



# LA FENICE

notiziario di informazione musicale e avvenimenti culturali

**PRESS RELEASE**

Venice, 6 July 2021

## **2021-2022 Opera and Ballet Season Symphony Season 2021-2022**

**The programme from 20 November 2021 to 22 October 2022**

The **2021-2022 Opera and Ballet Season** and **Symphony Season** of Fondazione Teatro La Fenice was presented today, Tuesday 6 July 2021, by the president of Fondazione Teatro La Fenice and the mayor of the City of Venice, Luigi Brugnaro (via web), by the superintendent and artistic director Fortunato Ortombina, the general director Andrea Erri, the artistic dance director Franco Bolletta, Maria Laura Faccini representing Regione del Veneto, and the vice-president of Marsilio Editore, Emanuela Bassetti.

“We are finally able to present a season that spans twelve months,” said Fortunato Ortombina, “after the countless ‘mini-seasons we have promoted since the pandemic began. We will therefore be able to disassemble the now renowned ark that is installed on the Fenice stage, which carried us from the floods, the *acquagrande*, of November 2019 and throughout the pandemic when it was at its peak. However, before going into the details, it is only right to express our heartfelt thanks to the city, the Municipality of Venice and the Venetians who have always been behind us during this long period, participating in the numerous performances, the dress rehearsals and the openings only for the *millenials* that we were able to offer, not only letting us feel their enthusiasm, but also their affection and the desire for a reopening. And it was with this Venetian public in mind that the Season we are presenting today was prepared, with the objective of reinforcing the identity of La Fenice with its territory, even more so since it is the year marking celebrations for the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Venice.

With one year’s delay, we can now pay homage to Ludwig van Beethoven: in fact, both the opera and symphony season will be opened by Myung-Whun Chung with *Fidelio* and the Beethoven’s Ninth. There are countless novelties not only on the opera scene, with numerous new productions and premières, but also on the symphony scene, with a considerable increase in the number of concerts. As always, we are continuing both our projects and particular themes, whilst paying attention to our public – both the international public that has always supported us, and our local public, whom we have always paid close attention to. With the latter in mind, we will



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soon be presenting a season ticket campaign that is full of interesting novelties, starting on Monday 27 September for the Opera, and Monday 4 for the Symphony Season.”

In brief, the **Opera Season** opens with Beethoven’s *Fidelio*, conducted by Chung and directed by Joan Anton Rechi; this will be followed by the world première of Giorgio Battiselli’s *Baruffe* with a production by Damiano Michieletto in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of Marsilio Editore; *Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten will have its première in Venice as will *I lombardi alla prima crociata* by Giuseppe Verdi, another opera that was never staged in Venice in the last century; the Baroque programme includes the première of the new productions of Antonio Vivaldi’s *Griselda* and Antonio Caldara’s *Scipione nelle Spagne* while for French opera lovers we have a new *Faust* by Charles Gounod, with direction by Joan Anton Rechi; but we also have Gaetano Donizetti’s *La Fille di régiment*, and one of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s masterpieces, *Apollo et Hyacinthus*. There are two ballets: *Lac* by Jean-Christoph Maillot from *Swan Lake* by Pëtr Il’ič Čajkovskij with Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo and *Marie-Antoinette* by Thierry Malandain, with an Italian première with the Malandain Ballet Biarritz. Finally, the programme also includes two operas from La Fenice’s great repertoire, *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini and *Il trovatore* by Giuseppe Verdi.

