

THE WITTELSBACHS MUSIC & ART IN MUNICH

WEDNESDAY 20 – MONDAY 25 MARCH 2019 (6 DAYS)

LECTURERS: TOM DUNCAN & GUDRUN MOUNTAIN

£2375

- Discover the Wittelsbach Dukes, Electors & Kings of Bavaria & their elegant capital, Munich
- Three wonderful palaces with amazing contents & superb museums & art galleries
- Musical patronage a central theme
- Excellent operas including Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* (Anje Kampe as Minnie), Donizetti's *Roberto Devereaux* (Edita Gruberova as Elisabetta), & Wagner's *Parsifal* (with René Pape & Nina Stemme)
- Superior 4* hotel in the historic central district



Munich, Nymphenburg Palace

OVERVIEW

The extraordinary story of the Wittelsbach Dukes, Electors and Kings of Bavaria is the theme of this tour as we explore their varied and remarkable patronage of music, architecture and the visual arts. As a 'court' city Munich had a marvellous musical tradition, particularly noted for its operatic performances. Indeed, music lovers owe King Ludwig II of Bavaria thanks for supporting the 'impossible' Richard Wagner at a vital point in his life. This level of state support continues today and Munich's Opera House is one of Europe's most important, a vibrant artistic and music milieu, and our formal visits will be enlivened by three wonderful operas, including *Parsifal*, at the Bavarian State Opera.

In the early eighteenth century, Bavaria, in common with all the other German Electorates and Principalities, embraced the late Baroque of Italy, imported from Rome and Turin. By about 1725, French influence began to lighten this style with a particularly delicious variety of the Rococo, represented by the extraordinary Asam brothers' church of St John Nepomuk. Under the Elector-Duke, Maximilian III Joseph (1745 - 1777), Munich consolidated this 'Golden' rococo age, perhaps best typified by the exquisite Residenz Theatre by François de Cuvilliers and the delicate interiors of both Schleissheim and Nymphenburg just outside the city.

Bavaria was 'upgraded' to a kingdom in 1806, with much expanded territories, and the enriched state treasury was able to fund an extraordinary period of building. It was transformed according to new ideas of first, classical dignity under Ludwig I and second, romantic eclecticism under melancholy Ludwig II, Wagner's doomed patron.

Participants will also be able to book tickets for up to three operas including Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* with Anje Kempe as Minnie, Donizetti's lyric tragedy *Roberto Devereux* with Edita Gruberova as Elisabetta and a wonderfully cast Wagner's *Parsifal* with Michael Nagy as Amfortas, René Pape as Gunemanz, Burkhard Fritz as Parsifal and Nina Stemme as Kundry, conducted by Kirill Petrenko. We have secured excellent seats in the first two categories and as tickets for these performances are likely to be in great demand, early booking is highly recommended. We shall need to know which performances you wish to attend as soon as possible.

We shall be based in the comfortable **4* Superior Hotel Platzl**. Located in the heart of the historic centre, it is within easy walking distance (five minutes) of the Opera House. The visit will be co-guided by Tom Duncan and our excellent local specialist, Gudrun Mountain.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1: Wednesday 20 March – We fly from Heathrow arriving in **Munich** early afternoon. We transfer by coach to our hotel, the **4* Superior Platzl**, ideally situated in the centre of the old city. There will be some free time for a snack lunch (not included) after which we have an introductory walk around the city centre. The **Marienplatz** with its Neo-gothic **Rathaus** is situated at the core of the **Aldstadt**, the old medieval centre. The nearby

Frauenkirche is the most important monument to survive from that time. The **Pieterskirche** is the oldest parish church in Munich. Medieval in origin, transformed in the Baroque period, badly damaged during World War II and subsequently rebuilt, it will be the perfect introduction to the splendours of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the finest expression of this style is the nearby **Asamkirche**, one of Europe's unknown gems, the perfect end to our introductory walk. Later that evening there will be a group dinner in a local restaurant. Wine, water and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

Day 2: Thursday 21 March – Successive Bavarian monarchs looked to ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration reflected not only in the architecture of Leo von Klenze but also in several museums devoted to the ancient world, such as the **Staatliche Antikensammlungen**, where the displays bring the ancient world to life. After a group lunch we visit the Wittelsbach family's great city palace, the **Residenz**. Built round a series of courtyards, the interiors are remarkable and our visit will include the State Apartments, the Treasury and the Court Theatre by François de Cuvillies. There is no opera tonight and the evening will be free.

Day 3: Friday 22 March – The first of the city's two great art galleries will be the focus of this morning's visit. The **Alte Pinakothek** is where the best old masters from the several discrete collections formed by the three branches of the Wittelsbach family are now united. They are quite breath-taking and range across all the major European schools. Our visit will be broken by coffee and we have a late group lunch after which the rest of the afternoon will be free. We return to our hotel in plenty of time for tonight's opera performance, Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* with Anje Kempe as Minnie, John Lundgren as Jack Rance and Brandon Jovanovich as Dick Johnson; the conductor will be James Gaffigan.

Day 4: Saturday 23 March – This morning we go by coach to **Schleissheim**, one of two wonderful country palace complexes which we shall visit. There are several palaces and lesser structures which make up the complex and the **New Palace** will be the focus of our visit. This is a very handsome essay in late Baroque with subsequent alterations, with some lovely paintings. After a group lunch in a local restaurant we return to Munich and the rest of the afternoon will be free. The opera tonight will be Donizetti's lyric tragedy *Roberto Devereux* with Edita Gruberova as Elisabetta and Charles Castronovo as Devereux; the conductor will be Friedrich Haider.

Day 5: Sunday 24 March – The Neue Pinakothek will be closed for repairs during our visit (we shall see highlights from its collection elsewhere) and we shall visit in its place the **Pinakothek der Moderne**, one of the best collections of modern and contemporary art in Germany. After a group lunch, we return to the hotel for a short break before we attend our final opera, Wagner's *Parsifal*. The wonderful cast includes Michael Nagy as Amfortas, René Pape as Gunemanz, Burkhard Fritz as Parsifal and Nina Stemme as Kundry; the conductor will be Kirill Petrenko.

Day 6: Monday 25 March – We drive out to **Nymphenburg**, the family's favourite summer residence. Here, a mixture of baroque, rococo and neoclassical interiors are furnished appropriately, the ensemble set amidst a fine landscape park. We continue to the airport for our return flight.

Operas: You will be able to book up to three operas – Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* on 22 March, Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* on 23 March and Wagner's *Parsifal* on 24 March. Details of how to book tickets will be sent to participants upon receipt of your booking form.

PRACTICALITIES

Price £2375 **Price without flights** £2250 **Deposit** £375 **Single Supplement** £395 (Double for Sole Use)

Hotel 5 nights with breakfast at the 4* Superior Hotel Platzl, Munich

Flights British Airways

Outward: **BA930** Depart London Heathrow (Terminal 5) **0955**, arrive Munich **1250**

Return: **BA953** Depart Munich **1555**, arrive London Heathrow (Terminal 5) **1700**

Price includes 1 dinner & 4 lunches with water, wine & coffee, all local transfers, entry fees & gratuities, services of Tom Duncan & local tour guide, Gudrun Mountain

Not included Travel to / from Heathrow, 4 dinners, 2 lunches & Opera tickets



CICERONI TRAVEL
2 The Square, Aynho, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 3BL
Telephone +44 (0) 1869 811167 Fax +44 (0) 1869 811188
Email info@ciceroni.co.uk Website www.ciceroni.co.uk

