



..... International Press Service

Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Parsifal: Mystical Opus Through Augmented Reality

Bayreuther Festspiele, 08.08.2025 [ENA]

Parsifal at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus in 2025 under conductor Pablo Heras-Casado and director Jay Scheib is a truly unforgettable experience. This production—a bold fusion of tradition, modern technology, and spiritual nuance—is consistently enthralling from first note to final bow. The Festspielhaus remains the quintessential site for Parsifal opera performance.

Its unique architectural features—the famed “mystic gulf” effect created by the recessed covered orchestra pit and double proscenium—immerses audiences in Wagner’s ritualistic vision, making every leitmotif blend seamlessly with drama and symbol. The acoustics are superb: voices, chorus, and orchestra emerge with clarity and reverberant depth unique to this sacred stage. The Festival Chorus, under Thomas Eitler-de Lint, delivers ooze—well-synchronized, spiritually charged, dynamically unified—especially during Grail rituals and the final transfiguration moments. Overall, the ensemble offers vocal grandeur matched by intimate expressivity suitable to Wagner’s most sacred work.

2025’s cast—led by Andreas Schager as Parsifal, Derek Welton as Klingsor, Ekaterina Gubanova as Kundry, Georg Zeppenfeld as Gurnemanz, Tobias Kehrer as Titurel, and Ryan McKinny as Amfortas—underscores the festival’s high musical caliber.

Schager’s Parsifal conveys spiritual innocence fused with resolve. His tone is resonant and sustained even in quiet inner lines, and his climactic transformations in Act III carry deep emotional weight.

Welton’s Klingsor is commanding, articulate, and menacing, a villain portrayed with both vocal beauty and moral tension

Gubanova’s Kundry dominates Act II with a luxuriant mezzo line, bringing sensual darkness eased by controlled high tones—she grounds the character in both suffering and paradoxical seduction.

Zeppenfeld’s Gurnemanz emanates sage-like calm and weight, his storytelling sung with sustained richness in Act I’s long monologues.

Kehrer’s Titurel and McKinny’s Amfortas fulfill their roles with compelling presence; the former evoking mythical authority, the latter tragic vulnerability laden with yearning.

Pablo Heras-Casado anchors the performance with clarity, momentum, and dramatic integrity. From BR-Klassik critiques and operatic sources, his conducting is described as expressive yet non-pathetic: brisk in the first act, crystal-clear textures in Act II, and somber restraint with sustained tension in Act III. He

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

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

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

balances orchestral weight—wind chords suspended, strings glimmering—to support singers without overwhelming them. His pacing allows Parsifal’s emotional arc to unfold organically; the Easter interlude breathes like a meditation rather than a set-piece. Audiences respond with deep respect, while earlier critics note Heras-Casado’s refusal of false solemnity elevates the music into ritual rather than execution.

Jay Scheib’s production remains one of the most technologically daring Parsifal stagings in Bayreuth’s history. Since its 2023 premiere, the production continues to make selective use of AR glasses to project immersive digital imagery—flying swans, arrows, doves, skulls, plastic bottles, environmental detritus—virtually into the auditorium space. The AR visuals heighten key moments: the Speerwurf scene projects the spear hurtling toward the audience, halting just before contact; at the end of Act I, a boy with angelic wings marches directly toward spectators; in Act II, Klingsor’s floral illusions swirl into psychedelic excess.

This layering of myth and metaphor transforms the opera into an environmental and spiritual experience. Critics warn the AR visuals risk distraction—and indeed repeated animations can overwhelm central stage action—but at their best they evoke poetic resonance, amplifying the score’s archetypal meaning rather than supplanting it. Notably, reviewers report refinement of the AR layer in its second year: sharper timing, selective restraint, and better narrative integration. Scheib has scaled back gratuitous digital effects while amplifying those aligned with musical peaks.

Scheib’s staging links Parsifal to broader contemporary themes: environmental collapse (plastic bottles, pollution motifs), spiritual renewal across faith traditions, and communal suffering. The final act resonates with universalist redemption—white doves, light halos, collective audience transcendence—echoing earlier interpretations of Parsifal as interfaith allegory. Although Cosima Wagner insisted that Parsifal remain a ritual performed only at Bayreuth, Scheib’s interpretation invites a global audience to see its symbolic universality anew. The AR-enhanced visuals do risk diluting theatrical subtlety, but their poetic scale matches the work’s mythic intent.

Bayreuth audiences in 2025 greeted this production with enthusiasm for its vocal and musical quality, even where visual modernism remained controversial. BR-Klassik notes that production criticism did not overshadow applause for conductor, performers, and emotional intensity. Reddit commentary echoes the physical demands of attending: heat, hard seating, no surtitles, long waits—but attendees emphasize that for Parsifal, the immersive Bayreuth ritual is fundamental. As one fan put it: “Bayreuth is a fantastic experience...”.

Thematic Highlights & Key Moments

Act I – Gurnemanz’s Grail Temple

Redaktioneller Programmdienst: European News Agency

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

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

Gurnemanz's invocation is sublime: his extended vocal narration floats above a delicate orchestral backdrop, and the chorus enters as ritualistic echo. The AR doves and swans enhance the environment without dominating it. This slow, meditative opening sets the tone of transcendent contemplation.

Act II – Klingsor's Domain & Kundry's Seduction

Welton's Klingsor constructs an aesthetic nightmare of seduction and rusted memory. Gubanova's Kundry enters in braided gold-red, her voice weaving lament and power. AR visuals of snake, broken stained glass, falling bottles reinforce the sense of corruption and spiritual entrapment.

Act III – Redemption and Rebirth

Parsifal breaks Klingsor's magic, the spear flies, and the temple dissolves. Schager's voice shifts from innocence to determination; the chorus rises to widespread redemption. Heras-Casado brings emotional quietude before the last flourish of the final chord. The AR finale—white dove halo, light flood, dissolving ruins—elicits collectively held breath before applause.

Bayreuth 2025 presents a Parsifal that feels both ancient and urgent. Under Heras-Casado's baton, Wagner's sublime score is given room to breathe and speak. Through Scheib's AR lens, myth and metaphor are refracted into digital symbol, bringing new life to the sacred text.

This is not Parsifal as museum pièce but as living prophecy—critical, contemplative, visually expansive, and musically assured. As the festival approaches its 150th anniversary, this production reflects Bayreuth's dual role: protector of tradition, innovator of form.

For Wagner devotees, pilgrimage-seekers, and curious newcomers alike, this Parsifal stands as a landmark. It reasserts the festival's capacity to reframe Wagner's final mystical opera.

[Bericht online lesen:](#)

https://culture.en-a.eu/kunst_kultur_und_musik/parsifal_mystical_opus_through_augmented_reality-91885/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDStV: Dr. Nadejda Komendantova

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

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

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.