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**PANEL 3: LIVE ACCESSIBILITY NEW CONTEXTS**

"To Hear, to See, to Read: How Surtitles Influence Contemporary Operatic Landscape"

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VIDEO PRESENTATION <https://youtu.be/Ay9ufqhUPc0>

**ABSTRACT**

Translation has always been a significant part of operatic performances and nowadays surtitling is a fast-growing area of audiovisual translation. For a long time surtitles used to be but a minor element of operatic performances, but now they are one of the key factors of making opera more audience-friendly and accessible. More and more over they also become an integral part of a whole operatic production.

Operatic surtitles constantly evolve, especially with the rise of Internet opera broadcasts. Such broadcasts are often supplied with translations – usually a few languages are available, but some streaming services offer also auto-translation. Moreover, recently a few biggest opera houses have made numerous successful attempts at developing the potential of surtitles; such translations prove that surtitles can considerably shape the significance of operatic productions by, for example, showing a given character or an event in a different light. Adjustments of this kind are made particularly for the productions with altered interpretation or modernised setting.

The singers always sing the original version, so surtitles are sometimes the only element keeping the coherence of the whole production. While focusing on the surtitles following specific productions, one may refer to Vermeer and Reiss's skopos theory, according to which the purpose of the translation action determines the process and final shape of translations. For opera surtitles created for non-

standard productions such aim consists in adjusting the translation to the production and the audience and ensuring the performances' consistency and extraordinary interpretation. Thus, operatic subtitles also create certain images of libretti and whole operatic productions.

Using a number of examples of libretti translations provided by biggest opera houses, i.e., Metropolitan Opera House, Royal Opera House or Bayerische Staatsoper, I would like to depict how they shape the meaning of particular productions; no other kind of translation in opera can be so powerful and versatile. Subsequently, I will show how the development of technology, which has entered opera houses for good, affects even such traditional genres as opera: not only does it make opera more accessible, but it also determines its significance and reception.