



# LA FENICE

notiziario di informazione musicale e avvenimenti culturali

PRESS RELEASE

Venice, June 2025

## 2025-2026 Opera and Ballet Season 2025-2026 Symphony Season

The 2025-2026 Opera and Ballet Season and the Symphony Season of Fondazione Teatro La Fenice were presented today by the superintendent and artistic director Nicola Colabianchi, the artistic and organisational manager of dance activities Franco Bolletta and the general director Andrea Erri in the presence of the Counsellor of Theatre Activities of the Municipality of Venice, Giorgia Pea.

The Management of Fondazione Teatro La Fenice announces that part of the 2026 programming will take place at Teatro Malibran and – for one title only – also at the Teatro Goldoni, in order to allow the completion of essential maintenance work on the stage of Teatro La Fenice. Previous works, carried out in 2024, regarded the lower stage machinery, with the replacement of the electronic devices that were damaged by the floods in 2019. The intervention scheduled for 2026 will instead concern the upper stage machinery, including its renovation and the upgrading of the command-and-control system. The operation will be divided into two phases: from February to May 2026, and this work will not interrupt stage activity, while work scheduled from mid-July to mid-October 2026 means the use of the Campo San Fantin stage will be suspended. The conclusion of the works – the total cost of which is based on tenders and is approximately two million euros – is expected between June and August 2027.

The **Opera and Ballet Season 2025-2026**, including eleven opera titles, four dance performances and two new Education productions, will, as usual, combine great repertoire works with titles that have long been absent from the Venetian stage, including fascinating rediscoveries and contemporary works. The season will start with *La clemenza di Tito* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, in a new production by Paul Curran with Ivor Bolton at the baton. This will be followed by two Verdi titles, both written by the Busseto-born composer for Venice: *Simon Boccanegra*, in a new production directed by Luca Micheletti with musical direction by Renato Palumbo; and *La traviata* directed by Robert Carsen with stage design by Patrick Kinmonth, the production that inaugurated La Fenice when it was reconstructed after the fire, and which has now become a milestone of La Fenice repertoire. The Vivaldi title this season will be the opera *Ottone in Villa*, with the musical direction of the specialist

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Diego Fasolis. After a long absence from the Venetian stage Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin* will return, in a new international production in collaboration with the Rome Opera and the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia: Damiano Michieletto will be making his debut with a German title, working together with the expert musical direction of Markus Stenz. The season also includes a revival of Georges Bizet's *Carmen* with the controversial and fascinating production by Calixto Bieito. This will be followed by the staging of a rarely performed opera by Gaetano Donizetti, *Enrico di Borgogna*, the first opera that was actually staged in Bergamo's copious catalogue. *Venus and Adonis* by Salvatore Sciarrino, composed for Hamburg in 2023 will be performed for the first time in Italy, conducted by Kent Nagano. Two highly popular repertoire operas will then follow: *L'elisir d'amore* by Gaetano Donizetti – a revival of the successful Fenice staging – and *Pagliacci* by Ruggero Leoncavallo, in a new production created in collaboration with the Venice Academy of Fine Arts. The season will close with the twentieth-century diptych composed of *The Telephone* by Gian Carlo Menotti and *Trouble in Tahiti* by Leonard Bernstein, directed by Gianmaria Aliverta and musical direction by Francesco Lanzillotta.

The **Education programme** foresees a world première of Giovanni Sollima's *Piccolo orso e la montagna di ghiaccio*, with a libretto by Giancarlo De Cataldo, a co-production with AsLiCo. This will be followed by *Il piccolo principe* by Pierangelo Valtinoni, the result of the tried and tested synergy between La Fenice and the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice.

There will be four **dance performances**: *The Nutcracker Suite* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky will be proposed in a new version by the Canadian choreographer Wayne Eagling in collaboration with Tamás Solymosi, performed by *étoiles*, prima ballerinas, soloists and dance corps of the Budapest National Opera, for whom the choreography was specifically designed. The Martha Graham Dance Company will arrive in Venice to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the company's foundation. Finally, two events will touch on the atrocious topicality of war: a performance by the Hamburger Kammerballett, a dance company composed of professional dancers born in 2022 with the aim of supporting Ukrainian dancers who are refugees in Germany; and then *Dear Son*, a creation by Sasha Riva and Simone Repele, a choreographic portrait of a family shaken by the loss of a son who left for war.

