



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Echoes of a Silenced Voice: Briefe von Ruth

Chamber Opera of Vienna, Theater an der Wien, 11.03.2025 [ENA]

The Theater an der Wien's recent production of Briefe von Ruth stands as a monumental achievement in contemporary musical theater, offering a poignant and deeply moving portrayal of Ruth Maier's life—a narrative often overshadowed in the annals of history. This chamber musical, composed by Gisle Kverndokk with a libretto by Aksel-Otto Bull and Kverndokk himself, is based on Maier's diaries and letters, providing an intimate glimpse into the life of a young Jewish woman whose aspirations and dreams were tragically cut short during the Holocaust.

Ruth Maier, often referred to as the "Norwegian Anne Frank," was a young Jewish woman from Vienna who fled to Norway in 1939 to escape the escalating atrocities of the Nazi regime. Her diaries and letters, meticulously preserved by her close friend and confidante, Gunvor Hofmo, offer a vivid account of her experiences, inner turmoil, and enduring hope amidst the encroaching darkness of World War II. These personal writings serve as the foundation for Briefe von Ruth, allowing audiences to connect deeply with Ruth's story on an emotional and intellectual level.

The production's success is anchored in its exceptional cast and creative team, who collectively breathe life into this harrowing yet inspiring tale.

- Emily Mrosek as Ruth Maier: Mrosek delivers a tour de force performance, capturing the essence of Ruth's youthful exuberance, intellectual curiosity, and profound vulnerability. Her vocal prowess and emotive expression create a compelling portrayal that resonates deeply with the audience.
- Dorothea Maria Müller as Gunvor Hofmo: Müller's portrayal of Gunvor is both nuanced and powerful, depicting the profound bond between the two women with sensitivity and grace. Her performance highlights the themes of love, loss, and remembrance that are central to the narrative.
- Supporting Cast: The ensemble, including Julia Bergen as Judith, Maaïke Schuurmans in multiple roles, Alen Hodzovic as Hermann Thimig, and Reinwald Kranner as Professor Williger, provides robust support, each contributing depth and dimension to the storytelling.

Under the meticulous direction of Philipp Moschitz, the narrative unfolds seamlessly, balancing moments of poignant introspection with scenes of stark reality. The staging is both innovative and respectful, utilizing Matthias Engelmann's set and video design to create a visual landscape that complements the emotional gravity of the story.

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Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

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Gisle Kverndokk's composition is a masterful blend of melodic beauty and dramatic tension, capturing the emotional spectrum of Ruth's journey. The score is both accessible and profound, weaving traditional musical theater elements with motifs that reflect the historical context of the narrative. Conductor Herbert Pichler leads the orchestra with precision and sensitivity, ensuring that the music serves as a powerful conduit for the story's emotional currents. Sven Niemeyer's choreography adds a dynamic layer to the production, using movement to express the unspoken emotions and internal struggles of the characters. The choreography is both subtle and impactful, enhancing the storytelling without overshadowing the narrative.

Claudio Pohle's costume design and Franz Tscheck's lighting work in harmony to create a visual aesthetic that is both period-appropriate and evocative. The use of lighting to delineate different emotional landscapes and the thoughtful costume choices help to transport the audience to the 1930s and 1940s, immersing them fully in Ruth's world.

Briefe von Ruth is more than a historical recount; it is a poignant reminder of the human cost of hatred and intolerance. The production does not merely recount Ruth Maier's life but invites the audience to reflect on the broader implications of her story in today's world. It challenges viewers to consider the fragility of freedom and the enduring importance of compassion and understanding.

The Theater an der Wien's production of Briefe von Ruth is a triumph of musical theater, offering a deeply moving and thought-provoking experience that lingers long after the final curtain. It stands as a testament to the power of art to illuminate the darkest corners of history and to honor the memories of those whose voices were silenced. This production not only educates but also inspires, ensuring that Ruth Maier's legacy continues to resonate with audiences today and in the future.

In a world where the lessons of the past are more pertinent than ever, Briefe von Ruth serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the enduring power of love and friendship. It is a must-see performance that enriches the soul.

[Bericht online lesen:](https://culture.en-a.eu/kunst_kultur_und_musik/echoes_of_a_silenced_voice_briefe_von_ruth_-90758/)

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