

# Orpha Phelan

Stage Director



“ Absolutely one of the most complete stagings I’ve ever seen in an opera”  
**Skansga Dagbladet**

**Orpha Phelan** is an Irish opera director from County Kilkenny whose award-winning productions have been staged at leading opera houses across Europe.

She is a frequent collaborator with Irish National Opera, where her production of *La Cenerentola* was shortlisted for Best Production in the Irish Times Theatre Awards. There, she has also directed *Don Pasquale*, and *La Bohème* which she later brought to *Opéra de Montpellier*. At Wexford Festival Opera she directed a new production of Donizetti’s *Le Convenienze ed Inconvenienze Teatrali* (2024) and Félicien David’s *Lalla-Roukh* (2020), which received four Irish Times Theatre Award nominations including Best Opera and Best Director.

At Malmö Opera, Sweden, she directed *La Bohème* (film released by Naxos), *Les Contes d’Hoffman*, and *Jenůfa* (film released by Arthaus Musik) as well as a production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. For Opera North she has directed *Billy Budd* and a production of *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* which she later directed for Opera Australia at the Sydney Opera House. Other directing highlights include *Fidelio* for Longborough Festival Opera, *Così Fan Tutte* with Opera Theatre Company, and *L’Orfeo* at the Barbican.

She was awarded the Ring Awards Audience Prize for her concept of *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Oper Graz and Wagner Forum Graz. She received the European Opera Directors’ Award for her concept of *Hans Heiling* for Strasbourg Opera in collaboration with Opera Europa.

Celebrated for her work in contemporary opera, she received a Place de l’Opéra

prize for Best Opera for her production of Bernstein’s *A Quiet Place* at Opera Zuid. For two years running she was the recipient of Denmark’s prestigious Reumert Award for Best Opera

Production for her productions of Thomas Ades’ *Powder Her Face* and Jake Heggie’s *Dead Man Walking* (both with The Royal Danish Opera). She made her French debut at Opera National de Lorraine with Bernard Herrmann’s *Wuthering Heights*. She also directed the world premiere of *Raising Icarus* by Michael Zev Gordon for the Barber Institute in Birmingham, and at the Barbican she staged the UK premiere of Jonathan Harvey’s *Wagner Dream*.

Last season she directed a new production of *Owen Wingrave* at the Royal Northern College of Music. This season she directs *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Royal College of Music, *Tamerlano* with London Handel Festival and *Norma* at Irish National Opera, named as one of Opera Now’s ‘Must See new opera productions’. Further ahead she looks forward to her return to Malmö Opera with a new production of *Rusalka*.

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