The **Symphony Season** will not only welcome some of today’s most famous conductors, but will also see the return of famous names, and attractive debuts in both Teatro La Fenice and on the new stage of Teatro Malibran, which has been renovated thanks to its recent restoration by La Fenice together with the technical partnership of Fest. Myung-Whun Chung will hold the baton for both the opening and the closing of the Season, with Beethoven’s Ninth and Mahler’s Third Symphony respectively. New conductors with the Orchestra of Teatro La Fenice include Charles Dutoit, Robert Trevino, Louis Lortie, Joana Carneiro – with the concert of Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du printemps* that was cancelled last year – and Dmitry Matvienko. The season also offers the return of two great stars of the streaming events that La Fenice offered during the pandemic, but this time in front of a live audience: Markus Stenz together with the renowned tenor Peter Seiffert for a completely Wagnerian programme, and John Axelrod who will conduct Bernstein and Tchaikovsky. Other names include Riccardo Frizza, Francesco Lanzillotta, Frédéric Chaslin and Fabio Biondi. Before the summer break, Fabio Luisi will conduct *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff in a concert that thanks to the Municipality of Venice might take place in Saint Mark’s Square (weather conditions permitting). The Christmas Concert in the Basilica of Saint Mark has also been confirmed, with Marco Gemmani and the Cappella Marciana, as has the New Year’s Concert conducted by Fabio Luisi, soloists the soprano Pretty Yende and the tenor Brian Jagde, which will be broadcast live on Rai1. The programmes range in both time and music culture, with works by Galuppi and Carl Orff, going from Spain to Russia, with many repertoire classics and in line with the past seasons, concentrating on Gustav Mahler.

In celebration of the seven hundredth anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri, La Fenice is proposing a project dedicated to the great poet, a sort of

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Dantean mini programme within the main 2021-2022 programme. It comprises four highly attractive appointments: a conference organised together with Ca' Foscari University, devoted to Dante and music, and a concert by the *ensemble* Le Parnasse français with madrigals by a variety of Renaissance composers inspired by the lyrics of the so-called Three Crowns (Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio) 7 December 2021); a project called *Un itinerario dantesco*, in collaboration with the mezzosoprano Manuela Custer and the pianist Raffaele Cortesi with the Dafne Quartet, offering a refined selection of nineteenth-twentieth-century pieces dedicated to Dante's work (date to be defined); lastly, *A riveder le stelle*, a performance based on the same-named book by Aldo Cazzullo, with the participation of Piero Piero Pelù in the *rock* interpretation of *Divina Commedia* with direction by Angelo Generali (9 December 2021).

In addition, there will also be the what have now become traditional collaborations, for example with **Musikamera**, **Musica con le Ali**, **Fondazione Mascarade Opera**, **Rai Radio3** and **VenetoJazz**, with their fascinating programmes of chamber music, opera and jazz on the Venetian stages; the new partnership with **Sky Arte** deserves a particular mention, as does the participation of the **Solisti della Fenice al Festivalletteratura di Mantova**: Saturday 11 September, the septet of the Venetian theatre's orchestra teachers will be the protagonists on the stage of Teatro Bibiena in Mantua, together with Marcello Fois, for an event called *Come capire le trame delle opere liriche [How do understand opera plots]* (based on Fois' *vade mecum*). The performance is supported by Intesa Sanpaolo.

As regards the music education sector, as usual all teachers who are enrolled in the **Fenice Education** community will receive the programme with the education activities for the 2021-2022 school year by July. In addition to the online activities we have been offering schools in the last few months, there will also be a return to the normal with two opera productions for the younger generation and their families: Tomaso Albinoni's *Engelberta* (October 2021) and Antonio Caldara's *Scipione nelle Spagne* (spring 2022), both of which will be staged at Teatro Malibran. The Education programme is based on a theme called *La Forma in Musica [Shape in Music]*. There will also be online education courses for teachers of all levels and a continuation of the trial courses offering transversal skills and online orientation on professions in opera, 'opera magazine', archive sources and music in the *Divina Commedia*; there will also be regular education laboratories and rehearsals of the concerts and operas programmed in the Opera and Symphony Season open to the public, and the lessons-concerts of the *Musikamera Giovani*. For further information contact: [formazione@teatrolafenice.org](mailto:formazione@teatrolafenice.org).

Lastly, after the enforced break in 2020 owing to the pandemic, the traditional **Premio Venezia national piano competition** will return, with the support of Fondazione Amici della Fenice in collaboration with Fondazione Teatro La Fenice. Created with the support of Regione del Veneto, this is now the thirty-seventh edition of what is now one of the most prestigious national piano competitions whose winners have gone on to become outstanding figures in the field today. The competition is only for pianists who are not older than 24, of any nationality, and who

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graduated with the highest marks (10 in the pre-reform education system, or between 105 to 110 with a first level academic diploma) in music conservatories or equivalent music institutes in Italy in the academic year 2019-2020. The competition will take place from 22 to 28 November, 2021.

