riccardo Muti and many others. In 1985 he established the period-instrument Orchester Wiener Akademie. In addition to performing an annual series of concerts in Vienna's Musikverein, he and his orchestra are regular guests and resident artists in concert halls and opera productions around the world. He now enjoys a busy career as a guest conductor with the world's leading orchestras, and has enjoyed a distinguished career as an opera conductor since making his debut at the Göttingen Handel Festival. He was the first to stage new productions in Germany of the great Mozart operas on period instruments, and in 1991 his production of *Don Giovanni* was awarded the Mozart prize by the City of Prague. Martin Haselböck was appointed Music Director of the Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra in Los Angeles in 2004.

With the American actor John Malkovich and Austrian director Michael Sturminger, Martin Haselböck developed the theatre dramas *The Infernal Comedy* about the killer Jack Unterweger and *The Giacomo Variations* about the life of Giacomo Casanova. Martin Haselböck has received numerous honours and awards, including the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art (das Österreichische Ehrenkreuz für Wissenschaft und Kunst), the Prague Mozart Prize in 1991, and the 2011 and 2012 Hungarian Liszt Prizes.

Frank Hoffmann Director



Frank Hoffmann studied Romance and German philology, as well as philosophy in Luxembourg and Heidelberg, Germany, where he received a doctorate in 1983. He worked as freelance director among others in Berlin, Paris, Cologne, Basel, and Stockholm. In 1996, Hoffmann founded the "Théâtre National du Luxembourg", supported by the Cultural Ministry of Luxembourg, of which he is still the director. In September 2004, he took over as artistic director and chief executive officer of the "Ruhrfestspiele Recklingshausen". In 2011, his contract was extended until 2015 by the festival's board of directors. Since 1984, Frank Hoffmann has directed more than 100 national and international productions in Germany, France, Luxembourg, and Switzerland. His productions have been invited to numerous international festivals, including the Bonn Biennale, Mülheimer Theatertage, Mannheimer Schillertage, Heidelberger Stückemarkt, Ibsen Festival in Oslo, the Festival of European Theatre and the Strindberg-Festival, Stockholm, the Plodiv International Festival (Bulgaria), Sibiu International Festival (Romania), International Festival of Classical Theatre, Almagro (Spain), and the Prague Festival of the German Language. For his work, Frank Hoffmann received several prizes and awards, among them the prize for best director for his movie „Schacko Klak“ at the Festival in Tehran, and the Prix Lions for his complete theatrical work. In addition, "Theater Heute" named him young director of the year.

Virgil Widrich Stage and Visuals



Virgil Widrich, born 1967 in Salzburg, works on numerous exhibitions, multimedia- and film productions. His short film "Copy Shop" won 35 international awards and was nominated for the Oscar.

"Fast Film" premiered in Cannes 2003 and won 36 awards.

In 2009 he was the artistic director of the exhibition „Linz. City in Luck“ which was part of that city's year as European Capital of Culture, in 2010 he was responsible for the exhibition „90 Years of the Salzburg Festival“. Virgil Widrich is co-founder and CEO of checkpointmedia AG in Vienna, which is one of the most successful companies of the "Vienna creative industry". He is also Professor for "Art & Science" at the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

Virgil Widrich lives and works in Vienna.

Oleg Prodeus Digital Painting and Animation



Oleg Prodeus is a multimedia artist and producer, a graphic & motion graphic designer, a songwriter and singer, a multi-instrumentalist and a music producer. He was born in the former Soviet Union and has been living and working in Vienna since 1990.

In the 90s, he worked mainly in various theatres as singer, musician and actor. In 1997 he wrote and produced his first solo music album with a second following in 2000. In 2004 he wrote and produced his first film music. During this period, he also occasionally toured Austria with his various musical projects. In the year 2000, he founded his own multimedia and music company, and, as creative director, animator, graphic, multimedia and sound designer successfully produced and completed many animation films, advertising and multimedia projects. Within the last few years, he has started to increase his work in the fields of modern visual arts, graphic- and film collages, digital paintings and has been awarded various commissions for art exhibitions at various museums, both in Austria and abroad. In the year 2012, Oleg published his third solo music project "The 13".

Katharina Polheim Costumes



After growing up in Switzerland, she studied at fashion school ESMOD in Paris. In Vienna, she successfully completed the master class for stage- and film design at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Since 1995, she has been working as freelance stage- and costume designer in Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and Austria. Her works so far at the Landestheater Niederösterreich: set and costumes for "Sinbad the Sailor" and "Puenktchen and Anton", as well as costumes for "Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver".

Jean-Guillaume Weis Dance



Jean-Guillaume Weis has danced with Pina Bausch Tanztheater, Mark Morris Dance Group, Tanztheater Basel and others. Through his own and other companies' work he has participated and collaborated with many composers, conductors, musicians, actors and directors across the world. Since 1998 he has danced mostly in his own work and choreographs for his company, Jean-Guillaume Weis & Dancers. He performs regularly as a guest-artist with other companies and in various art and theatre projects as a dancer, choreographer, performer and actor. Since 1998 he has choreographed numerous full length and shorter pieces that were performed in Belgium, Germany, France, Poland, Luxembourg and the United States. JGW has taught classes and workshops over many years in ballet, modern/contemporary dance as well as his own work - repertoire, creating new material, improvisation and movement research- in Luxembourg and abroad.

