



Press release

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**Conductor Leonardo García Alarcón, choreographer Angelin Preljocaj and visual artist Prune Nourry: three prominent figures working together at the Grand Théâtre de Genève to create the first Swiss rendition of the opéra ballet *Atys*, a musical masterpiece by Lully. Sensual, captivating and innovative.**

Continuing with the exploration of the opéra-ballet already started two seasons ago with *Les Indes galantes*, the Grand Théâtre and Leonardo García Alarcón conducting his Cappella Mediterranea, engage the services of the great French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj, to stage *Atys*, the somewhat forgotten masterpiece by Lully. It is said that Louis XIV who funded the work, was so enamoured by it that he could be heard humming the tunes as he walked through his palace.

Prolific artist, choreographer and, now for the first time, director, Angelin Preljocaj loves to explore the most diverse universes and weave ties between the threads of today and yesterday, the traditional and modern – elements which at first glance seem worlds apart. It is also his first encounter with lyrical art. What better introduction to this genre than an opéra-ballet penned by the great Lully.

He is assisted in the scenography by a more audacious artist, the young French visual artist Prune Nourry, whose bold multidisciplinary practice combines high-class conceptualisation with performance, photography, video and sculpture. Her scenography for this production of *Atys* will be her début on the stage of opera – a tantalising taster of her work for *Atys* at the artgenève exhibition, end of January 2022 (showing at the Grand Théâtre's stand). Artist Jeanne Vicérial, founder of *Clinique Vestimentaire*, a laboratory dedicated to all things body and clothing, designs the costumes.

While the dancers from the Ballet du Grand Théâtre will give physical form to this story filled with reticence and reluctance, the singers will give the characters a voice as they battle against the revelation of their own feelings. Heading this line up of baroque specialists is the angelic voice of Ana Quintans en Sangaride, the striking tenor of Matthew Newlin in the lead role and Giuseppina Bridelli as Cybèle.

Brought back to life by William Christie in a production staged in 1987 during a revival of the Baroque, no one dared to even attempt this holy grail of the repertoire of an historical custom. This notwithstanding, the mythological plot behind the opera, written by the librettist Philippe Quinault, is very intricate. Based on Ovid, it tells the story of a love-quadrangle: the young *Atys*, priest to goddess *Cybèle*, and *Sangaride* love each other, but *Sangaride* is betrothed to *Idas*, king of *Phrygia*, and *Cybèle* in turn loves *Atys*. Love triangles involving deities don't tend to end very well... and this one is no exception.

Photos on

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