



Liebhabertheater Schloss Kochberg
Theater an der Klassik Stiftung Weimar

The Apothecary (Lo speciale)

Opera buffa by Joseph Haydn
Libretto based on Carlo Goldoni



Scene with ensemble

Musical director	Wolfgang Katschner
Musical assistant:	Gerd Amelung, Daniel Trumbull
Stage director	Nils Niemann
Assistant to the stage director	Lisa Altenpohl
Set design	Christopher Melching, Theater Vorpommern
Costumes	Christopher Melching, Tamiko Yamashita-Gegusch
German text version of recitatives	Babette Hesse
Edition of the musical score	Ulrike Becker
Composition of the recitatives in the 3 rd act	Thomas Leininger
Sempronio, the apothecary	Cornelius Uhle, baritone
Grilletta, his ward	Alessia Schumacher, soprano
Mengone, Sempronio's assistant	Christian Pohlers, Tenor
Volpino, a rich young bon vivant and client	Georg Bochow, Countertenor / Altus
Sempronio's second assistant (mute)	Lisa Altenpohl

lautten compagney BERLIN

A coproduction of *Liebhabertheater Schloss Kochberg - Theater an der Klassik Stiftung Weimar*
lautten compagney BERLIN
Theater Putbus / Theater Vorpommern Stralsund.Greifswald.Putbus
Tetru Manoel in Valetta / Malta

Production: Silke Gablenz-Kolakovic, Dörte Reisener, Gerd Amelung

Lo speciale was first staged in 1768 to celebrate the opening of the opera house at Esterhazy Palace in Hungaria where Haydn was musical director.

We staged the opera buffa according to the principles of historical acting performance of the late 18th century. The musicians play on historical instruments. Missing parts of the third act had to be filled in. Two arias were taken from Haydn's opera „Il mondo della Luna“. The recitatives are in German, arias in Italian.

The *European Route of Historic Theatres* connects the 120 most beautiful historic theatres in Europe. In a first co-production of theatres from this European Route we staged the opera buffa *The Apothecary (Lo speziale)* by Joseph Haydn together with *lautten compagney BERLIN* according to historical performance practice of its period. The musical director is Wolfgang Katschner. *Lautten compagney BERLIN* is one of the most renowned and creative German baroque orchestras. In their concerts and opera performances under Wolfgang Katschner's direction they delight the audience with an infectious and enthusiastic joy of playing. *Lautten compagney* is a regular guest at prestigious national and international concert stages and festivals. Their CD recordings received several awards. The stage director Nils Niemann is a specialist for historical performance on stage with long years of experience in baroque and classical stage productions. The preparations took us three full years, especially because the third act had to be partially restored because part of the score had been lost - something not untypical for almost all of Haydn's operas.

It is the first international opera co-production of *Liebhabertheaters Schloss Kochberg - Theater an der Klassik Stiftung Weimar* (1800), with *Teatru Manoel* (1732) in Valetta (Malta) and *Theater Putbus* (1820) / *Theater Vorpommern* on the island of Rügen where the opera will be staged in 2020 to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the theatre.

„Lo Speziale“ was first staged in 1768 at the opening of the opera house at Esterházy Palace (Hungary) where Haydn directed the orchestra and the opera as first master of music. Even Empress Maria Theresia visited one of the performances. From there the work – often called Haydn's best opera – conquered the stages.

The libretto is based on a piece by Carlo Goldoni: In the house of the old apothecary Sempronio lives his pretty ward Grilletta, who is endowed with a considerable dowry. So, of course, it is Sempronio's plan to marry Grilletta. Sempronio's assistant Mengone has to prepare all the medicines while his master prefers reading the newspaper and getting informed about world affairs. Grilletta and Mengone love each other but Mengone is very shy. Volpino, a rich bon vivant and client of the pharmacy, also has his eyes on Grilletta. Enough material for a comedy! In the end, two disguised Turks show up at Sempronio's and cause a proper confusion but also herald the happy ending.

One can see here, similar to Mozart's operas *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Così fan Tutte*: in Austria-Hungary of the 18th century, after the „Great Ottoman Wars“ and the sieges of Vienna, there still prevailed a certain fear of the ottomans; on the other hand everything oriental exerted a captivating fascination. And today?

Haydn's music is at the same time catchy and yet expressdly intricate and sophisticated for a work of this format that traces back to the Commedia dell'arte. The vocal parts are highly demanding which indicates that Haydn had an above-average cast of singers for his premiere. For the performances in Kochberg and Malta Haydn's score was adapted for a smaller orchestra.

Silke Gablenz-Kolakovic

Liebhabertheater Schloss Kochberg – Theater an der Klassik Stiftung Weimar