

TEATRO LA FENICE ORCHESTRA

The history of the Teatro La Fenice Orchestra is connected to the theatre itself. During the nineteenth century it was this theatre that was a production centre of primary importance of the world premieres of fundamental operas in the history of opera (*Semiramide*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*). In the second half of the past century the orchestra concentrated on the internationalisation of its repertoire, whilst also expanding on the symphony-concert front (with soloists such as Enrico Mainardi, Mstislav Rostropovič, Edwin Fischer, Aldo Ferraresi, Arthur Rubinstein). The nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed a succession of renowned conductors and composers on the orchestra podium: Lorenzo Perosi, Giuseppe Martucci, Arturo Toscanini, Antonio Guarnieri, Richard Strauss, Pietro Mascagni, Ildebrando Pizzetti, Goffredo Petrassi, Alfredo Casella, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Leopold Stokowski, Fritz Reiner, Vittorio Gui, Tullio Serafin, Nino Sanzogno, Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, Carlo Zecchi, John Barbirolli, Herbert Albert, Franco Ferrara, Guido Cantelli, Thomas Schippers, and Dimitri Mitropoulos. When Teatro La Fenice became an independent institution in 1938 the Orchestra was reorganised and revived, also thanks to their active participation in the Contemporary Music Festival of the Art Biennale. Under the guidance of Scherchen, Bernstein, Celibidache (who worked on the complete cycle of Beethoven's symphonies), Konwitschny (on Wagner's complete Ring) and Stravinsky, in the Forties and Fifties the Venetian orchestra performed concerts that went down in history.

This was followed by a succession of the most famous conductors on the Venetian podium, including: Bruno Maderna, Herbert von Karajan, Karl Böhm, Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Georges Prêtre, Elisha Inbal, Seiji Ozawa, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Chailly, Myung-Whun Chung (protagonist of the double opening of the 2012-2013 season with *Otello* and *Tristan und Isolde* and countless other openings with *Simon Boccanegra*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *Macbeth*, *Don Carlo* and *Fidelio*, as well as numerous concerts in the Symphony Season and the New Year's Concerts. Noteworthy contemporary operas staged at La Fenice include *The Rake's Progress* by Stravinsky and *The Turn of the Screw* by Britten in the 1950s (both were world premières), *Aus Deutschland* (Italian première) and *Entführung im Konzertsaal* (world première) by Mauricio Kagel; more recently, the world première of *Medea* by Adriano Guarnieri (Premio Abbiati 2003), *Signor Goldoni* by Luca Mosca and *Il killer di parole* by Claudio Ambrosini (Premio Abbiati 2010), and lastly *Le baruffe* by Giorgio Battistelli. Of particular note is also the world première of the recently rediscovered *Requiem* by Bruno Maderna, one of his early works, and in recent seasons the revivals of *Intolleranza 1960* by Luigi Nono and *Lou Salomé* by Giuseppe Sinopoli (the latter was an Italian première). As regards symphonies, the Orchestra has performed epic cycles of works by Berg, Mahler and Beethoven, under the baton of masters such as Sinopoli, Kakhidze, Masur, Barshai, Tate, Ahronovitch, Kitajenko, Inbal, and Temirkanov. One of the most interesting orchestras in Italy today, the Teatro La Fenice Orchestra regularly goes on tour in Italy and abroad (to Poland, France, Denmark, Japan, China, the Arab Emirates, and Switzerland) where it has been met with resounding success by both the public and critics. In recent years the principal conductors of the Orchestra have included Elisha Inbal (with the complete Beethoven and Mahler symphonies), Vjekoslav Sutej, Isaac Karabtschewsky (with the complete Mahler symphonies), and Diego Matheuz from 2011 to 2014; principal guest conductors include Sir Jeffrey Tate. Marcello Viotti was the musica director from 2002 to 2004 when he conducted La Fenice Orchestra with operas such as *Thaïs*, *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, and *Le Roi de Lahore*. He was then followed by



Eliahu Inbal from 2007 to 2009. Amongst the most important productions that the Teatro La Fenice Orchestra has recently taken part in are Filippo Perocco's *Aquagrande*, a work commissioned by La Fenice to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the great floods in Venice, which won the 'Premio speciale Franco Abbiati 2017' and *Le baruffe*, which Teatro La Fenice commissioned Giorgio Battistelli with and was staged in 2022.

