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## Forum Neues Musiktheater der Staatsoper Stuttgart

### LAST DESIRE Premiere

Music theater piece by Lucia Ronchetti based on Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* as adapted by Tina Hartmann

December 20, 2004 at 8 p.m.

**Additional performances:** December 21, 22, 2004 and March 3, 4, 5, 2005 at 8 p.m.  
Introduction 19.15

After the performances, audiences will have the opportunity to speak with the production team.

**Music:** Lucia Ronchetti **Text:** Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*, adapted by Tina Hartmann **Staging:** Michael von zur Mühlen  
**Live electronics:** Carl Faia **Set and costume design:** Sebastian Hannak **Musical assistance:** Alexander Adiarte  
**Dramaturgy:** Tina Hartmann

With **Daniel Gloger**, countertenor; **Andreas Fischer**, bass; **Luca Sanz **, viola; **Darius Paul-Knecht / David D rner**, boy soprano

Oscar Wilde would have turned 150 this year. Yet neither his writings nor he himself have lost anything of their vitality or contemporary relevance. As the author of *Salom 's Tragedy in One Act* (1893), this ostensibly "unmusical" writer has the distinction of having written one of, if not the paradigmatic libretto of the twentieth century. Astonishingly enough, however, Wilde never thought about having his work set to music. Instead he sought to lend the text an inherently musical quality. The characters repeat their lines like musical refrains or *id es fixes*, and the drama takes on the character of a ballad. Nearly a century after Strauss produced his monolithic setting of the work, contemporary composers are rediscovering Wilde's story, which has acquired a mythlike presence in the wake of Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung. It is precisely the great variety of interpretations—between woman child and femme fatale, abused object and liberating stroke—that interested and inspired us. A close reading of Wilde's text shows that it unpacks masculine notions of the nature of woman. We took the metaphor of *Salom * literally. She is the moon goddess, the projection screen, in which all of these men contemplate or "mirror" themselves while at the same time remaining transfixed around its light like moths around a flame. The piece begins, but *Salom * is not there. Three men and a boy wait for her. One of them seems to be able to fill the gap, at least temporarily. As in Plato's allegory of the cave, the viola conjures up a "sound shadow" of the desired object. The projections of *Salom * begin to develop a surreal life of their own. Yet the dance around the "sound shadow" turns into a deadly battle. Lucia Ronchetti's composition for boy's voice, countertenor, bass, viola, and live electronics seeks to capture all the story's drama and many levels in its virtuoso treatment of the singing voice. Together with the Stuttgart vocal soloists Daniel Gloger and Andreas Fischer, Ronchetti develops an approach to the voice in which conventional dramatic and vocal roles cross and intersect, creating a striking effect in which new horizons are opened up.

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