Intesa Sanpaolo is the Main Partner this season. For years, the opera and symphony seasons of Teatro La Fenice di Venezia has been a fundamental reference point for the artistic and cultural life of Italians but not only. For the fourth year running, Intesa Sanpaolo has confirmed its support for the Opera House's performances, continuing its support for the historic Venetian institution and with the country in general, at a moment in which art and culture are more necessary than ever.

In addition to the Founding Members represented by the State, Regione del Veneto and the Municipality of Venice, the support of our institutional partner, Fondazione de Venezia has also been confirmed, thus supporting not only the Opera House's social role but also its cultural role in the region.

For more information visit [www.teatrolafenice.it](http://www.teatrolafenice.it).

## 2021-2022 Opera and Ballet Season

***Fidelio*** by **Ludwig van Beethoven** will open the Season of La Fenice. The opera will be staged with a new production by the Opera House, with direction by Joan Anton Rech, and musical direction by Myung-Whun Chung. The cast includes Ian Koziara (Florestan), Tilmann Rönnebeck (Rocco) and Tamara Wilson (Leonore). Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio* is based on a libretto by Joseph Sonnleithner and Georg Friedrich Treitschke, based on Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's *Léonore*, which was a text from 1798 belonging to the *à sauvetage* genre that was very popular then and put to music by various composers. Its origins are both complex and tormented. So much so that there are three versions: the first, in three acts, was composed in 1804-5 and debuted in 1805 in a Vienna that was occupied by French troops. The third and final version, in two acts and going back to 1814, debuted at the Kärntnertortheater. *Fidelio* will be staged at Teatro La Fenice on 20, 23, 25, 27, and 30 November 2021.

A few days before Christmas will see the return to Venice of one of the most popular ballet companies on the international scene: after *Romeo e Giulietta* in 2019, **Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo** will return to La Fenice with **Lac**, a reinterpretation of *Swan Lake* by the choreographer Jean-Christophe Maillot. Based on a plot by Maillot conceived together with the writer Jean Rouaud, to the original music by Tchaikovsky with additions by Bertrand Maillot, it will be played live by the Fenice Orchestra, conducted by Igor Dronov. The choreography is a combination of classic ballet and modern dance, creating a performance that is both dramatic and sensual, with an intriguing air of tension that continues from beginning to end. The sets are by Ernest Pignon-Ernest, costumes by Philippe Guillotel and lights by Maillot with

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Samuel Thery. The ballet debuted at Grimaldi Forum Monaco on 27 December and will be on stage at Teatro La Fenice on 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 December 2021.

Once again, dance will be the protagonist in the new year with the Venetian debut of the **Malandain Ballet Biarritz**. The French company will perform *Marie-Antoinette*, with choreography by Thierry Malandain to music by Franz Joseph Haydn and Christoph Willibald Gluck and it will have its Italian première after debuting in 2019 at the Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles. The creation is a portrait in dance of the controversial figure of the queen of France, and of her life in Versailles in particular, amidst frivolousness, court intrigue and power play. With set and costumes by Jorge Gallardo and lights by François Menou, the performance was made possible thanks to the generous support of Palazzo Garzoni and in collaboration with the Malandain per la Danza endowment fund. It will be staged at Teatro La Fenice on 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 January 2022.