The **Symphony Season** begins on 28 November 2025 and ends on 31 October 2026, with internationally renowned conductors, long-awaited come backs and debuts, in the auditorium of Teatro La Fenice and at Teatro Malibran. Conducting the opening of the Season will be **Ivor Bolton**, with a programme dedicated to Johannes Brahms. For the first time at La Fenice, Japanese conductor **Kazuki Yamada** will conduct music by Tōru Takemitsu and Rachmaninov, and the solo cellist **Ettore Pagano** with Saint-Saëns' First Concerto. The season includes another Venetian debut, **Vincenzo Milletari** with music by Martucci and Rimskij-Korsakov, in addition to the Concerto for piano and orchestra in F minor by Scriabin with the highly talented soloist **Gianluca Bergamasco**, winner of Premio Venezia 2024. A

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novelty in this season's programme is an opera *recital* dedicated to Giuseppe Verdi and Franz Liszt, with two exceptional performers: the tenor **Francesco Meli** and the baritone **Luca Salsi**, accompanied on the piano by **Nelson Calzi**. **Constantinos Carydis** will make his debut on the Venetian podium with a concert with music by Guiraud, Pärt, Koukos and Berlioz. In addition, for the first time at La Fenice **Michael Hofstetter**, will conduct a programme of sacred music, with the Symphony *Al Santo Sepolcro* by Vivaldi, *Credo* by Antonio Lotti and the *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi. **Markus Stenz** will return with works by Jean-Féry Rebel, Haydn and Schumann; **Alpesh Chauhan**, will conduct music by Smetana, Kodály and Sibelius; and **John Axelrod**, who will propose a twentieth-century programme with pieces by Michael Daugherty, Aaron Copland and Charles Ives. A welcome return will be **Ton Koopman**, who will conduct three works by Mozart: the "Ave verum corpus" motet; *Messa dell'Incoronazione* and Symphony No. 40. This is followed by **Corrado Rovaris** who will be conducting Symphony No. 38 *Prague*, the *Pastorale d'Été* by Arthur Honegger and *Tres Tangos* by Astor Piazzolla, with the bandoneon solo by **Mario Stefano Pietrodarchi**. Music by Richard Strauss, Dvořák and Brahms are in the programme to be conducted by **Cornelius Meister**, who is also making his debut at La Fenice. **Daniele Callegari** will be conducting Bizet's Symphony in C and Tchaikovsky's *Piccola Russia*. This will be followed by **Neil Thomson** who will be conducting an original programme that includes Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Spagnolo*, Rodrigo's *Concerto d'Aranjuez* – with guitar solo by Marco Tamayo – and Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. The season continues with **Alfonso Caiani** who will conduct the Teatro La Fenice choir in Carl Orff's *Carmina burana* in the version for solo, choir, two pianos and percussion together with the **Piccoli Cantori Veneziani**. The programme includes two guest orchestras: the **Kremerata Baltica** which, under the direction of its founder, **Gidon Kremer**, will perform music by Ginastera, Piazzolla and Franck. And the **Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini**, with which Riccardo Muti **will return to La Fenice** with a special concert that is not included in the season ticket. The evocative **Christmas Concert** in the Basilica of San Marco and in the Cathedral of Mestre is also confirmed, with **Marco Gemmani** and the **Cappella Marciana** that will perform sacred music by Natale Monferrato, offering us in particular the reconstruction of a Christmas Vespers in San Marco in 1675. This new Season once again includes two *mainstream* events that are an integral part of La Fenice's the programme: the **New Year's Concert** with the musical direction of **Michele Mariotti**, soloists the soprano **Rosa Feola** and the tenor **Jonathan Tetelman**, which will be broadcast live on television on Rai1; and the symphony concert in **Saint Mark's Square**, in the middle of summer, with the **Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro La Fenice**.

