

VENICE MUSIC BIENNALE ANNOUNCES 2021 PROGRAMME, 'CHORUSES', SEPTEMBER 17-26

FIRST MUSIC BIENNALE UNDER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LUCIA RONCHETTI

FIFTEEN WORLD PREMIERES TO BE GIVEN

KAIJA SAARIAHO RECEIVES GOLDEN LION LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Lucia Ronchetti. Photo credit: Vanessa Francia

The programme for the 2021 Venice Music Biennale, one of the six Biennale di Venezia that showcase the best in contemporary Architecture, Art, Dance, Film, Music and Theatre, has been announced by Artistic Director Lucia Ronchetti. For her first Biennale as Artistic Director the Italian composer is presenting 15 world premieres over 10 days of performances across Venice under the heading of 'Choruses.'

'Choruses' will focus on contemporary choral writing through performances of new commissions and some of the most important works of the last 50 years that explore the human voice. The Venice Music Biennale 2021 is fostering a dialogue between the Venetian past and the present, and the possible renaissance of vocal polyphony through performances from major Venetian organisations across the city.

The 65th Music Biennale will welcome major European vocal and choral ensembles such as Theatre of Voices from Copenhagen, Neue Vocalsolisten from Stuttgart, Accentus choir from Paris, vocal ensemble Sequenza 9.3 from Paris and SWR Vokalensemble from Stuttgart, as well as the renowned historical Venetian choirs the Cappella Marciana di San Marco and the choir of the Teatro La Fenice.

The Festival will open at the Teatro La Fenice with a performance of *Oltra mar* for choir and orchestra by Kaija Saariaho, winner of the Golden Lion for Music, whose chamber work *Only the sound remains* will also be presented at the Teatro Malibran. The Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Silver Lion for Music, will be present throughout the festival with world premieres, the production of monumental vocal works and as tutors of the College Biennale Musica.

The festival will present three commissions of the Venice Music Biennale. Marta Gentilucci, has been commissioned to write a work for four reciting voices and mixed choir. Another is a new composition for voices recorded in the Basilica di San Marco by the German sound-artist Christina Kubisch, in collaboration with the Cappella Marciana of the Basilica di San Marco conducted by Marco Gemmani. The third commission is for a new work by the African-American composer George Lewis. His new composition for the Neue Vocalsolisten and live electronics is dedicated to the legendary figure of the first philosopher of African origin, Anthony William Amo, who lived in the 18th century and was a professor at the universities of Halle and Jena.

Other world premieres being given during the Festival include *Reconnaissance* by Kaija Saariaho (commissioned by the Accentus Choir); a new work of vocal dramaturgy by Sergej Newsky (commissioned by the Neue Vocalsolisten); a work by Israeli composer Sivan Eldar for the Accentus Choir and a new choral work by Francesco Filidei on a text by Nanni Balestrini commissioned by the SWR Vokalensemble.

Other important and representative works for choir and vocal ensemble are by renowned composers such as George Aperghis, David Lang, Sylvano Bussotti, Luca Francesconi, Samir Odeh-Tamimi, Morton Feldman, Arvo Pärt, Hans Abrahamsen and Valentin Silvestrov.

Four concerts for solo voice presented by renowned vocalists and vocal performers will contribute to a broader view of contemporary vocality. The concerts will feature the charismatic Egyptian producer and DJ Ahmed Zuli, the Albanian vocalist Elina Duni, the renowned Dublin-based vocalist and composer Jennifer Walshe and Swiss-Ghanaian composer and vocalist Joy Frempong.

The festival programme includes various theoretical events linked to vocal production, including a conference by Gianmario Borio, director of the Giorgio Cini Foundation Institute of Music, Kaija Saariaho in conversation with critic and broadcaster Tom Service, as well as a meeting between the Neue Vocalsolisten and Björn Gottstein, artistic director of the Donaueschinger Musiktage. Several meetings on vocal writing with the invited composers are planned at the Conservatorio di Venezia "Benedetto Marcello".

