

The National Opera House of Pilsen presents a brand new HAMLET of Ambroise Thomas in January 2018 - the Thalia and Libuska Award winner Thomas Weinhappel takes the task to perform the title role once again - as in Ostrava and Prague 2017.

**20.1.2018, 2.2.2018,  
10.2.2018, 21.3.2018,  
30.3.2018, 12.4.2018, 26.4.2018**

*Michaela Svobodova DJKT Pilsen*



*Thomas Weinhappel - Photo K.Kokhanova*



*Hamlet - Photo Martin Popelář*

***Opera Hamlet is not played so often ... how was your first impression, when you got closer to the role?***

Like in any other role – although music takes the first place – my aim is always to create an human being using my stagecraft and my musicality which are necessary to show love, mourning and the inevitability of the fate of Hamlet. My ambition is to show the audience all musical colours on the one hand and to represent the text and everything, which is hidden between the lines and letters on the other hand.

In »Hamlet« one additional factor comes into play here: I discovered very specific similarities between my private life and the life of the Prince of Denmark: Whensoever I'm standing on stage in the very first scene of Hamlet mourning at the sarcophagus of the late king memories of my father's funeral start running through my head. It might be due to this loss that I'm able to perform Hamlet the way I do.

***You say that every feeling on the stage must be true, it must be very hard, because you had also lost father as Hamlet.***

Yes indeed – there were and are constant reminders during the rehearsals and the performances. I thought very often of that time when my beloved father closed his eyes forever! When I started working on the interpretation of Hamlet's appearance simultaneously applying all my personal emotions. Therefore Hamlet was on the one hand a gargantuan task and on the other hand an elementary mission to me. Particularly in the third scene when Hamlet promises to avenge his father's murder and so gives up his individual happiness for all time overwhelming emotions ascend in me every time I'm singing »Ombre chere«.

***Are you looking forward to Hamlet in Pilsen? Maybe Martin Otava could bring another point of view on the role.***

When I am fascinated by the soul of a role I literally want to get to the bottom of it and that's why I'm champing at the bit to have the first rehearsal in Pilsen and find new

character traits of Hamlet! To me there's no doubt that such a distinguished and experienced director like Mr. Otava will present a new aspect of the Danish prince – I'm very glad to meet Mr. Otava and I'm especially pleased to work with him!

***Back to the start of your career – I can't imagine staying alone in Vienna without family, your decision to become a singer must have been really strong.***

Borne by the great parental affection of my father – who encouraged me to join the famous Vienna Boys' Choir (Wiener Sängerknaben) when I was seven years old – I felt an enormous desire for singing and acting on stage even as a young boy! And this deep yearning lasts until now!

And yes, I missed my family when I had to do my duties as soloist of the choir sometimes, particularly at Christmas time. But even then the sadness disappeared immediately when I set foot on stage!

*(laughing:)* Back then as well as today the stage is always the best medicine for me!

***How do you feel in Czech republic? I think that we can still feel very pleasant atmosphere ... we used to be one monarchy.***

In the meantime the Czech republic is a second homeland to me, but also when I arrived the very first day everybody here regards me as a friend and even as a native! One of the reasons why we feel so familiar with each other is maybe our shared and common past under Habsburg rule and *(laughing:)* maybe our common kitchen with our »knedlíky« and »pivo«!

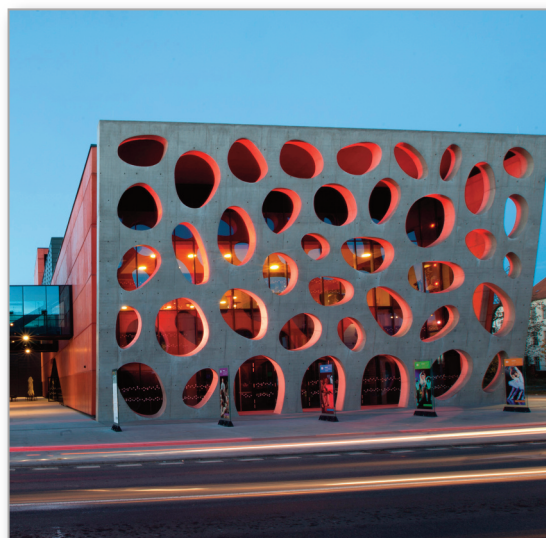
***What about your future plans? Do you have a dream role?***

Almost every of the leading parts I had the honour to sing – like Don Giovanni or Hamlet and even roles in operettas like Danilo – were awesome and challenging roles.

*(A little contemplative:)* But I have to say that quite honestly all dreams come true when I'll sing one day Posa and Wolf-ram!

At the turn of the year 2017/2018 I'm in Canada for lieder recital and shortly before Christmas I'm going to perform Schubert's Winterreise in Vienna, one of my favorite musical pieces.

For 2018 there are so many ideas: Escamillo in Austria at a brand new opera festival in Falkenstein in Lower Austria, later Rossini's Figaro and Count Homonay (The Gypsy Baron) and as a matter of course: Hamlet in Pilsen as often as possible!



*Nationaltheatre Pilsen - Nova Scena*



*Thalia Award - Photo Pavel Prucha*



*Escamillo - Photo Gars*