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## 2025-2026 Opera and Ballet Season

The Season will open with *La clemenza di Tito* by **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**. First performed in Prague on 6 September 1791, this title marks Mozart's return to *opera seria*, ten years after *Idomeneo*. It was composed for the coronation of Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia, at the request of the impresario Domenico Guardasoni. The latter decided to set to music the well-known text by Metastasio – one of the most admired theatrical works of the century, praised even by Voltaire and scored by an impressive number of composers – entrusting its revision and rearrangement to the poet Caterino Mazzolà. After its première, until the early nineteenth century *La clemenza di Tito* was one of Mozart's greatest successes, also internationally. In Vienna, where it was performed in 1794, it was given a triumphant reception also thanks to the ‘promotion’ efforts of Constanze, Mozart's widow; moreover, *Clemenza* was the first Mozart opera to be staged in London, in 1806. The show will be performed with a new production by Paul Curran, his first time with this Mozart title, with stage design and costumes by Gary McCann. On the podium of Orchestra and Choir of the Teatro La Fenice will be the acclaimed Ivor Bolton, who will conduct a cast that includes in the main roles Daniel Behle; Cecilia Molinari in her debut role as Sesto; Nicolò Balducci, in his debut role as Annio; and Francesca Aspromonte, is also interpreting Servilia for the first time in her career. There will be five performances at Teatro La Fenice on November 20, 23, 25, 27 and 30, 2025.

From the Verdi catalogue, *Simon Boccanegra* will be staged, the fifth score composed by **Giuseppe Verdi** and commissioned specifically for the Venetian Theatre. The genesis of the work can in fact be traced back to the commission of a new work Verdi received from the management of La Fenice in the spring of 1856: it was Verdi who chose the subject, adapting it from the eponymous drama (1843) by the Spanish playwright Antonio García Gutiérrez, from whose repertoire Verdi had already drawn inspiration for *Il trovatore*. The libretto is by the Murano-born Francesco Maria Piave, who was also working at the same time as director of the Venetian opera house and who also played an important role as an intermediary with the direction of the Theatre and with the censorship milieu. The outcome of its premiere, on 12 March 1857, was unsuccessful, comparable – in the words of Verdi himself – to that of *Traviata*. Unlike *Traviata*, however, *Boccanegra* did not undergo a full and sudden rehabilitation afterwards. It was for this reason that Verdi went on to prepare a new version, which debuted with great success on 24 March 1881 at La Scala in Milan. *Simon Boccanegra* will be staged with a new production by director Luca Micheletti, who will be interpreting this opera for the first time. The orchestra will be conducted by Renato Palumbo. The outstanding cast includes Luca Salsi; Francesco Meli; Alex Esposito making his debut in the role of Fiesco; and Francesca Dotto making her debut as Amelia. There will be eight performances at Teatro La Fenice, on 23, 25, 27, 29 January, 1, 10, 12, 14 February 2026.

A milestone of La Fenice's repertoire, Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata* will return to the stage in the historic production – now a symbol of the Venetian Theatre – that



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inaugurated La Fenice when it was reconstructed after being destroyed in a fire. With direction by the Canadian director Robert Carsen, and the scenes and costumes by Patrick Kinmonth, twenty years after its première, this production has become a key piece of the Teatro La Fenice programme. Conducted by Stefano Ranzani, the cast includes in the main roles Rosa Feola, Stefan Pop, and Roberto Frontali. There will be five performances at the Teatro La Fenice: 8, 11, 13, 15, 17 February 2026.

As far as Baroque music is concerned, our discovery of **Vivaldi operas** continues: after *Dorilla in Tempe* (2019), *Farnace* (2021), *Griselda* (2022), and *Orlando furioso* (2018, 2023), and *Il Bajazet* (2024), there will be a new production of ***Ottone in Villa***. An opera in three acts to a libretto by Neapolitan Domenico Lalli, based on the libretto *Messalina* by Francesco Maria Piccioli, *Ottone in villa* was the first opera by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). It premièred on 17 May 1713 in Vicenza, a peripheral musical centre that until then had mostly imported operatic repertoire from nearby Venice. However, in 1713, with the opening of the new Teatro delle Grazie, an unprecedented work was chosen owing to rivalry with the oldest Teatro di Piazza o delle Garzerie. At that time considered one of the most important instrumental composers and in 1713 ‘promoted’ as choirmaster at the Hospital della Pietà in Venice, it was therefore the Red Priest who received the commission. *Ottone in Villa* will be staged under the direction of Giovanni Di Cicco. Musical direction will be entrusted to the hands of the Baroque and Vivaldi specialist, Diego Fasolis. Principal performers include Margherita Maria Sala in the title role and Michela Antenucci as Tullia. There will be five performances at the Malibran Theatre: 20, 22, 24, 26, 29 March 2026.