Giorgio Battistelli's new opera *Le baruffe*, a world première commissioned by Fondazione Teatro La Fenice is the fruit of the long-standing collaboration between Teatro La Fenice and Marsilio Editori, which on this occasion also has the support of Regione del Veneto and the V-A-C Foundation partnership to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the publishing house. "Goldoni was the obvious choice to celebrate this anniversary and to remember the soul of the publishing house, Cesare De Michelis who began working on a national edition of the playwright's works in 1993, with the objective of bringing to light their amazing topicality and modernness," explained the vice president of Marsilio, Emanuela Bassetti. Based freely on the Venetian comedy by Carlo Goldoni, with a libretto by Damiano Michieletto, the protagonists of the opera are fishermen from the lagoon, and it is set in Chioggia. The music is by Giorgio Battistelli, who was awarded the 2018 Premio Abbiati for the Fenice's production of *Richard III*, the Fenice Orchestra and Choir will be conducted by Enrico Calessio, with direction by Damiano Michieletto, sets by Paolo Fantin and costumes by Carla Teti. There will be five performances at Teatro La Fenice on 22, 24, 26 February, 2 and 4 March 2022.

The opera programme offers both contemporary music and one of Giuseppe Verdi's early works with a new production of *Lombardi alla prima crociata*, adding another piece to the programme dedicated to Verdi's early works that will continue in the coming years. Verdi's fourth opera premièred at Teatro alla Scala in Milan on 11 February 1843 and was met with the same resounding success as *Nabucco* one year earlier in the same opera house; the *Lombardi* is practically a novelty for the La Fenice, since it was never staged during the twentieth century and it was only performed in the nineteenth century once after its debut at La Scala. A four-act opera by Temistocle Solera, based on the same-named poem by Tommaso Grossi, the *Lombardi* develops the theme of the meeting between the East and the West, between cultures and religions – a theme that is of the greatest relevance today with direction by Valentino Villa, sets by Massimo Checchetto and costumes by Elena Cicorella. The conductor will be Sebastiano Rolli who will be debuting on the Venetian stage, with a cast that includes the bass Michele Pertusi, the soprano Roberta Mantegna and the tenor Antonio Poli. Dates for the performances are 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 April 2022.

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As mentioned earlier, Charles Gounod's *Faust* is to return. After the production last June, it will be staged with a completely new version, but maintaining its highly symbolic value; in fact, during the nineteen twenties it was the most frequently performed opera when normal life was finally able to resume after the tragedies of the First World War and the 'Spanish' flu. The opera was performed in 1883 at the opening of the New York Metropolitan, a city that already had a population of several million, and then again at La Fenice, when it reopened in 1920 after closing in 1914. This is because the opera, the protagonist of which was the devil, enjoyed such incredible success all over the world. The staging is a new production by La Fenice in co-production with Teatro Comunale in Bologna, with direction by Joan Anton Rechi, with sets by Sebastien Ellirch and costumes by Giorgia Salaverri, conducted by Frédéric Chaslin and with Ivan Ayon Rivas, Alex Esposito, and Carmela Remigio in the main roles. The dates are 22, 24, 26, 28, and 30 April 2022.

As regards Baroque music, which has been a specific focus in the Opera House's opera seasons for the last few years, the fascinating path of discovering Vivaldi's operas continues: after *Orlando furioso* (2018), *Dorilla in Tempe* (2019) and more recently *Farnace* (2021), La Fenice is now presenting a new production of the Red Priest's three-act opera *Griselda*, based on a libretto by Apostolo Zeno and revised by Carlo Goldoni, which premièred on 18 May 1735 at Teatro San Samuele. Once again Diego Fasolis, one of the greatest experts on the music of Antonio Vivaldi, will conduct the orchestra while the direction, sets, and costumes are by Gianluca Falaschi. After the debut of the *Baruffe*, this is another opera that is connected to Goldoni, allowing La Fenice to pay homage once again to the city of Venice on the 1600-year anniversary of its foundation. *Griselda* will be performed at Teatro Malibran on 29 April, 3, 5, 7 and 8 May 2022.

*Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten will be performed at La Fenice for the first time. Despite the friendship between the Opera House and the composer, the opera had never been performed in Venice. A resounding success by the English composer, the opera is a prologue and three acts with a libretto by Montagu Slater, based on George Crabbe's poem *The Borough*, which debuted at Sadler's Wells on 7 June 1945 in a London that was still suffering greatly after the war. The work's success represented a glorious revival for English art. This new production is by the Scottish director Paul Curran, with sets and costumes by Gary McCann, while Juraj Valčuha will be holding the baton. The main roles include the tenor Brenden Gunnell and the bass-baritone Mark Doss. The performance will go on stage 24, 26, 29 June, 2, and 5 July 2022.

