



La Biennale di Venezia announces its 66th International Festival of Contemporary Music
Out of Stage: New Experimental Music Theatre
programmed by the Music Biennale's Director Lucia Ronchetti
Venice, 14 - 25 September 2022

The Venice Biennale announced the programme for the **66th International Festival of Contemporary Music**. Programmed by its director, composer Lucia Ronchetti, *Out of Stage* will present a wide perspective on contemporary music theatre; the role of new technologies and multimedia, and ways in which virtual and augmented reality is being applied to sound.

Out of Stage refers to works conceived for places and situations other than those offered by traditional stages, presenting a wide perspective on contemporary music theatre and the role of new technologies.

New commissions from the Biennale include experimental theatre works by **Simon Steen-Andersen**, **Helena Tulve**, **Michel van der Aa**, **Paolo Buonvino** and **Annelies Van Parys**, in addition to the Italian premieres of new projects by **Alexander Schubert**, **Rino Murakami** and **Ondřej Adámek** co-produced with other European institutions.

The Biennale's Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement 2022 will be presented to **Giorgio Battistelli** whose *Jules Verne* will be presented in a new production performed by **Ars Ludi**, winner of the **Silver Lion 2022**, on the inaugural evening of the Festival at the Teatro La Fenice. The new production will feature the construction of large sound sets as part of the stage design by Angelo Linzalata. Battistelli, the author of this chamber fantasy inspired by Jules Verne, will appear in a new role as director. Ideally suited to interpret this new vision of percussion theatre are Ars Ludi, the charismatic musicians who consider every performance an existential experience to be shared in a spirit of fun and complicity.

The Festival will involve the entire city of Venice, from the historical spaces of the **Arsenale**, **Ca' Giustinian**, the **Basilica di San Marco**, **Teatro La Fenice**, the **Malibran** and **Goldoni** theatres, the **Scuola Grande di San Rocco** and many others.

The 2022 Festival programme further examines the role of contemporary music theatre by presenting works by **Mauricio Kagel**, **Georges Aperghis**, **Carola Bauckholt** and **François Sarhan**.

Contemporary music theatre is constantly evolving, elaborating forms from the past that can bring meaning to the present time and to the complex global reality we live in. Diverse compositional voices presented include **Mehdi Jalali** from Iran; **Yvette Janine Jackson**, the American composer representative of the Afro-Diasporic Experimentalism; **Klein**, the Nigerian performer based in London; the American composer and producer of Taiwanese origin **X.Lee**; the composer of electronic music from Florence **Daniele Carcassi** and the group of Native American composers showcased by the

collective project of the **Shenandoah Conservatory**, which includes a world premiere performance of a work by the composer of Mohican origin **Brent Michael Davids**.

Lucia Ronchetti comments:

“The Biennale Musica 2022 offers artists who bring protest back to contemporary music theatre a space to present their work against dispossession, abuse, the denial of rights, the refusal to acknowledge and respect sexual identity - all of which continue to take place before our very eyes. We will be giving some of these voices a place in which to express themselves, encouraging them to experiment with new forms of performance.”

The fertile collaboration between Biennale Musica and Rai Radio3 continues with four episodes of **Lezioni di Musica**, the programme curated by Paola Damiani and broadcast live from Ca' Giustinian, in which Giovanni Bietti will explore the history of ancient and modern experimental music theatre in Venice. In addition, a cycle of audio-documentaries for **Tre soldi** documents the composition and performance workshops attended by the young artists selected for the Biennale College Musica. **Il teatro di Radio3** will host the live broadcast of the new opera created by the young Catalan composer Gemma Ragués.

BBC Radio 3 will produce a special edition of The New Music Show which will be dedicated to experimental music theatre curated by Tom Service who will be in Venice during the Festival to moderate the two concerts on September 17th and 18th dedicated to instrumental theatre.

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Notes for Editors

Images of the Festival may be downloaded from: <http://ftp.labiennale.org> (username: dmtfoto; password: 2022).

Instructions for accreditation may be found on the Biennale website at: www.labiennale.org.

Full programme of events can be viewed here:

<https://static.labiennale.org/files/musica/Documenti/music-programme-22b.pdf>

Highlights of the Biennale Musica 2022 include:

Sleep Laboratory by **Alexander Schubert**, an immersive and participatory performance for ensemble and virtual reality which seeks to recreate a group sleep session with interpolations based on the themes of hypnosis, journey and meditation. As the people in the audience lie in small individual compartments on cots wearing VR headsets, Schubert transports them from the performance venue into various sound environments that take the form of dreams and visions.