Coming to the German repertoire, the programme includes ***Lohengrin***, a romantic opera written and composed by Richard Wagner, the sixth opera in the chronological catalogue of his works. The source of the libretto is the medieval German epic poem *Parzival* by Wolfram von Eschenbach: Lohengrin, the swan knight, one of the guardians of the Holy Grail, is in fact the son of Parsifal, the mythical knight of the Round Table, in turn protagonist of Wagner's last opera, written thirty years later. The opera premièred at the Großherzogliches Hoftheater of Weimar on August 28, 1850, and it was staged under the aegis of Franz Liszt, a friend and supporter of Wagner. The Italian premiere, however, took place at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna on November 1, 1871, and this performance was also the first time a Wagner opera was staged in Italy. The new Venetian production of *Lohengrin* is by Damiano Michieletto, and this will be the first time he is working with one of Wagner's operas. However, the main interpreters are also making their ‘debuts’: Brian Jagde, in the title role; Chiara Mogini as Ortrud and Äneas Humm as Der Heerrufer des Königs. Markus Stenz, a specialist in German repertoire, will be conducting the orchestra. Produced by Fenice in collaboration with the Teatro dell 'Opera in Rome and the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, it will be staged at the Teatro La Fenice on 12, 15, 19, 22, 26 April 2026.

From the French repertoire we have the masterpiece by **Georges Bizet, *Carmen***. Based on a libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy from the novella of the same name by Prosper Mérimée, the opera debuted at the Opéra-Comique in

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Paris on 3 March 1875: it was Bizet's last work as he passed away three months later. *Carmen* brought a new twist to the tradition of the Opéra-Comique, with the stories of its characters that were 'distant' to say the least, from the ideals of the French bourgeoisie, including cigar makers, smugglers, women of ill reputation, shady and dubious characters engaged in events of corruption and sensuality. *Carmen* will be revived with the fascinating and controversial production by the director Calixto Bieito, with the set designer Alfons Flores, costume designer Mercè Paloma and light designer Alberto Rodriguez Vega: "Set in an infamous borderland between Spain and Africa – the motivations read – the *Carmen* staged by Bieito [...] gives back to Bizet's masterpiece its rough theatricality, unveiled by vital and sometimes shocking snapshots that follow each other in tune with the crucial moments of the score, composing an amazing story." The musical direction will be by Francesco Ivan Ciampa. Principal performers include Annalisa Stroppa, Marina Comparato, Jean-François Borras, Stefan Pop, Serena Gamberoni, Julie Mossay, Davide Luciano, Alessandro Luongo, Matteo Ferrara, Armando Noguera, Paolo Antognetti and Francesco Salvadori. Created by Fenice in co-production with the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, the Teatro Regio in Turin and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, the production will be staged at Teatro La Fenice eight times: on 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 May, and 1 June 2026.

Building on the success of last season's *Anna Bolena*, La Fenice is proposing another rarely staged opera by **Gaetano Donizetti**, *Enrico di Borgogna*. It is a heroic opera in two acts to a libretto by Bartolomeo Merelli, based on the drama *Der Graf von Burgund* by August von Kotzebue, a singular dramatist and theatrical impresario of the late eighteenth century. This score was first performed at the Teatro Vendramin San Luca in Venice on November 14, 1818, and, if the opera *Pygmalion* is excluded, it is actually the first opera from Donizetti's prolific catalogue to be performed. The expert conductor Corrado Rovaris will be holding the baton for this opera for the first time, leading a cast that includes Teresa Iervolino, Giuseppina Bridelli, Dave Monaco and Omar Montanari as principal performers. Curiously enough, all the singers will be debuting in their respective roles for the first time. The production is by Silvia Paoli. Created in collaboration with the Donizetti Festival in Bergamo, this new production will be staged at the Malibran Theatre on 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 June 2026.