Lucia Ronchetti is one of the leading Italian composers working today who is especially celebrated for her vocal works. On April 30, the final concert dedicated to four of Ronchetti's works will be streamed to celebrate the conclusion of her visiting professorship of composition at Frankfurt's Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst. On June 27 the Oper Frankfurt will premiere Ronchetti's opera *Inferno* and 2021 also sees the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin produce her chamber opera *Pinocchio's Abenteuer*, which also receives a new production at Oper Frankfurt. A new opera project will also be created at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf.

All press enquiries to Simon Millward, Premier PR, simon.millward@premiercomms.com

The full programme of the Venice Music Biennale 2021 is:

FRIDAY 17 September

12.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony
KAIJA SAARIAHO

12.30

Tom Service in conversation with Kaija Saariaho

16.00

Conservatorio di Musica
"Benedetto Marcello"

BIENNALE COLLEGE MUSIC

JACK SHEEN

SOUND INSTALLATION, 2021 ***

Installation will run throughout the whole Festival

20.00

Teatro La Fenice

KAIJA SAARIAHO

OLTRA MAR, 2009 *

for choir and orchestra

HANS ABRAHAMSEN / CLAUDE DEBUSSY

CHILDREN'S CORNER, 2012

Teatro La Fenice orchestra and choir

Ernest Martinez-Isquierdo, conductor

Presented in conjunction with Fondazione Teatro La Fenice

SATURDAY 18 September

09.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

RAI RADIO 3 MUSIC LESSONS curated by Paola Damiani

ADRIAN WILLAERT (c. 1490-1562)

Salmi Spezzati for two choirs

Giovanni Bietti, presentation

15.00

Sala d'Armi E – Arsenale

BIENNALE COLLEGE MUSIC

CHONGLIAN YU

SOUND INSTALLATION, 2021 ***

Sound installation will run until the end of the Festival

19.00

Teatro Malibran

KAIJA SAARIAHO

ONLY THE SOUND REMAINS, 2015 **

Chamber work in two parts

Co-production between La Biennale di Venezia, Tokio Bunka Kaikan, Palau de la Musica, Tampere Hall

Clement Mao-Takacs, conductor

Aleksi Barriere, director

In conjunction with Fondazione Teatro La Fenice

SUNDAY 19 September

09.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

RAI RADIO 3 MUSIC LESSONS curated by Paola Damiani

GIOVANNI GABRIELI (c. 1555-1612)

In ecclesiis with three choirs and basso continuo

Exaudi me Domine with four choirs

Giovanni Bietti, presentation

16.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (III)

GEORGE LEWIS

AMO 2020 ***

For 5 voices and live electronics

La Biennale di Venezia commission

SERGEJ NEWSKI

DIE EINFACHEN, 2021 ***

For 6 voices

Commissioned by Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart

Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart

19.30

Auditorium Lo Squero

Fondazione Giorgio Cini

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE VOICE: ON EXPERIMENTAL COMPOSITIONS FOR VOCAL ENSEMBLES

conference by **GIANMARIO BORIO**

21.00

Auditorium Lo Squero, Fondazione Giorgio Cini

DAVID LANG

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL PASSION, 2008

For 4 voices

ARVO PÄRT

STABAT MATER, 1985

For soprano, contralto, tenor, violin, viola and cello

Theater of Voices

Parco della Musica

Contemporanea Ensemble

MONDAY 20 September

12.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

Silver Lion Award ceremony presented to **NEUE VOCALSOLISTEN STUTTGART**

12.30

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

Björn Gottstein in conversation with Neue Vocalsolisten

20.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (III)

MORTON FELDMAN

THE ROTHKO CHAPEL, 1971

SAMIR ODEH-TAMIMI

TIMNA, 2018-2020 *

FRANCESCO FILIDEI

TUTTO IN UNA VOLTA, 2020 ***

For double choir.

