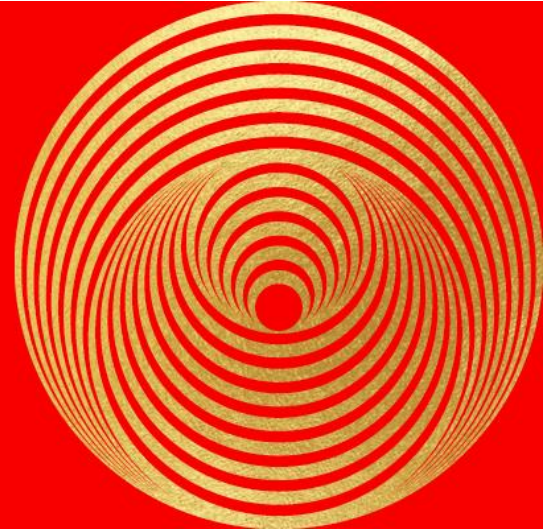


# Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik

25. Juli – 31. August 2025



**PRESS KIT**

of the

**49th Innsbruck Festival of Early Music 2025**

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## Introductory Words from the Artistic Direction

### «Who pulls the strings?»

It begins with a tangle of loose fibers of thought, bundled together and seemingly without any discernible structure. Here, a loose end of an idea; there, a knotted start to a program. With careful combing and untangling, the diffuse mass begins to unravel. Some fibers break, refusing to be spun into threads, discarded, lost – only to reappear elsewhere. Much like fibers driven through a spinning wheel, twisted, entwined, and wound, loose ideas and tangled thoughts transform into the fabric of our festival program.

We let it slip from our hands, entrusting the threads of our ideas to the artists. We hand over to them freedom, responsibility, and power. They continue spinning, weaving, and interlacing these threads. They cast the end to you, dear audience, making you part of the tapestry, inviting you to grasp the completed work from every angle. And in that moment, one question arises: Who pulls the strings?

Where do these strings even originate? Who pulls at their section of the string, at what time, with what intention and force? On a far deeper level, we must ask: Who governs the strings of our collective destiny? Are we surrounded by a fateful power, often spiritually conceived? Is humankind, endowed with reason, the sole master of its existence – or a mere puppet on strings? And within the community of humankind, how is the dynamic between those pulling the strings and those being pulled shaped? These reflections inevitably lead to another: How has art historically addressed this web of power and dependency? Does it surrender to it, remain ensnared, or does it act as a driving force, a barbed hook? Does it hold up a mirror to those grasping the stronger end of the strings, or does it merely reflect itself?

In this edition of the festival, we entrust the opera stage to a puppet theater, let Iphigenia narrate her fate, steered by divine decisions, and Giustino climb from farmer to emperor. We listen to instrumentalists who, by their very instruments, pull the strings, attune ourselves to hidden revolutions and overt satires, follow the threads of meticulously crafted compositional architecture, and watch mystical figures and grand emotions weave their threads around humanity. And we extend this fundamental question to you as a call to action: with your attendance, your listening, and your reactions, you too pull the strings, invisibly connected in the moment of performance to the architecture of sound and the towering structure of your and our shared history.

Eva-Maria Sens & Ottavio Dantone

## The Innsbruck Festival of Early Music

### Who we are

The Innsbruck Festival of Early Music is an internationally renowned festival for original sound and a venue for masters of their field and the most exciting up-and-coming talents on the scene. Since its foundation in 1976, Innsbruck has been the starting point for many artists' careers and one of the most important addresses in the field of early music worldwide. In 2023, Eva-Maria Sens took over as Artistic Director together with Ottavio Dantone, who will serve as Musical Director for five years. During this time, his Accademia Bizantina, one of the world's most renowned orchestras for historical performance practice, will be Orchestra in Residence. The Innsbruck Festival 2025 will take place from 25 July to 31 August under the guiding question «Who is pulling the strings?».

