

LAURENT PELLY

DIRECTOR, COSTUME DESIGNER

‘Laurent Pelly unfolds his magic on Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Teatro Real – an impeccable production, faithful to Wagner’s work’

El País, Wagner Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, Teatro Real 2024

French opera and theatre director Laurent Pelly is sought after by the world’s most prestigious houses, renowned for his surreal sense of invention and dark sense of humour. Bringing theatrical insight to his work with singers, he is also a master of detail, and designs costumes for all his productions, as well as, occasionally, sets. With a natural affinity for Italian and French repertoire, his creative curiosity has in recent years led him towards other composers, including Russian and Czech.

Operatic projects in 2025–26 include new productions of Offenbach’s *Robinson Crusoe* at Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Smetana’s *La Fiancée Vendue* at Teatro Real, Stephen Sondheim’s *Follies* at Opéra national du Rhin and Strauss’ *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Glyndebourne Festival, as well as numerous revivals, including *Falstaff* (La Monnaie/De Munt, Teatro San Carlo Napoli, Teatro del Liceu Barcelona), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Teatro de la Maestranza Seville) and *Eugene Onegin* (Palau de les Arts, Valencia). Last season he directed new productions of Gassman’s *L’Opéra Seria* at Teatro alla Scala Milan and a staging of Jule Styne/Stephen Sondheim’s *Gypsy* for Paris Philharmonie, which tours during 2025–26.

Other recent work includes an award-winning production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for Teatro Real Madrid and Royal Danish Opera, and *Le Chauve Souris* (in the original French) for Opéra de Lille, as well as *Il Turco in Italia* at Teatro Real Madrid, *Eugene Onegin* at La Monnaie/De Munt and Royal Danish Opera, *La périchole* at Théâtre des Champs Elysées, *Lakmé* at Opéra Comique, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Lille, Poulenc’s *La voix humaine/Les mamelles de Tirésias* for Glyndebourne Festival (winner of Best New Production at the International Opera Awards 2022), *La Cenerentola* (Amsterdam, Geneva, Valencia, Los Angeles), *Falstaff* (Teatro Real, La Monnaie/De Munt, Nikikai Opera Foundation Tokyo) and *Il nozze di Figaro* (Santa Fe, Matsumoto Festival Japan).

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MAESTROARTS

Pelly is equally adept in and passionate about theatre. His most recent theatrical venture was Goldoni's *L'Impresario de Smyrne* (*Scènes de la vie d'opéra*), featuring on-stage musicians, and the first French theatrical production of Mary Chase's *Harvey*, with acclaimed French actor Jacques Gamblin. He was Co-Director of Théâtre national de Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées from 2008–18, where creations included Ionesco's *La cantatrice chauve*, Aristophane's *Les oiseaux*, Goldoni's *L'oiseau vert* and Hugo's *Mangeront-ils?* as well as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Pelly's artistic drive leads him to an ever-expanding catalogue. He has long worked with French repertoire such as *Manon*, *Cendrillon*, *Pélleas et Mélisande*, *L'étoile* and *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, as well as Italian works including *La fille du régiment*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *I Puritani*, *La Cenerentola*, *La traviata*. His Russian and Czech catalogue includes Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Golden Cockerel*, Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges* and Janáček's *Cunning Little Vixen*. Plans include works by Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and Strauss. He is also drawn to musical theatre; stagings include Bernstein's *Candide*, Brecht–Weill's *Threepenny Opera* and Weill's *Mahagonny*, with more in the pipeline.

As a renowned Offenbach specialist, Pelly has directed many award-winning titles, including *Barbe-bleue*, *La vie parisienne*, *La belle Hélène*, *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*, *Orphée aux Enfers*, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, *Le voyage dans la lune* and most recently *La périchole* for the Théâtre des Champs Élysées. His production of *Le roi carotte* for Opéra de Lyon won Best Rediscovered Work at the 2016 International Opera Awards.

Appointments: Co-Director Pel-Mel Groupe (2017–); Co-Director (with Agathe Mélinand) of Théâtre national de Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées (2008–2018); Director Centre Dramatique National des Alpes (1997–2007); Founding Director Compagnie Le Pelican (1980–1996).

Awards: 2025 Best New Production (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) Premios Opéra XX1; 2025 Årets Reumert Opera of the Year (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*); 2022 Best New Production *La voix humaine/Les mamelles de Tirésias* International Opera Awards; 2022 Grand Prix du Plaisir du Théâtre; 2022 Best Director Premios Opéra XXI; 2019 Opera News Award; 2017 French Critics Prix de l'Europe Francophone (*Le Coq d'Or*); 2016 Best Director and Best Rediscovered Work (*Le roi carotte*) International Opera Awards; 2016 Spanish Critics Best Director (Premios Líricos Campoamor); 2015 French Critics Best Scenic Elements award (*L'oiseau vert*); 2011 French Critics Best Director and Best Set Design awards (*Mille francs de récompense*); 2009 SACD Best Director.