

General information & Application guidelines

Applicants are advised to read this document in conjunction with the information available online at: <https://opera-europa.org/news/european-opera-directing-prize-2025>

The 14th European Opera-directing Prize gives the opportunity to a creative team under the age of 35 to stage a production of Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, under the new Intendanz of Dorothea Hartmann and Beate Heine, during their 2026-27 season. The winning concept will be given a professional contract to work within the financial and technical constraints of the theatre, with the cast offered by the theatre.

Process, deadlines and important dates

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| By 25 January | Applicants return their completed application form and concept presentation to eop@opera-europa.org . They will receive a confirmation of receipt by 31 January. Partial applications or applications that do not respect the guidelines will not be considered. |
| By 25 March | Applicants will be notified of the first step of the selection process, resulting in a shortlist of up to 10 creative teams being invited to the semi-final. |
| 1-2 May | Semi-final held during the Internationale Maifestspiele in Wiesbaden, where max 2 members of the creative team will be invited to present their concept, with visual supports, in a 45-minute conversation with the jury. |
| 3-4 May | (Optional) Workshops and evening performances organised in the framework of the Internationale Maifestspiele. |
| By 20 May | Semi-finalists will be notified of the second step of the selection process, resulting in the choice of four finalist creative teams being invited to the final. |
| 3-5 October | Final held during Opera Europa's autumn conference in Geneva, where the creative team will be invited to stage a scene (specified by the jury) with artists, in front of the jury and other observers. |

Jury

Barbara Minghetti, chair, Artistic Director, Teatro Sociale di Como /Verdi OFF
Parma

Chrysoline Dupont, Artistic Administrator, Opéra Comique Paris/General Director
designate, Opéra national du Rhin Strasbourg

Dorothea Hartmann, Intendantin, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden
Ina Karr, Intendantin, Luzerner Theater
Thomas de Mallet Burgess, Opera Director, Finnish National Opera & Ballet
Fergus Sheil, Artistic Director, Irish National Opera
Ex officio: Karen Stone, Executive Director, Opera Europa

Costs, fees and prizes

There is no application fee to submit a concept to the European Opera-directing Prize.

Semi-finalists will receive a stipend to contribute to their travel and accommodation in Wiesbaden, plus free attendance to performances and workshops of the Internationale Maifestspiele.

Finalists will receive a stipend to contribute to their travel and accommodation in Geneva and free attendance to Opera Europa's autumn conference.

All finalist teams will receive a cash prize of 2.500€ as recognition of their preparation work for the concept of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and their achievement in reaching the final. This is a cash prize per team, not per person.

The winning team will be offered a professional contract under the host theatre's current practices, thanks to the support of Camerata Nuova, a Wiesbaden-based philanthropic organisation, founder of the European Opera-directing Prize.

Artistic, financial & Technical considerations

Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden will choose the team to produce their production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* among the finalists of the European Opera-directing Prize, with input from the jury.

Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden will hire the creative team according to their current fee and contractual practices.

Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden will be in charge of casting the production.

The winning concept will have taken into account the technical facilities available to them (see Technical Guidelines document, available online), alongside the given financial and human resources available.

Applicants should work with the Kaye/Keck version (Schott). The duration of the opera should not exceed three hours (interval excluded). For a final stage version, cuts or additions, the winning team will work with dramaturgy colleagues from Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden.

To apply, please return the following documents by 25 January to eop@opera-europa.org

- The application form
- A single separate pdf document (maximum 8 pages) in English, totally anonymous (no names or identifying marks), presenting the concept with
 - o A one page summary (up to 500 words)
 - o Up to 7 further pages (maximum 2500 words), including illustrations

Please note: A full storyboard is not required for initial applications, we simply encourage applicants to set out their concept as clearly and compellingly as possible. Applications must consist of original production concepts, not the relaunch of existing concepts. Production concepts should be designed to engage experienced opera lovers, infrequent visitors to opera and new audiences alike.