Sylvia Camarda Dance



Young dance virtuoso and choreographer; Sylvia Carmarda develops a universe and a style appropriate to each production. She endeavours to use her technique and boundless energy in the service of a physical and generous dance, notable for the carnal presence of the body. She then presents this in choreographic and theatrical language of obvious force and sexuality.

Luxembourgish dancer and choreographer, Sylvia Carmarda studied at the Rosella Hightower School in Cannes and at the London Contemporary Dance School, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in 2000.

As a dancer, having worked on various projects with Philippe Egli in Switzerland and Philippe Talard in Luxembourg, she joined the Ballets C. de la B. in 2002 for the production of Koen Augustijnen's Just another landscape for some jukebox money.

She then worked with Jan Fabre on three different productions: Je suis sang in 2005; as a co-producer and dancer in Requiem pour une metamorphose in 2007; as a dancer in I am a mistake also in 2007.

In 2005-2006 she joined the adventure of Cirque du Soleil and participated in their North American tour with the show Delirium. As a young choreographer she produced three shows: Only the lonely, a solo that premiered at Hivernales of the Festival d'Avignon; Crash, a solo presented at the festival of Sibiu, and lastly she choreographed Absolutely Fabulous, a trio about football.

She also choreographed the dance extracts for the films of Luxembourgish director Andy Bausch, and proudly participated as Royston Maldoom's assistant for the Dance2007 project – part of Luxembourg's year of culture. Her company Missdeluxedanceco! presented her newest production Conscienza di terrore at the Grand Théâtre in June 2009. In 2009 she has also continued touring with Jan Fabre with their earlier productions. In Luxembourg, Sylvia Camarda was responsible for the choreography of various dance productions, two of them for the Theatre National.

James Oxley Tenor



James Oxley has appeared at all the major concert halls in London, at Symphony Hall Birmingham and Philharmonic Hall Liverpool, and notable UK concert credits include Missa Solemnis with Heinrich Schiff and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Stravinsky Renard with Psappha at the BBC Proms, Haydn Creation and Mozart Great Mass with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Handel Alexander's Feast with Northern Sinfonia and Nicholas McGegan. His engagements have taken him throughout Europe, especially to France where he has worked with Philippe Herreweghe, Hervé Niquet and Christophe Rousset. Equally at home on the operatic stage he has sung the roles of Lensky and Belmonte at the Opera de Rennes, Lucano in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at English National Opera, and Ferrando *Così fan tutte*, Steersman *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the title role in *Candide* at the Opera de Rouen, Bob Boles Peter Grimes for Opéra-Théâtre de St-Etienne, and Acis and Galatea at the Reinsberg Festival conducted by Martin Haselböck. This year he will make his debut at Theater Dortmund singing the title

role in the high-tenor version of Gluck's *Orphée*.

Christoph Genz Tenor



The Erfurt-born tenor Christoph Genz received his first musical training as a member of the St. Thomas' Boys Choir in Leipzig. He continued his studies in musicology at King's College Cambridge where he was also a member of King's College Choir. He studied voice under Hans-Joachim Beyer at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Leipzig and with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. He won first prize at the International Singing Competition in Grimsby, England and the first prize at the International J.S.Bach-Competition in Leipzig. Christoph Genz has been engaged for concerts, recitals and opera productions in Europe, Asia and the USA. His discography contains more than 50 CD and DVD recordings of operas, oratorios, songs and arias. Plans for 2012 include a tour with Thomanerchor Leipzig/Gewandhausorchester to South Korea, Japan and England (Matthew Passion), a tour with La Petite Bande/Sigiswald Kuijken (Matthew Passion), an opera production at the Schwetzingen Festival as well as concerts and recitals at Musikverein Vienna, Leipzig Gewandhaus and Cologne, Paris, Amsterdam.

David Sylvian Songs



At the beginning of the 1980s, David Sylvian was the lead singer of the band Japan and was epitomized as the androgynous embodiment of the New-Romantic-movement. 20 years and two handfuls of impressive solo albums later, the pop-critics described him as "creative aesthete" (Berliner Morgenpost), and as "aristocrat of darkness" (Berliner Zeitung). Sylvian's solo career started in 1982 and was influenced by styles such as Jazz, Avant-garde, Ambient, Electronic Music, and Progressive Rock; albums in cooperation with Robert Fripp and Can-pioneer Holger Czukay were released. In the last 15 years, Sylvian has freed himself more and more from the influence of the music companies, setting up his own record label Samadhi Sound, on which he has released several acclaimed solo albums and recorded the work of other uncompromising artists. The permission for the use and adaptation of David Sylvian's recordings has been granted upon arrangement with the composer and his management, Opium Arts Ltd.

MUSIKKONZEPT Veranstaltungsservice GmbH

Dean Kustra

Reisnerstraße 28/11,

A-1030 Vienna

Tel/Fax: +43 1 712 7707

Mobile: +43 676 608 63 44

Email: d.kustra@musikkonzept.org

Website: www.musikkonzept.org

