

Marie-Theres Arnbom appointed new director of the Theatermuseum in Vienna as of January 1, 2022



Born in Vienna in 1968, Marie-Theres Arnbom studied history and musicology at the University of Vienna. She worked as a freelance exhibition curator, published extensively, founded, devised and organized several festivals and worked in musical dramaturgy. She is no stranger to the Theatermuseum, where she curated the exhibitions “The World of the Operetta. Glamour, Stars and Showbusiness” (2012), and “Fritz Grünbaum. Grüss mich Gott” (2005).

In her most recent publications, she explores haute-bourgeois villas in Austria (e.g. “Die Villen im Ausserland”, 2021); she also authored the books “Swing tanzen verboten! Unterhaltungsmusik nach 1933 zwischen Widerstand, Propaganda und Vertreibung” (Swing not allowed! Popular music after 1933 between resistance, propaganda and forced migration), and „Damals war Heimat. Die Welt des jüdischen Großbürgertums” (Then it was home. The world of the Jewish haute-bourgeoisie).

Arnbom is the director of two festivals: the “Kindermusikfestival St Gilgen” (Children’s Music Festival St. Gilgen) and “Hölle am See”, and in November 2021 she will curate the exhibition “Mein Kollege der Affe. Tiere im Kabarett, 115 Jahre Theater und Kabarett “Die Hölle” im Theater an der Wien” (My colleague the monkey. Animals in cabaret performances. 115 years of theatre and the cabaret „Die Hölle” at the Theater an der Wien”).

Director-general Sabine Haag is happy: “The position was advertised publicly in Austria and abroad, and in the subsequent hearings Marie-Theres Arnbom convinced both the jury and me with her bold concept for the Theatermuseum, which envisages, among other things, opening the museum to new visitor groups.”

“The Theatermuseum in Lobkowitz Palace houses treasures and highlights of European cultural history that need to be rediscovered”, said Marie-Therese Arnbom. “It documents traditional theatre performances and controversial operas, modern operettas and frivolous cabarets, exhilarating ballets and innovative films. Its extensive holdings include fascinating stage models and spectacular costume drawings, photographs and programme notes, in which the past, the present and the future of the performing arts meet and enter into an intense dialogue with their audience. Together with my team, I want to turn the museum into a pulsating and entertaining meeting-place of scholarship, research and artistic exchange. I look forward to this fascinating challenge”.

There were seventeen qualified candidates from Austria and abroad, of which ten (six women and four men) were invited to the hearings.

Thomas Trabitsch, the current director of the Theatermuseum, is retiring at the end of 2021 after leading the museum for two decades.