

UNITEL and CLASSICA present

Unsuk Chin's
Alice
in Wonderland



Wer bist du?



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Alice

in Wonderland



Alice

in Wonderland from the Bayerische Staatsoper

Music by **UnsuK Chin**
Conductor **Kent Nagano**

Chorus **Chor der Bayerischen
Staatsoper**
Orchestra **Bayerisches Staatsorchester**

Alice **Sally Matthews**
Cat **Piia Komsu**
Mad Hatter **Dietrich Henschel**
White Rabbit / March Hare **Andrew Watts**
Queen **Gwyneth Jones**

Directed by **Achim Freyer**

Length **150'**

**A production of Unitel
in co-production with Classica
in co-operation with the Bayerische Staatsoper**

shot in HDTV 1080

Cat. no. A05016472



**Bayerische
Staatsoper**

Ravel, Handel, Elgar, Stravinsky, a snippet of Puccini's "Turandot," a bass-clarinete homage to George Gershwin, glissandi, hints of musicals, film music and Gilbert & Sullivan – UnsuK Chin is a master of stylistic parody, but also much more than that: she is clearly at home on every highway and byway of music history. Yet the musical house she constructs with the building blocks of the past and the present is definitely her own house, which she has designed and which self-assuredly proclaims her unmistakable individuality and style. It is a thoroughly modern house that welcomes everyone who loves music. "I did not want to write music that needs several pages of explanations to be understood," she says about her first opera, "Alice in Wonderland."

UnsuK Chin, born in Seoul, Korea, in 1961, had always been fascinated by Lewis Carroll's fairy tale for children and adults. Director Achim Freyer, whose productions have been setting standards for decades, sees Chin's opera as a collection of "dream sequences," for which he has created imaginary spaces: with the help of pulleys, acrobats depict the magical characters of Alice's world and suggest the action through pantomime, and with the help of colorful masks and props. "Nightmare visions of the girl. Dream, reality, hyperreality fuse together, everything is theater, transformation," says Freyer. The characters themselves are sung by vocalists (outstanding: Andrew Watts as White Rabbit) sitting in a row at the front of the stage wearing Lewis Carroll masks.

At the center is Alice, portrayed by the impressive Sally Matthews. "She must do everything with her flexible, beguiling and characteristic soprano voice. She shifts with virtuoso ease from rebelliousness to fear, flirtatiousness, anxiety, irony, tragedy and seductiveness." (Reinhard J. Brembeck, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*) Matthews is supported by the dynamically and transparently playing orchestra of the Bavarian State Opera under Kent Nagano, who conducted the world premieres of several works by Chin and originally planned to produce "Alice in Wonderland" in Los Angeles.

One of the great moments of the work is the appearance of Dame Gwyneth Jones as the Queen of Hearts, "dazzling like a diamond, overwhelming like a natural phenomenon ... undisputedly the climax of this opening production ... which abounds in phenomenal singers and phenomenal visuals." (Eleonore Büning, *F.A.Z.*) One of the highlights of the 2007 Munich Opera Festival, UnsuK Chin's "Alice in Wonderland" is contemporary music at its most accessible and crowd-pleasing.

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