### Where we are going

In 2026 the Innsbrucker Festival of Early Music will celebrate its 50th anniversary. That anniversary underlines its pioneering position in the field of historically informed performance practice. The Festival has always offered a stage not only to great masters and renowned ensembles, but also to young, up-and-coming artists, since it was founded as a summer academy. The «Pietro Antonio Cesti» competition for baroque opera singers, the «Barockoper:Jung» opera project and the newly founded «youngbaroque» project are all examples of the Festival's commitment to promoting young artists.

## The Operas

With the story of Ifigenia, Greek mythology comes to life on stage in all its beauty and meandering absurdity: The fateful tale is told in two operas. They are both prequel and sequel to each other and both have links to Austrian musical history: «Ifigenia in Aulide» by Antonio Caldara and Apostolo Zeno (1718) and «Ifigenia in Tauride» by Tommaso Traetta and Marco Coltellini (1763). Ifigenia is to be sacrificed to the goddess Diana so that her father's fleet, stranded at Aulis due to a lack of wind, can continue its military campaign towards Troy. Her sacrifice is prevented at the last moment, and she is brought to the island of Tauris to live as a high priestess. Her unpleasant task in this kingdom of Toante is to sacrifice strangers arriving on the coast. One of these strangers is her brother Oreste, who lands on the island with his friend Pilade after killing his mother Clitennestra to avenge his father Agamemnon. Ifigenia hesitates to sacrifice the two strangers, thus setting in motion the plot that will eventually lead to Oreste and Pilade – with the help of Ifigenia's confidante Dori – fulfilling their mission and Ifigenia putting an end to Toante's reign.

The first opera production of «Ifigenia in Aulide» by Antonio Caldara will be staged under the musical direction of Ottavio Dantone and with the Orchestra in Residence, the Accademia Bizantina. In this first staged performance of Caldara's «Ifigenia» in over 300 years, world-renowned countertenor Carlo Vistoli makes his eagerly awaited festival debut as Achille. He is joined by soprano Marie Lys in the title role. Other soloists on stage include former Cesti participants Laurence Kilsby as Ulisse, Filippo Mineccia as Teucro, Neima Fischer in the role of Elisena and Giacomo Nanni as Arcade. The cast is completed by the mezzo-soprano Shakéd Bar as Clitennestra and the tenor Martin Vanberg as Agamemnon.

The «sacrificial drama» of «Ifigenia in Aulide» – in which the gods and goddesses pull the strings of human destiny – will be staged by the Spanish company PerPoc, directed by Anna Fernández, who will delight the audience with a combination of puppetry and images steeped in Baroque aesthetics. The work was first performed in 1718 at the Leopoldine Court Theatre in Vienna.

**Premiere on Fri | 08.08., 7.00 pm**

**Sun | 10.08., 4.00 pm**

**Tue | 12.08, 7.00 pm**

Tiroler Landestheater, Großes Haus  
(Programme book p. 26)

Later in August, Ifigenia's story will continue with Tommaso Traetta's «Ifigenia in Tauride» on the stage of the Tiroler Landestheater. Christophe Rousset and his ensemble Les Talens Lyriques, who since their recording of Traetta's «Antigona» (L'Oiseau-Lyre, 2000) have been regarded as advocates of this great composer worthy of rediscovery, have been recruited for the musical realisation of the second part of our opera sequel. The Spanish soprano Rocío Pérez, who was recently heard with Rousset's «lyrical talents» in Domenico Cimarosa's «L'Olimpiade» at the Theater an der Wien, takes on the role of Ifigenia. The British countertenor Owen Willetts plays Oreste, while the dark figure of Toante is sung by Australian tenor Alasdair Kent. They are joined

by sopranos Karolina Bengtsson as Dori and Suzanne Jerosme (last seen at the 2023 Festival Weeks in Traetta's «Oratorio Rex Salomon») as her lover Pilade. The production will be staged by the acclaimed German director Nicola Raab. The opera was first performed in 1763 at the theatre of the imperial summer residence at Schönbrunn, to a libretto by Marco Coltellini, and enjoyed great popularity at the end of the 18th century.

