

# Opera Augusta gUG

## Bel Canto Masterclass (Augsburg, Oktober 2026)

Opera Augusta gUG, a concert organization based in Augsburg, and the Tonkünstlerverband Augsburg-Schwaben e.V. are teaming together to offer eight young singers at the beginning of their careers the opportunity to take part in an opera gala with orchestra and to participate in a masterclass focused on bel canto repertoire.

### WHO WE ARE

Opera Augusta is a non-profit concert association and opera company founded in 2024 in Augsburg, Germany. Part of our mission is to support young professional musicians and work towards a balanced and varied cultural scene in our region.

The Tonkünstlerverband advocates for the professional interests, social concerns, and working conditions of performing artists, music teachers, and composers. The Augsburg regional association (TKVA) represents individuals in the Augsburg-Swabia region and beyond who work professionally in various areas of music. In addition, it regularly organizes concerts (including contemporary works), professional development events such as workshops and lectures, support programs for young talent, music weeks for young musicians, concerts with students of members, and more.

### ABOUT THE MASTERCLASS

We are offering eight singers of all voice types the opportunity to take part in a multi-day masterclass focusing on the bel canto composers of the 19th century. At the end of the masterclass, an orchestral concert will take place in Augsburg in which all singers will perform. The language of instruction will be primarily German and English.

### WHAT WE ARE OFFERING

- One and a half hours of voice lessons (2 x 45 minutes) with Kate Allen (mezzo-soprano, Staatstheater Augsburg)
- Two hours of coaching with Opera Augusta pianists: Justin Pambianchi (Opera Augusta, Rossini Opera Festival, Leopold Mozart College of Music), Sergio Fundarò (University of Music and Theatre Munich), and Volker Hiemeyer (Staatstheater Augsburg, Leopold Mozart College of Music)
- An audition workshop
- Workshops on style and ornamentation
- Career and audition counseling
- Participation in an professionally recorded opera gala with the Opera Augusta Orchestra

The masterclass focuses exclusively on early 19th-century bel canto repertoire (Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini).

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY**

The masterclass is designed for singers who are currently studying at a conservatory/music university or who have completed their vocal studies at a higher institution within the last three years. Applications from singers of all voice types are welcome.

As this project is intended to support young artists at the beginning of their professional careers, applications from singers already represented by a private agency will not be considered.

## **DATES**

- Application deadline: April 10, 2026
- Auditions: Late April / early May 2026 (results will be announced at the end of May)
- Masterclass: October 20–29, 2026
- Opera Gala: October 30, 2026

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE OPERA GALA**

The opera gala will take place on October 30 in the Kleiner Goldener Saal in Augsburg under the musical direction of Justin Pambianchi. All singers participating in the masterclass will perform in the gala. Musical preparation for the gala will take place alongside the masterclass.

The concert will be professionally recorded and the recording will be sent to the singers. The works to be performed on the gala will be chosen during the summer of 2026. Participants are expected to prepare the repertoire independently and thoroughly before the beginning of the masterclass.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

The following application materials are required:

- A letter of intent
- A CV/resume
- Two links to video recordings made no earlier than September 1, 2024, uploaded to a video sharing service (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo, or similar platforms). Please do not send video files as attachments.

Interested singers may send their complete application documents by April 10, 2026 to: [info@opera-augusta.de](mailto:info@opera-augusta.de)

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Selected candidates will be invited to audition in Augsburg in late April / early May. Travel and accommodation expenses for the audition will not be reimbursed. Candidates are asked to prepare three opera arias (at least one by Rossini, Donizetti, or Bellini), to be sung in their original language, and to bring their own printed copies of their arias.

## THE FACULTY

**Justin Pambianchi** is a sought-after conductor and pianist known for his energetic performances, versatility, and charisma. After three years as Second Kapellmeister at the Staatstheater Augsburg, he won several prizes at international conducting competitions. In July 2022, he received first prize at the “Ionel Perlea” Competition, and in September 2023, third prize at the “Blue Danube” Competition for opera conductors. He completed his bachelor’s degree at McGill University in his hometown of Montreal, studying composition and piano. After graduating in conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music, he worked at Leipzig Opera, Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz, and the Teatro Municipale in Piacenza. He has also collaborated with the Bucharest Symphony Orchestra, the Silesian Philharmonic in Poland, and the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra in Vilnius. He is a member of the music staff of the Rossini Opera Festival as répétiteur and assistant conductor and works as a vocal coach at the Leopold Mozart College of Music in Augsburg.

**Kate Allen** is an Irish mezzo-soprano who has performed on international opera and concert stages. As a scholarship holder of the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera, she received the Zheng Cao Memorial Scholarship in 2013 for her portrayal of the title role in *The Rape of Lucretia*. She has appeared as a guest at Opera Santa Barbara, where she was mentored by Marilyn Horne, and was a member of the Festival Junger Künstler in Bayreuth in 2014. The same year, she won the Audience Prize at the Wexford Festival. She made her Italian debut at Teatro La Fenice in Venice in a gala concert under Lorin Maazel. At the Bad Immling Festival in 2016, she sang the role of Eustazio in *Rinaldo*. Her repertoire also includes Eboli (*Don Carlo*), the Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*), Suzuki (*Rigoletto*), Concepción (*L’heure espagnole*), and Madeleine Audebert in Kevin Puts’ *Silent Night*. Since the 2018/19 season, she has been a member of the solo ensemble at the Staatstheater Augsburg.

**Sergio Fundarò**, an Italian pianist and conductor, completed his piano studies at the Conservatorio A. Scontrino in Trapani and was subsequently selected for the young artist program of the prestigious Scuola dell’Opera Italiana in cooperation with the Teatro Comunale in Bologna. After completing the program, he was engaged both as pianist and conductor at various renowned international theaters and festivals, including Luglio Musicale Trapanese, the Grand Théâtre de Genève, and the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania. He has also worked at theaters in Germany, including Münster, Ulm, and Nuremberg.

**Volker Hiemeyer** studied piano and conducting at the Conservatory of Music and Theatre in Munich. From 2001 to 2003, he was Artistic Director of the Weilheim Chamber Orchestra and conducted the “Abaco” Symphony Orchestra of Ludwig Maximilian University Munich from 2004 to 2005. As a guest conductor, he has worked with the Philharmonic Orchestra Bad Reichenhall, the Ingolstadt Chamber Orchestra, the Aue Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Munich Symphony Orchestra. Concerts with artists such as Julia Fischer and Danjulo Ishizaka have taken him to the Madrid Philharmonic Hall, London’s Wigmore Hall, and the Prinzregententheater in Munich. From 2005 to 2015, he served as Kapellmeister and Head of Music at Theater Aachen, and from 2015 to 2019 as Second Kapellmeister at the Nuremberg Opera. Since 2019, he has been Head of Music at the Staatstheater Augsburg and teaches at the Conservatory of Music and Theatre in Munich and at the Leopold Mozart Centre in Augsburg.

## COSTS

Course fee: €650

The course fee covers faculty fees, room rental, and the recording of the opera gala.

For the duration of the masterclass, Opera Augusta can organize accommodation for a limited number of singers and cover the associated costs.

For questions or further information, please email: [info@opera-augusta.de](mailto:info@opera-augusta.de)

We look forward to receiving your application!