A SWR Vokalensemble commission

SWR Vokalensemble Stuttgart

Parco della Musica Contemporanea Ensemble

Yuval Weinberg, conductor

TUESDAY 21 September

11.00

Conservatorio di Musica

“Benedetto Marcello”

Meeting with **GEORGE LEWIS**

18.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (III)

GEORGE APERGHIS

WÖLFLI KANTATA, 2006 *

For vocal ensemble and choir

Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart

SWR Vokalensemble Stuttgart

Yuval Weinberg, conductor

21.00

Basilica di San Marco

CHRISTINA KUBISCH

TRAVELLING VOICES, 2021 ***

For recorded and diffused voices based on the repertoire of the

16th century Venetian school

La Biennale di Venezia commission

With compositions by **ADRIAN WILLAERT, ANDREA GABRIELI, GIOVANNI GABRIELI AND CLAUDIO**

MONTEVERDI

Cappella Marciana

Marco Gemmani, conductor

Sound curated by CIMM (Centro Informatica Musicale and Multimediale de La Biennale di Venezia) in

conjunction with Basilica and Procuratoria di San Marco

WEDNESDAY 22 September

11.00

Conservatorio di Musica

“Benedetto Marcello”

Meeting with **CHRISTINA KUBISCH**

17.00

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale

BIENNALE COLLEGE MUSIC

Programme to be announced

ENSEMBLE VOCALE EVO

21.00

Teatro del Parco Albanese, Bissuola (Mestre)

ZULI

Live performance for voice & electronics

THURSDAY 23 September

11.00

Conservatorio di Musica

“Benedetto Marcello”

Meeting with **JENNIFER WALSH**

18.00

Via Garibaldi and Teatro alle Tese (II)

MARTA GENTILUCCI

MOVING STILL - PROCESSIONAL CROSSINGS (2020/2021) ***

For four reciting voices and a vocal ensemble

Processional journey to original texts by Elisa Biagini, Irène Gayraud, Shara McCallum and Evie Shockley

A Biennale di Venezia commission

Elisa Biagini, Irène Gayraud, Shara McCallum, Evie Shockley, reciting voices

Vocal Ensemble Sequenza 9.3

Voices from the Conservatorio di Musica “Benedetto Marcello” singing class

Antonello Pocetti, director

Sound curated by CIMM

Catherine Simonpietri, conductor

In conjunction with Conservatorio di Musica “Benedetto Marcello” - Venice

21.00

Basilica di San Marco

VALENTIN SILVESTROV

LITURGICAL CHANTS, 2015

For mixed a cappella choir

Cappella Marciana

Marco Gemmani, conductor

In conjunction with Basilica and Procuratoria di San Marco

FRIDAY 24 September

11.00

Conservatorio di Musica

“Benedetto Marcello”

Meeting with **KAIJA SAARIAHO**

18.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (III)

KAIJA SAARIAHO

RECONNAISSANCE, 2019 ***

For choir, percussion and double bass

A Accentus choir commission

SIVAN ELDAR

AFTER ARETHUSA, 2019 ***

For choir and electronics

A Accentus choir commission

KAIJA SAARIAHO

TAG DES JAHRS, 2001*

For choir and electronics

SYLVANO BUSSOTTI

FOR 24 TREBLE OR ADULT VOICES, 1967

Accentus choir

Marcus Creed, conductor

21.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

ELINA DUNI

PARTIR

Solo performance for voice, guitar, percussion and piano

SATURDAY 25 September

09.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

RAI RADIO 3 MUSIC LESSONS, curated by Paola Damiani

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI (1567-1643)

Vespro della Beata Vergine

Giovanni Bietti, presentation

17.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (II)

JENNIFER WALSHE

IS IT COOL TO TRY HARD NOW, 2017 *

Solo performance for voice, film and live electronics

21.00

Teatro del Parco Albanese, Bissuola (Mestre)

JOY FREMPONG

CHANGE AND CHANCE, 2021 ***

Solo act for voice and live electronics

SUNDAY 26 September

09.00

Ca' Giustinian – Sala delle Colonne

RAI RADIO 3 MUSIC LESSONS, curated by Paola Damiani

ANTONIO VIVALDI, (1678-1741)

Magnificat for soloists, two choirs and two orchestras RV 610a

Giovanni Bietti, presentation

18.00

Arsenale – Tese dei Soppalchi

BIENNALE COLLEGE MUSIC

LUCA FRANCESCONI

HERZSTÜCK, 2012

For voice ensemble

MARIA VINCENZA CABIZZA

NEW COMPOSITION, 2021***

MANUEL HIDALGO NAVAS

NEW COMPOSITION, 2021***

Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart with electronics curated by CIMM