**Premiere on Wed | 27.08.**

**Fri | 29.08.**

**both at 7.00 pm**

Tiroler Landestheater, Großes Haus  
(Programme p. 30)

The Barockoper:Jung enjoys great popularity every year. In 2025, the Cesti participants from the previous year will perform Antonio Vivaldi's opera «Il Giustino». The singers will perform the *dramma per musica* in a production by Claudia Isabel Martin. Under the musical direction of Stefano Demicheli, Maximiliano Danta, Jiayu Jin, Benedetta Zanotto, Justina Vaitkute, Sarah Hayashi, Lucija Varsic, Thoma Jaron-Wutz and Massimo Frigato will make their Barockoper:Jung debut.

«Il Giustino» was first performed in 1724 at the Teatro Capranica in Rome. It is the story of the peasant Giustino's rise to emperor: along the way there is a wild bear, a kidnapping, a sea monster, heroes and cunningly switched identities – Vivaldi's opera is full of imaginative ideas. The peasant Giustino dreams of an exciting life, preferably with eternal glory. He soon finds himself at the Imperial Court, rescuing aristocrats from embarrassing situations and climbing the career ladder. As was typical of *opera seria* at the time, the libretto is based on historical figures and real events – the Eastern Roman Emperor Justin I was actually born into a peasant family and enjoyed a successful military career before succeeding Emperor Anastasios I on the throne. The political plot is embellished in a baroque style with numerous fictional love entanglements.

**Premiere on Sun | 17.08., 4.00 pm**

**Tue | 19.08., Thu | 21.08., & Fri | 22.08.**

**each 7.00 pm**

Haus der Musik, Kammerspiele  
(Programme book p. 34)

## The «Ambraser Schlosskonzerte» (Concerts at Ambras Castle)

The four «Ambraser Schlosskonzerte» are the oldest series for Early Music in the world, an integral part of the Innsbruck Festival and mark the beginning of the festivities. This year's guests are **Giovanni Antonini**, **Il Giardino Armonico** and **Dmitry Smirnov** with a programme that focuses on «La sprezzatura» – the ability to make strenuous activities seem effortless and natural. The ensemble **Astrophil & Stella**, led by transverse flutist **Johanna Bartz**, has set its programme somewhere between the longing for intimacy and the desire for revolution, driven by an inner restlessness that takes place «in secret» («Im Verborgenen»). In her concert «Tormento & Gelosia», **Margherita Maria Sala** explores states of passion taken to extremes with the **Ensemble Locatelli**, while **Céline Scheen** and the Ensemble **La Chimera**, conducted by **Eduardo Egüez**, take us on a journey across Europe in the footsteps of Count Juan de Tassis y Peralta, reputedly the «Queen's lover» of Isabela of Spain.

## The Concerts

**Ottavio Dantone** and his **Accademia Bizantina** continue their series of vocal-instrumental tributes to music: on 11 August, an evening will be devoted entirely to the undisputed master of the Baroque oratorio, whose 300th anniversary will be in 2025: Alessandro Scarlatti. In «Diana ed Endimione», **Carlotta Colombo** takes on the role of the goddess of the hunt and the countertenor **Paul-Antoine Bénos-Dijan** the role of Endimione. Comic scenes for tenor and bass sung by **Žiga Čopi** and **Marco Saccardin** complete the program.

Two days earlier, on 9 August, **Han Sol Lee Eo**, winner of the Johann Heinrich Schmelzer Competition at the Internationale Barocktage Stift Melk, will play the violin in the first «Kapellenkonzert» («chapel concert»). In the evening of the same day, the **Ensemble Explorations**, conducted by **Roel Dieltiens**, will explore the wide range of moods in Johann Sebastian Bach's «Die Kunst der Fuge». Each member of the ensemble will play two instruments – including the conductor himself on cello and organ – with which to weave the compositional threads of this unique work. On 13 August, **Christina Pluhar** and **L'Arpeggiata** will celebrate female musicians from all eras who had to hide their talents behind those of their husbands or who gave up their careers prematurely in the Open Mind concert «Wonder Women» – a female perspective on the key question of 2025.

