

ALEXANDER POLZIN

SCULPTOR, PAINTER, STAGE DESIGNER AND DIRECTOR

Alexander Polzin was born in East Berlin in 1973 and completed his training as a stonemason before embarking on a career as a sculptor and painter, with his work exhibited in galleries and public spaces around the world. His intellectual and artistic curiosity have led to collaborations with writers, composers, musicians, choreographers and scientists, and in the last decade to stage design for dance, opera and theatre, as well as direction.

Polzin recently created the stage design for *Mitridate* (Malmö Opera/The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen/Concerto Copenhagen/Skånes Dansteater), an innovative three-way creative collaboration with director Ralf Pleger and choreographer Fernando Melo. He first worked with Pleger on Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at La Monnaie in 2019 (later staged at Teatro Comunale di Bologna in 2020), collaborating on the artistic concept as well as designing the sets.

Previous stage design includes Verdi's *Aida* at Israel Opera (2022), Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* for Grand Théâtre de Genève (2015), Wagner's *Parsifal* for Salzburg Festival and Beijing Music Festival (2013), and Verdi's *Falstaff* at L'Opéra des Nations (2016). He has designed the sets for four productions at Teatro Real, Madrid: Sotelo's *El público* (2015), Wagner's *Lohengrin* (2014), Rihm's *The Conquest of Mexico* (2013) and Jurado's *La Pagina en blanco* (2011).

As well as working with opera, Polzin has created visual representations of orchestral repertoire, including for Bernstein's *The Age of Anxiety* with Aarhus Symphony Orchestra and Grieg's *Peer Gynt* for Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, both in 2014. He made his directing debut at Tiroler Festspiele Erl with *Fidelio* in 2014.

Polzin has co-created various projects, including *The Art of Being Human* with viol player Laurence Dreyfus and choreographer Sommer Ulrickson, which had its world premiere at Boulez Saal, its UK premiere in Snape Maltings (2023) and was subsequently performed at Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg (2025). He also co-created *Love in Fragments*, working alongside cellist Alban Gerhardt, violinist Gergana Gergova and Ulrickson, inspired by Roland Barthes' *A Lover's Discourse*, which premiered at the 92Y in New York (2019). For 92Y he also created video and visuals for Toshio Hosokawa's *Futuri Shizuka* and George Benjamin's *Into the little Hill* (2020).

As a sculptor and painter, Polzin's works have been exhibited around the world. Most recently, his *Double Angel* was exhibited at the Venice Biennale, and one of his Bach sculptures was installed at the Royal Academy of Music in London. *Requiem (Homage to György Kurtág)* is currently installed at the New York City Library. His representations of the human form and the subtexts they contain are ideally suited to public spaces and have been seen in a vast array of civic centres and galleries. His public sculptures include *The Fallen Angel* for Collegium Helveticum, Zürich; *Giordano Bruno Monument* in Berlin's Potsdamer Platz; *Socrates* for Tel Aviv University, *The Couple* for Opéra national de Paris and his memorial sculpture to Paul Celan in the Anne Frank Garden, Paris.