

Curtain-raiser for the 50th Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik with Ambras Castle Concerts – Opera premiere of 'Il pomo d'oro' follows on 7 and 8 August

The 2026 Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik got off to a striking start with two concerts in the Spanish Hall of Ambras Castle: the sold-out opening concert 'La Cetra', performed by the baroque orchestra of the same name, was met with great enthusiasm by audiences last Friday. On Saturday, 'Flöte hoch 2' followed, with Dorothea Seel, a specialist in the Renaissance traverso, and recorder player Dorothee Oberlinger, joined by the Barocksolisten München, both of whom were warmly received by the audience. Next weekend brings two further Ambras Castle Concerts to round off this series – the oldest of its kind for early music anywhere in the world. On Friday, 31 July, festival veteran Sigiswald Kuijken leads La Petite Bande into the world of the great Baroque master with 'Bach à 7'. On Saturday, 1 August, Il Gusto Barocco and three soloists, under the direction of Jörg Halubek, perform fragments of the oldest opera in music history: Jacopo Peri's 'Dafne'.

The official opening, presided over by Austrias Bundespräsident Alexander Van der Bellen on 7 August, will be marked that evening by Part One of the festival opera 'Il pomo d'oro' by Pietro Antonio Cesti; Part Two takes to the stage the following day, 8 August. The production is under the musical direction of Ottavio Dantone, who has served as the Festival's Music Director since 2023. The orchestra-in-residence, Accademia Bizantina, plays from the pit, while the stage brings together 20 soloists in 47 roles alongside the NovoCanto choir and two dance companies. A few tickets remain for the premiere. Further musical highlights of this anniversary festival, which runs until 30 August, include concerts by former Music Directors: on 19 August, Alessandro De Marchi returns with Antonio Caldara's oratorio 'Gioseffo', the Consort & Coro Maghini, and an outstanding cast. On 22 August, René Jacobs takes up the baton to conduct Handel's oratorio 'Il Trionfo' with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and selected soloists. Both performances are already sold out.

The Festival's second opera production, Handel's 'Atalanta', premieres on 21 August and will be performed as Barockoper:Jung by participants of the 2025 Cesti Competition. This format uniquely combines the promotion of young talent with practical stage experience, reflecting both the Festival's long history of nurturing emerging artists and the future of Early Music.

Under the guiding theme 'What are we celebrating?', the 2026 Innsbruck Festival turns its attention to the elements that have made it, over the past half-century, one of the leading festivals for Early Music anywhere. Over six weeks, the Festival will celebrate its artists, its audiences, Early Music itself, and, of course, the Festival's own history. Alongside numerous concerts featuring stars such as Jean Rondeau, Anna Bonitatibus,

Arianna Vendittelli, Giovanni Antonini and others, the programme also includes several special formats marking the anniversary: 'Festwochengeschichte(n)' ('Festival Stories'), in which pioneers and long-time companions of the Festival share their experiences; the 'Wir feiern!' ('We're celebrating!') festival on 9 August in the Hofgarten, offering an afternoon full of music followed by a former Festival opera screened under the stars that evening; and an exhibition marking 50 years of the Innsbruck Festival at the Haus der Musik Innsbruck. As every year, the entire programme is framed by countless free events held at various locations across the city.

Press contact:

Leonie Schiessendoppler MA BA

Phone: +43 (0) 512 571 032 18

Mobile: +43 (0) 699 157 103 23

Email: leonie.schiessendoppler@altemusik.at

