

# STAATSOPER STUTT GART

Press Release

Stuttgart, 7 April 2025

## Premiere of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* Biennale artist John Akomfrah at Staatsoper Stuttgart

Artist, filmmaker and writer John Akomfrah as well as director and set designer Silvia Costa collaborate on a new production of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* at Staatsoper Stuttgart. Akomfrah's contribution to that production includes new material as well as excerpts from his work for the British Pavilion at the Biennale di Venezia 2024. His film sequences act as a visual echo and commentary on Silvia Costa's installative directorial concept, bringing a post-colonial perspective to that story about identity and foreignness. The four elements fire, water, earth and air also play an important role in Silvia Costa's production, where the use of black and white dominates.

The new production of Verdi's *Otello* will premiere on 18 May 2025 at Staatsoper Stuttgart. Italian conductor Stefano Montanari is in charge of the musical direction. For Silvia Costa, it is her second work in Stuttgart following her *Juditha triumphans* by Antonio Vivaldi in 2022.

John Akomfrah, who was born in Ghana, is an award-winning artist, writer and filmmaker. His work, which is on show as various film and video installations all over the world, deals mostly with issues such as racial injustice, colonial heritage, diasporic identities, migration and climate change. Akomfrah rose to prominence in the early 1980s as a member of the Black Audio Film Collective (BAFC). In recent years, his work has developed into complex multi-screen installations presented in renowned galleries and museums worldwide. John Akomfrah won the Artes Mundi Prize in 2017 and was honoured with a knighthood in the UK Honours List in 2023. In 2024, he presented his new work *Listening All Night to the Rain* in the British Pavilion at the Biennale di Venezia, commissioned by the British Council for the 60th International Art Exhibition in Venice. John Akomfrah lives and works in London.

<https://www.staatsoper-stuttgart.de/en/schedule/a-z/otello/>

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