21.00

Arsenale – Teatro alle Tese (II)

BIENNALE COLLEGE MUSICA

DANIELE CARCASSI

NEW PRODUCTION ***

AGITA REKE

NEW PRODUCTION ***

XU TONG LEE

NEW PRODUCTION ***

EXPERIMENTAL PERFORMANCE

The Musicale Biennale would like to thank the Biennale College Musica tutors for their contribution: Guido Barbieri, Roberto Benozzo, Guglielmo Bottin, Thierry Coduys, Andreas Fischer, Catherine Simonpietri, Samir Odeh-Tamini and Jennifer Walshe.

*** World premiere

** European premiere

* Italian premiere

Lucia Ronchetti

Born in Rome in 1963, 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 (1997), the Sorbonne, Columbia University and with Hans Werner Henze among many other leading composers.

Lucia Ronchetti has frequently been composer in residence: Villa Concordia, Bamberg; in Berlin: Akademie der Künste & Künstlerprogramm des DAAD; in New York: Yaddo & Fulbright Scholar Program; in Stuttgart: Akademie Schloss Solitude & Staatsoper; Experimentalstudio des SWR, Freiburg; MacDowell Colony, Boston; in Paris: Cité internationale des arts, Fondation Nadia Boulanger & Fondation des Treilles; Schlossmediale Werdenberg, Zürich.

In 2021 the Oper Frankfurt will premiere Ronchetti's opera *Inferno*. The Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin will produce the chamber opera *Pinocchio's Abenteuer*, which also receives a new production at Oper Frankfurt. A new opera project will be created at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf.

In 2020, the Neue Vocalsolisten performed *Never Bet The Devil Your Head* at the Wittener Tage für Neue Kammermusik. The Ensemble Vocal Sequenza 9.3, conducted by Catherine Simonpietri, premiered *Sangu di Rosa*, as part of the Defilé Dior. The Ensemble Modern presented a retrospective of Ronchetti's work in the Happy New Ears concert series. Throughout 2020 Oper Frankfurt presented three works by Ronchetti: *Cartilago auris, magna et irregulariter formata*; *Le Palais du silence* and *Rosso pompeiano*.

2019 saw the Kölner Philharmonie perform *Cartilago auris, magna et irregulariter formata* and *Speranze fuggite, sparite da me*; Biennale Musica, Venezia presented *The Pirate Who Does Not Know the Value of Pi*; Angers Nantes Opéra *Les Aventures de Pinocchio* and the Nouvelle Philharmonie, Paris, *Inedia prodigiosa*, having previously performed *Les Aventures de Pinocchio*.

Other notable performances include: Opera di Roma, *Le Avventure di Pinocchio*; Romaeuropa Festival *Rivale-Film, Le Avventure di Pinocchio, Inedia prodigiosa & Anatra al sal*; Staatsoper Unter der Linden, Berlin *Rivale, Lezioni di tenebra & Last Desire*; Teatro Massimo, Palermo *Inedia prodigiosa*; Berliner Ensemble *Abschlussball*; Nationaltheater Mannheim *Aria da baule; Esame di mezzanotte & Neumond* and Semperoper Dresden *Mise en Abyrne, Sub-Plot & Contrascena*.

Numerous recordings of Ronchettis work are available including *Action Concert Pieces* (Kairos) featuring the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Christian Dierstein, Michele Marco Rossi and the Orchestra Regionale Toscana; *Drammaturgie* (Kairos) with the Neue Vocalsolisten and the Arditti Quartet); *Portrait* (Stradivarius) with Neue Vocalsolisten, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin and Roland Kluttig; *Xylocopa violacea* with Barbara Maurer, Reinhold Braig and Experimentalstudio Freiburg; *Lezioni di tenebra* (Parco della Musica Records) with Katia Guedes, Daniel Gloger, Vocal Consort Berlin and PMCE.

www.luciaronchetti.com