

## RAFAEL R. VILLALOBOS

Winner of the *European Opera-Directing Prize* (Vienna, 2013) and nominated for the *International Opera Awards* (London, 2016), Sevillian Rafael R. Villalobos has been highlighted by the Financial Times as one of the most promising names in international opera directing. Finalist of the *Independent Opera at Sadler's Wells* and artist-in-residence at the *Royal Academy of Spain in Rome*, in 2019 he received the *Princess of Girona Foundation Award for Arts and Literature* and the *Andalusians of the Future Award* (Joly Group), as well as two special prizes at the *Ring Award* in Graz and the *YAM Award* in Stockholm for the best opera project for young audiences.

Attracted to opera from an early age, he studied at the Conservatorio Cristóbal de Morales in his home city. He holds a degree in drama from RESAD and a Master's degree with distinction from the University of Barcelona and ESMUC, and continued his studies at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. As a director, playwright, set designer, costume designer, lighting designer and producer, he has created productions for the Teatro Real (Madrid), Gran Teatre del Liceu (Barcelona), Theater an der Wien (Vienna), La Monnaie (Brussels), Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier and the Teatro Massimo (Palermo), among other theatres in Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, Hungary and the United Kingdom.

He made his debut at the Peralada Festival in 2018 with Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, and returned in 2021 with *Orlando* by the same composer.

His most recent projects include Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Les Arts, Valencia), Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Antwerp, Belgium and Maestranza, Seville), Verdi's *Otello* (Gothenburg, Sweden), Handel's *Orlando* (Cologne, Germany) and Falla's *La Vida Verve / Torres' Tejas Verdes* (Teatro Real, Madrid), and he is also preparing new productions for La Monnaie (Brussels), the Staatsoper Berlin and the Teatro de la Zarzuela.

He will never direct *Tristan und Isolde*: he prefers to relax and let himself go before this masterpiece.