

The Guardian.-26.07.2021

Kate Connolly

'Finally!' Bayreuth festival gets a female conductor for first time

Нарешті! Фестиваль у Байройті вперше диригує жінка

[Українка О. Линів стала першою жінкою](#), яка диригувала оркестром за 145-річну історію відомого оперного фестивалю у німецькому Байройті. Байройтський фестиваль – один із найвідоміших у світі музичних фестивалів, присвячений творчості німецького композитора Р. Вагнера. О. Линів відкривала захід прем'єрою "Летючого голландця". Серед глядачів була канцлерка Німеччини [А. Меркель](#) з чоловіком. О. Линів – відома українська диригентка, родом із Львівщини, перша головна диригентка Опери і філармонійного оркестру австрійського міста Грац, другої за величиною опери Австрії. Вона працює з найбільшими оперними театрами та оркестрами світу. О. Линів заснувала Міжнародний фестиваль класичної музики LvivMozArt у Львові та Молодіжний симфонічний оркестр України – YsOU.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/26/oksana-lyniv-is-first-female-conductor-to-ope-n-bayreuth-festival>

It's been a hectic year for the famous Bayreuth Festival. Like many other arts events in 2020, the famous festival founded by Richard Wagner was cancelled due to the pandemic. In April, its director, 42-year-old Katharina Wagner [took a leave of absence](#) due to a grave illness. The great-granddaughter of composer and festival founder Richard Wagner was placed in an artificial coma for weeks and underwent several operations. Fortunately, Wagner fully recovered and returned to work on the storied Green Hill on September 21. Her return took place amidst an exciting announcement about the upcoming season. A new production of the opera *The Flying Dutchman*, to premiere during the 2021 season, will be directed Russian director Dmitri Tcherniakov and conducted by Ukrainian conductor Oksana Lyniv. The 42-year-old conductor will be the first woman to take the podium since the festival was founded in 1876. The role of Senta will be performed by the Lithuanian soprano Asmik Grigorian. The festival's managing director, Heinz-Dieter Sense, is firmly convinced the show will go on next year, even if the fight against the [coronavirus continues](#). Although Lyniv and Tcherniakov are debutants in Bayreuth, they are by no means strangers to the classical music scene. In their home countries, the Ukraine and Russia, as well as abroad, the conductor and opera director have earned numerous accolades. Nevertheless, both describe the invitation to [Bayreuth](#) as a career high point. Tcherniakov and Lyniv have previously worked together on productions at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich.

Oksana Lyniv: 'Wagner would be proud'

Lyniv was born into a family of musicians in Brody in western Ukraine. Her teachers at the Music Academy in Lviv advised her against pursuing a career in conducting, saying it was not suitable for women. Instead, they recommended she learn to play the flute. Yet Lyniv remained set on her dream of conducting and eventually prevailed. She won third prize at the conducting competition in Bamberg, Germany in 2004 and thus had the chance to continue her studies in Dresden. From 2008 to 2013 she was the associate chief conductor of the Odessa Opera House,

where she made a name for herself conducting the orchestra through daring premieres, including an opera by Ukrainian baroque composer Dmitry Bortiansky. The young conductor continued her career in Western Europe as assistant to Kirill Petrenko at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. In 2017, she became the first woman to take up the post of General Music Director in Graz, Austria. Lyniv describes founding the Youth Orchestra of Ukraine (YSOU) in 2016 as a groundbreaking event in her career. An orchestra for peace, YSOU brings together young people from the divided country's East and West. With initial funding from the [Beethovenfest Bonn](#), the National Youth Orchestra of Germany and Deutsche Welle, the orchestra came together and had its first performance during the 2017 Beethovenfest in Bonn. Lyniv also founded an international classical music festival in the Ukraine called LvivMozArt.

"Of course it is also very special to be the first woman since the founding of the Bayreuth Festival to conduct at this magical place," she told DW. "Richard Wagner has written women into his operas with leading, action-packed roles and has portrayed them as very emancipated. That's why I believe he would be proud that almost 140 years after his death a woman were to bring his wonderful music to life for the first time on the podium."

A breath of fresh air for Russia's opera scene

Dmitri Tcherniakov is one of the most productive and innovative opera directors in Europe. He has presided over more than 50 productions, including works by Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Wagner, and numerous Russian composers. Born in Moscow in 1970, the Russian fell in love with opera as a teenager. He often snuck into the Bolshoi Theater — sometimes without having a ticket. In 1998, he made his debut as an opera director in Novosibirsk and immediately gained recognition. At the time, Russia's conservative opera scene was characterized by productions set in historical periods with opulent sets. Tcherniakov, meanwhile, focused on minimal stage design and aimed to maximize emotional storytelling. Behind the familiar and often-performed operatic plots, Tcherniakov always knew how to find a moving, human story and tell it with brutal honesty. One of the main inspirations for his cutting-edge works is experimental film director Lars von Trier's Dogme 95 film movement. Thanks to "Mitja," as Tcherniakov is fondly called by his Russian fans, opera in his country is once again popular with young people. Tcherniakov owes his international breakthrough primarily to three conductors: Valery Gergiev, Teodor Currentzis and Daniel Barenboim. In 2005 Tcherniakov staged his first Wagner production in Gergiev's Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg with *Tristan and Isolde*. It was only the second production of this Wagner opera ever in Russia.

Meanwhile, Daniel Barenboim invited Tcherniakov to the Berlin State Opera and has worked with him regularly on the Russian repertoire since 2005. In 2015 he also created a controversial interpretation of Wagner's *Parsifal* set in the present day. Bayreuth 2022: A new Ring cycle? In an interview with DW, Tcherniakov describes his unique relationship with Wagner: "This composer and his works are absolutely different from all others. To stage Wagner, one must experience a kind of psychosis, a nervous breakdown. Approaching it is only possible if you sacrifice your blood and your flesh on his altar."

The new production of Richard Wagner's central work, the opera tetralogy *The Ring of the Nibelung*, has been postponed until 2022. As with other pieces on the festival playbill, including the opera *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* as staged by director Barrie Kosky and featuring a large and closely interactive cast, the festival administration is seeking presentation versions that are suitable to conditions during the coronavirus pandemic and is revising its

contracts with the artists. *Corrections from September 23, 2020: The article previously stated that the title role in The Flying Dutchman would be sung by the Armenian soprano Asmik Grigorian. It is the role of Senta, and Asmik Grigorian is a Lithuanian soprano. Also: The Ring of the Nibelung is an opera tetralogy, not a trilogy. We apologize for the errors.*