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Zürich, 15 June 2021

SOUGHT AND FOUND

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NEW BALLET DIRECTOR FROM 2023/24

Renowned choreographer Cathy Marston will take over as new Ballet Director and Chief Choreographer of the Ballett Zürich. For an initial period of two years, this British-born, Swiss-bred artist will succeed **Christian Spuck** for the 2023/24 season, after he takes over artistic directorship of the **Staatsballett Berlin**. Spuck has successfully led the Ballett Zürich since 2012, and his switch to Berlin with the 2023/24 season will see him leading Germany's largest independent ballet company.

Cathy Marston received her dance training in Cambridge and at the Royal Ballet School in London. From 1994-1999 she danced with the Ballett Zürich, the Ballett des Luzerner Theaters, and the Konzert Theater Bern. She was an Associate Artist of the Royal Opera House in London from 2002-2006 and Ballet Director at the Konzert Theater Bern from 2007-2013. While at the latter, she created countless world premieres as principal choreographer, and led the ballet from the brink of closure to a flourishing period of ensemble work.

Marston has been active as a successful and sought-after freelance choreographer for years, appearing as a guest at numerous companies and institutions the world over. She has created works for the Royal Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballett, the English National Ballet, the Finnish National Ballet, the Ballet Black, Danza Contemporánea de Cuba, as well as for Opera Australia and the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts. In recent years, she's appeared more often in the United States, appearing with the San Francisco Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre, and the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. Engagements closer to home have seen her works take the stage at the Oper Graz, as well as with the ballet companies in Basel, St. Gallen and at the Musiktheater im Revier.

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Cathy Marston offers new perspectives to existing narratives, engaging with historical personalities in ways both unusual and original, finding unexpected common ground in the process. She has won several awards for her choreographic work, including a South Bank Sky Arts Award and the British National Dance Award. She was awarded with the Excellence in International Dance prize in 2020 from the «International Institute for Dance and Theatre».

Cathy Marston (Ballet Director and Chief Choreographer designate): *«I am thrilled to take forward the direction of Zurich Ballet, building on the wonderful work of my colleague, Christian Spuck. Under his direction Zurich Ballett has welcomed many of the definitive choreographic voices of our time and been a hothouse of creation. I look forward to expanding this portfolio even further through my own choreography and curation, collaborating with the company's versatile and beautiful dancers as well as the brilliant production team, and bringing the era of Andreas Homoki at Zurich Opernhaus to an inspiring conclusion».*

SEARCH COMMITTEE BEGINS ITS WORK

The Board of Directors has created a six-member search committee to find a new artistic director for the Opernhaus Zürich, whose tenure will begin with the 2025/26 season. The successor to Andreas Homoki – who has decided to bring his tenure to a close in 2025, after 13 years – is set to be presented by the end of this year. The committee will target qualified candidates with international reputations for the leadership of Switzerland's largest cultural institution.

Leading the committee is Markus Notter, President of the Board of Directors of the Opernhaus AG. The other members of the committee include **Jacqueline Fehr**, president of the Cantonal Government, **Madeline Herzog**, Director of the Department of Culture, and **Peter Wuffli**, Vice-President of the Board of Directors. With **Laura Berman**, Artistic Director of the Staatsoper Hannover, the committee gains an experienced and distinguished expert in musical theater. Her position as an external advisor will receive additional support. The committee is rounded out by Christian Berner, the current Commercial Director of the Opernhaus.

DEVELOPMENTS IN COMMERCIAL DIRECTION

Christian Berner will join the Board of Directors of Opernhaus AG with the start of the 2023/24 season. As Delegate of the Board of Directors, he will continue to take on operational assignments. Berner has been employed at the Opernhaus since 2008 and was initially charged with undertaking the preparation and introduction of Homoki's artistic directorship. He has led the house as Commercial Director since 2013 and served as Deputy Artistic Director alongside Andreas Homoki. Christian Berner's move to the Board of Directors will guarantee continuity in the management of the house extending beyond the change in artistic direction.

He will be succeeded by the current Deputy Commercial Director, Marc Meyer, starting with the 2023/24 season. Meyer (44) has held his position since 2016. He completed his studies in dance in Zurich and Antwerp and had numerous engagements before studying law at the Universität Zürich and passing the bar exam. After working in the legal and business sectors, Meyer joined the Opernhaus Zürich in 2009 as a legal advisor. After an additional two-year program, he obtained the title of «Executive Master in Business Administration» from the Hochschule St. Gallen and was named Deputy Commercial Director of the Opernhaus Zürich in 2016. Marc Meyer also presided over the professional association Danse Suisse from 2016 to 2021.

Markus Notter, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Opernhaus AG: *«A change in artistic direction is an enormous challenge for any house. Christian Berner's appointment as Delegate to the Board of Directors will provide excellent support for the preparation and implementation of this period of transition. The appointment of Marc Meyer as Commercial Director is an efficient further development. In this way, the board of directors guarantees a reliable and continuous management structure. I am pleased that we have won Cathy Marston, an internationally renowned and respected choreographer, as Ballet Director. We thank Christian Spuck from the bottom of our hearts for the decisive role he has played during Homoki's tenure at the Opernhaus».*