The following day, 14 August, the theorist **Luca Pianca** will perform in the Innsbruck Hofgarten at dusk, allowing the audience to take part in a dialogue between a Titan and the Graces of Greek-Roman mythology. **The Playfords**, who have taken Shakespeare's Songbook as their source and rearranged it, will improvise upon it at the new venue St. Bartlmä on 15 August. A Shakespearean musical exploration of the question of power is to be expected. On 16 August, **Julien Chauvin** and his ensemble **Le Concert de la Loge**, soprano **Ana Vieira Leite** and mezzo-soprano **Eva Začik** will lead the audience to an enchanted forest in the Riesensaal of the Hofburg Innsbruck. There, they perform some of the most beautiful opera scores inspired by nature by George Frideric Handel, Antonio Vivaldi and Nicola Antonio Porpora.

**Ana Vieira Leite** remains in Innsbruck to perform with Concerto 1700 under the direction of **Daniel Pinteno** on 18 August, uniting her voice with the conductor's violin. The programme includes a key work of the 18th century: the «Neun deutsche Arien» by George Frideric Handel. With Claudio Monteverdi's »Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda» on 20 August, **Michele Pasotti** on the lute and as conductor of **la fonte musica** will honour a composer who was pulling the strings of many a musical development. On 23 August, the music «Kapellenkonzert» (chapel concert) at midday will revolve



around «Solo cembalo», played by the winner of the IV Concorso Internazionale di Clavicembalo della Città di Milano, **Kohei Takeoka**. In the evening, the Spanish Hall centres on Jean-Baptist Lully, when the young Georg Philipp Telemann, Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer and Georg Muffat, who liked to call themselves «Lullists» because of their admiration, have their say with **El Gran Teatro del Mundo** under the direction of **Julio Caballero Pérez**. The composer, violinist, guitarist and dancer at the court of the Sun King will have his say the following day: **Les Épopées** and **Stéphane Fuget** will present his works and those of other French composers. A programme that oscillates between the dazzling pleasures of the «Grand Siècle» and the longing for the silence of the night. **Vox Luminis**, conducted by **Lionel Meunier**, will perform «Jesu, meine Freude» – probably Johann Sebastian Bach's greatest contribution to a cappella choral music – surrounded by works from the «Alt-bachisches Archive». This concert «Choral and Kontrapunkt» will take place in St Jacob's Cathedral on 26 August. On 28 Aug, **Jiayu Jin** – winner of the 15th Cesti Competition 2024 – and the **Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin** will whisk the audience away to a musical salon: entirely in the legacy of the semi-public salons of 17th-century high society. For 30 August, **Ottavio Dantone** has invited none other than the internationally acclaimed countertenor **Andreas Scholl** to Ottavio plus. The programme will include works by Henry Purcell and George Frederic Handel. The brilliant conclusion of the Innsbruck Festival 2025 will as always be the final concert of the 16th Cesti Competition on 31 August.

July to August  
various days and venues

### **New: Youngbaroque meets masterclass**

Young people bring early music to life at the International Youth Baroque Orchestra Festival. From 3 to 6 August 2025, youth orchestras specialising in early music will meet in Innsbruck to rehearse and perform together. This meeting will take place for the second time in 2025 as part of the Innsbruck Festival. This year, the final concert will be organised together with the winners of Anna Bonitatibus' master class. This master class was a prize for five winners of last year's Cesti competition. Admission is by voluntary donation.