After the summer break, with the revival of two of the most popular titles with opera buffs, the public will finally be able to come and admire some of La Fenice's masterpieces once again: *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini with the highly popular production by Alex Rigola, conducted by Sesto Quatrini and a cast that includes Monica Zanettin and Vincenzo Costanzo in the main roles (10, 16, 18, 20, and 22 September 2022); and *Il trovatore* from Giuseppe Verdi's popular trilogy with direction by Lorenzo Mariani, sets and costumes by William Orlandi, conducted by

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Francesco Ivan Ciampa and Francesca Dotto and Antonio Poli in the main roles (11, 15 17 21, and 23 September 2022).

There will be two new productions in the autumn. The first is an opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, which is part of the programme dedicated to the operas by the genius from Salzburg. After *Il re pastore* and *Der Schauspieldirektor* La Fenice will be presenting a new production of *Apollo et Hyacinthus*, the very first opera Amadeus wrote at the age of eleven, a Latin intermezzo that was commissioned by Salzburg University to close the end of the 1766-1767 academic year. Written by the Benedictine Rufinus Widle, a local rhetoric professor, it was performed between the acts of the tragedy *Clementia Croesi*, also by Father Widl. The opera is directed by Cecilia Liori and will be conducted by Giancarlo Andretta. The performance is part of a project dedicated to the younger generation, and the result of the collaboration between La Fenice and the Venice Academy of Fine Arts; it will be staged at Teatro Malibran on 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 October 2022.

The season will close with the sparkle of the life and canto of Gaetano Donizetti's *Fille du régiment*. Performed in Paris, this was the Italian composer's first French opera. It is a two-act *opéra-comique* with a libretto by Jean-François-Alfred Bayard and Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and was completed during Donizetti's highly prolific period in the capital in 1839-1840. It premiered at the Opéra-Comique on 11 February 1840, and it was on this occasion that the Hector Berlioz, listing the Parisian commitments of his Italian colleague, spoke of an 'invasion'. "One can no longer speak of opera houses of Paris", he wrote, "but of the opera houses of Donizetti." After its initial icy reception, *Fille* was met with increasing success, so much so that by the beginning of the next century he had had over a thousand performances at the Opéra-Comique. For a composer who was not French, in this opera house it was a record. With a new production by La Fenice in coproduction with Teatro Regio in Turin, the staging of the opera is by Barbe&Doucet – alias Renaud Doucet and André Barbe, with musical direction by Stefano Ranzani. The cast includes the tenor John Osborn as Tonio, the soprano Maria Grazia Schiavo as Marie and Marisa Laurito as Duchess Krakenthorp. There will be five performances on 14, 16, 18, 20, and 22 October 2022.

There will be another date with *Opera Giovanni*, the Fenice project in collaboration with the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice, devised for schools, families and the younger generations. The title that has been selected is another 'rediscovery' of the Venetian Baroque repertory: *Scipione nelle Spagne* by the composer Antonio Caldara, a three-act drama to music with a libretto by Apostolo Zeno, which debuted at the Vienna Hoftheater on 4 November 1722, and which will have its modern-day première at Teatro Malibran, three hundred years after its debut. The Benedetto Marcello Conservatory Orchestra will be playing, conducted by Francesco Erle, while the set design is by Francesco Bellotto. There will be three performances on 26, 27 and 28 May 2022.

Season-ticket sales for the Opera Season (five different season ticket choices with ten operas each) will be open from Monday September 27 to Wednesday October 28 2021. New season-tickets may be purchased from Monday October 11.

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Season ticket sales for the Symphony Season (two season ticket choices with fifteen or ten concerts) will be open from Monday October 4 to Thursday November 4, 2021. New season tickets may be purchased from Monday October 18. For more information visit [www.teatrolafenice.it](http://www.teatrolafenice.it).