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Wolfgang Gussmann
Set Designer

Born in Oldenburg, Germany, Wolfgang Gussmann is one of the opera world's most renowned set designers.

After graduating, he first worked as a painter of theatre sets before being engaged by stage director/designer Herbert Wernicke as his personal assistant. He worked as an assistant on more than 20 productions before being engaged as a set/costume designer in his own right. His first such engagement, in 1979, was for the opera house in Darmstadt.

Since then, he has been working as a freelance set and costume designer with stage directors such as Harry Kupfer, Johannes Schaaf and Reto Nickler, but most often with Willy Decker and Andreas Homoki. There is considerable demand worldwide for revivals and co-productions of works created by Wolfgang Gussmann in conjunction with Willy Decker and Andreas Homoki. These include Decker and Gussmann's *Der fliegende Holländer*, presented at the Teatro Regio Torino; *Don Carlo*, redesigned for the Teatr Wielki Warsaw; and *Billy Budd*, also redesigned, for the Mikhailovsky Theater in St. Petersburg. The Metropolitan Opera New York and the Nederlandse Opera Amsterdam have performed several revivals of *La traviata*, another Decker/Gussmann production that has acquired 'cult' status since its original premiere at the Salzburg Festival in 2005. In 2013, the Teatro Colón Buenos presented the Homoki/Gussmann production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

His output has been prolific with over 150 productions for opera houses such as: the Vienna State Opera; the State Operas of Munich, Hamburg, Dresden and Stuttgart; Deutsche Oper and Komische Oper Berlin; Leipzig and Cologne Opera; the Ruhrtriennale and the Salzburg Festival; the Bastille, Palais Garnier and Châtelet in Paris; De Nederlandse Opera in Amsterdam and La Scala di Milano. The impressive list of his engagements also includes the opera houses of Florence, Bologna, Venice, Genoa, Naples, Barcelona, Madrid, Geneva, Lyon, Montpellier, Seville, Oslo, Copenhagen, Antwerp, Brussels, Santa Fe and San Francisco.

In the 2013/14 season, Wolfgang Gussmann worked with Willy Decker on a new production of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* at the Zürich Opera House, as well as with Andreas Homoki on *Lohengrin* at the Vienna State Opera. The following season he worked with Willy Decker designing sets and costumes for two productions in Zürich (*Lohengrin* and Britten's *Turn of the Screw*) whilst the Decker/Gussmann production of *Death in Venice* was revived in Madrid.

More recent engagements include: revivals of *Káťa Kabanová* and *Turandot* in Oslo; *Lulu* in Vienna; *Tristan und Isolde* in Tokyo; *Werther* in Barcelona and Prague; and in Zürich, *Das Land des Lächelns*, as well as a German-language production of Jonathan Dove's *The Enchanted Pig* (*Das verzauberte Schwein*), directed by Claudia Blerch. 2019 also saw the staging of the new Gussmann/Homoki production of Verdi's *Nabucco*, also at the Zürich Opera House.

Besides winning numerous critical awards in France, Italy and Spain, he was awarded the prestigious Order of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in 2002, honouring his contributions to the cultural life of France.

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