Thu | 7 Aug, 11 am  
Haus der Musik Innsbruck, Small Hall  
(Programme book p. 68)

### **Free Programs, Workshops & Open-Air Concerts**

As every year, the festival weeks offer a varied programme with free or low-cost admission. The long-established **Lunchconcerts** and the popular **Concerto mobile** are just as much a part of the festival programme as **Musica montana** and the **music in church services**. The two formats introduced in 2024 – **Hörgeschichten** (audio stories) and **Werkstattkonzert** (workshop concert) – will be continued due to the positive response. In **instrument making workshops** for children, Claudia Unterkofler reveals the secrets of violin making and Benedikt Sonnleitner provides insights into the world of trumpet making. And, of course, the Innsbruck Trumpet Consort will also be there. «Mit Pauken und Trompeten» (With timpani and trumpets), the musicians perform from the Golden Roof with festive sounds in the historic city centre on the evenings of the opera premieres and the Cesti competition.



# Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik

Fri | 24.07. - Fri | 31.08.  
various days and venues  
(Program p. 70-79)

## Numbers & Facts

55 events on 31 days at 19 venues  
Period: 25 July to 31 August 2025  
Events (total): 55  
Ticket shows: 37  
Free formats: 18  
Venues: 19

### Three staged productions

#### «Ifigenia in Aulide»

Antonio Caldara  
Opera in three acts  
Libretto by Apostolo Zeno  
Premiere: Vienna, 1718

#### «Il Giustino» (Barockoper:Jung)

Antonio Vivaldi  
Opera in three acts  
Libretto by Antonio Maria Lucchini after Nicolo Beregan and Pietro Pariati  
Premiere: Rom, 1724

#### «Ifigenia in Tauride»

Tommaso Traetta  
Opera in three acts  
Libretto by Marco Coltellini  
Premiere: Vienna, 1763

### Concerts & More:

Ambraser Schlosskonzerte: 4  
Festival Concerts: 16  
Free Events: 18  
Workshops: 7  
Werkstattkonzert (Workshop Concert): 1

## Venues

### **Audioversum**

Wilhelm-Greil-Straße 23  
Innsbruck

### **Alpengasthof Heiligwasser**

Heiligwasserweg 47  
Igls

### **Christuskirche**

Martin-Luther-Platz  
Innsbruck

### **Dom zu St. Jakob**

Domplatz 6  
Innsbruck

### **Geigenbauwerkstatt Claudia Unterkofler**

Grillparzerstraße 6A  
Innsbruck

### **Goldenes Dachl**

Herzog-Friedrich Straße 15  
Innsbruck

### **Haus der Musik Innsbruck**

→ Großer Saal  
→ Kammerspiele  
Universitätsstraße 1  
Innsbruck

### **Innsbruck Hofburg Innsbruck**

→ Riesensaal  
Rennweg 1  
Innsbruck

### **Hofgarten Innsbruck**

→ Pavillon  
Rennweg 6A  
Innsbruck

### **Meisterwerkstatt für Blechblasinstrumente**

Maximilianstraße 5  
Innsbruck

### **Schloss Ambras Innsbruck**

→ Spanischer Saal  
→ Nikolauskapelle  
Schlossstraße 20  
Innsbruck

### **St. Bartlmä**

→ Halle 6  
St. Bartlmä 3/Halle 6  
Innsbruck

### **Stiftskirche Stams**

Stiftshof 1  
Stams

### **Stiftskirche Wilten**

Klostergasse 7  
Innsbruck

### **Tiroler Landestheater**

→ Großes Haus  
→ Probebühne 2  
Rennweg 2  
Innsbruck

### **Umbrüggl Alm**

Umbrückleralmweg 36  
Innsbruck

## Contact

In case of questions, feel free to contact Leonie Schiessendoppler.

Telephone: +43 (0) 512 / 571032 18

Mobil: +43 (0) 699/ 157 103 23

Email: [leonie.schiessendoppler@altemusik.at](mailto:leonie.schiessendoppler@altemusik.at)