The Return, a new project by **Simon Steen-Andersen**, one of the most widely acknowledged voices in post-Kagelian experimentation. The dramaturgy of the piece, based on Claudio Monteverdi's *Il ritorno di Ulisse in patria*, uses quotations and re-elaborations of the original score to tie into a reconnaissance of the sites on which the Teatro di San Cassiano and the Teatro dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo, the first public theatres in Venice, once stood and to evoke the opera's first performance.

Visions by **Helena Tulve**, the Estonian composer who continues Arvo Pärt's experimentation in composition within the field of liturgical vocal music, postulates the creation of a new form of contemporary *sacra rappresentazione*, based on the musical manuscripts in the Library of Santa Maria della Fava and on the Gospel of Mary Magdalene. In collaboration with the Estonian ensemble Vox Clamantis and the historical Cappella Marciana, Tulve has conceived a work in which the sound from different instrumental and vocal sources inside the Basilica transforms the acoustic space into a complex pulsating instrument.

The Dutch composer and director **Michel van der Aa** has imagined a new work for the Biennale Musica 2022, *The Book of Water*, based on the theme of land erosion because of rain and flooding, after the novel *Der Mensch erscheint im Holozän* by Max Frisch and working on the images, movements and sounds of different environments. The composer will bring a theatrical vision of the lagoon environment into one of the most ancient theatres in Venice, the Teatro Goldoni, as if it was a re-evocation of what took place for the very first opera performed at the Teatro di San Cassiano in 1637, Francesco Mannelli's *Andromeda*, which opened with a scene of a nocturnal water landscape lit by faint candlelight.

The Sicilian composer **Paolo Buonvino**, known for his soundtracks, has designed a scenic concert based on the experience of collective breathing as a sound and as a vital gesture. The project is inspired by the Sicilian and Mediterranean culture of the *çiatu* (breath) and by the relation between the rhythm of human breathing and that of the waves that surround the island. Paolo Buonvino has conceived a stage structure that will hold, protect and host the audience of *çiatu*, inside which the musicians will create a collective breathing exercise, in a participatory form that seeks to evoke and transcend the experience of suffering and fear brought by the pandemic.

Belgian composer **Annelies Van Parys** in *Notwehr* re-elaborates Adriano Banchieri's collection of twenty madrigals for five voices *Barca di Venetia per Padova*, published in 1605 an overview in music of the society of the time that gathers a variety of characters, idealised portraits of musicians from foreign countries and various Italian regions on a journey by boat along the canals. The journey will take place in the form of a scenic concert in the Sala Capitolare of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, painted by Tintoretto, which will include figures from the past and the present, giving rise to a dialogue between two realities distant in time but close in terms of expressive and dramaturgical means.

La Biennale Musica

Since its founding in 1930, the Biennale di Musica has been widely regarded as one of the most influential and important festivals devoted to contemporary music. Responsible for commissioning hundreds of works by leading composers it has also presented numerous world or European premieres of works including: Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (1947), Hindemith's *Cardillac* (1948), Berg's *Lulu* (1949), Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* (1951), Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess* (1954) and Nono's *Prometeo* (1984).

The Biennale's Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement is one of the music world's most prestigious awards and past recipients include Luciano Berio, György Kurtág, Wolfgang Rihm, Peter Eötvös, Pierre Boulez, Sofija Gubajdulina, Steve Reich, Tan Dun, George Benjamin and Kaja Saariaho.

Lucia Ronchetti

Born in Rome in 1963, composer Lucia Ronchetti studied Composition and Computer Music at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia and Philosophy at the University of Rome. Further studies were undertaken in Paris with Gérard Grisey, IRCAM, the Sorbonne, Columbia University and with Hans Werner Henze among many other leading composers.

Ronchetti has frequently been composer in residence in numerous places across North America and Europe and has had her works performed by Oper Frankfurt, Opera di Roma, Staatsoper Unter den

Linden in Berlin, Teatro Massimo, Palermo, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Romaeuropa Festival, Düsseldorf, Kölner Philharmonie, the Nouvelle Philharmonie in Paris, and at Defilé Dior.

Her new choral opera *Les paroles gelées* premiered at the Nouvelle Philharmonie in Paris on March 19th.

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