*Venere e Adone* by **Salvatore Sciarrino** will have its Italian première. Based on a libretto by Fabio Casadei Turrone and Sciarrino himself and the result of a commission from the Hamburg Staatsoper, this contemporary score debuted in Hamburg two years ago, on May 28, 2023. The same production will be revived in Venice, with direction by Georges Delnon, stage design by Varvara Timofeeva and costumes by Marie-Thérèse Josse. Musical direction is by Kent Nagano, leading a prestigious cast composed including Layla Claire, Randall Scotting, Evan Hughes, Cody Quattelbaum, Matthias Klink, Kady Evanyshyn, Nicholas Mogg and Vera Tarlenko. The main source of the libretto is the *Adonis* by Giovan Battista Marino, a poet dear to Monteverdi, with an addition, a 'duettino', and a fine psychological turn from *Venus and Adonis* by John Blow, Purcell's maestro. The subtitle – *Naufragio di un mito [Shipwreck of a myth]* – gives some reference to the work. The author

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himself explains: “To better understand the subtitle, we can start at the end. The Epilogue, in fact, recalls the full line-up of the characters, and they sing in no uncertain terms: you have witnessed a tremendous love story. But then who won, they wonder, Love or Death? [...] Venus and Adonis embody the parody of every human weakness. Adone, a poor mortal, becomes ridiculous with the swagger of an adolescent; he is actually a toy in the hands of the gods. Love himself, the quintessence of a ruthless whim, pities him while he agrees to put his arrow among those of Adonis. Paradoxically, one of the protagonists, the Monster is the only one to show vague hints of sensitivity.” There will be five performances at Teatro La Fenice, on 26, 27, 28, 30 June, and 1 July 2026.

Drawing on the great classics of the La Fenice repertoire, the highly successful staging of **L'elisir d'amore** by **Gaetano Donizetti** will return. A two-act comic melodrama to a libretto by Felice Romani, taken from the French libretto *Le Philtre* by Eugène Scribe, *L'elisir d'amore* premièred on 12 May 1832 at the Teatro alla Canobbiana in Milan where it marked the definitive consecration of Donizetti, after the glowing triumph of *Anna Boleyn* (1830) and the uncertain outcome of *Count of Paris* (1832). From the very beginning, *L'elisir d'amore* became a classic of nineteenth-century opera. It was an ‘atypical’ classic, because it was not attributable to the genre *serio* or to that of comic opera, but rather to that intermediate genre, that was gradually defined as an ‘opera semiseria’ or ‘comédie larmoyante’; from the second half of the eighteenth century until the late nineteenth century, it was the latter that became the main vehicle of bourgeois identification, putting in the foreground the seriousness of the sentimental content, understood as an uplifting instrument of emotion. *L'elisir d'amore* will be revived in the highly successful production directed by Bepi Morassi, with scenes and costumes by Gianmaurizio Fercioni. It will be conducted by Francesco Ivan Ciampa. There will be four performances at the Malibran Theatre: 26, 28, 30 August, and 1 September 2026.

A masterpiece of Italian verismo, **Pagliacci** will also be staged. This is the best-known work by **Ruggero Leoncavallo**, (1858-1919), with Pietro Mascagni and Umberto Giordano among the greatest exponents of the ‘Young Italian verista school’. Written by Leoncavallo himself, the libretto draws on a fact that actually happened in Montalto Uffugo in Calabria: a crime of jealousy that led to a trial in which the composer's father was judge. Performed for the first time at the Teatro Dal Verme in Milan on May 21, 1892, under the direction of Arturo Toscanini, within a few months it was immediately being staged everywhere. Although this opera makes use of contemporary elements, it is not an ‘experimental’ work, destined to open new expressive ways; intertwined with melodic loans, in particular taken from Mendelssohn, and full of references and musical quotations from *Carmen* by Bizet and from *Otello* by Verdi, *Pagliacci* continues to receive the applause of audiences around the world “as one of the last *souvenirs* of the nineteenth-century Italian melodrama museum” (Michele Girardi). The new production with musical direction by Daniele Callegari includes two outstanding names: Gregory Kunde and Selene Zanetti, the latter making her debut as Nedda. The production, directed by Andrea Bernard, also renews La Fenice's tried and tested collaboration with the Academy of

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Fine Arts in Venice, which will be responsible for scenes and costumes. There will be five performances at the Malibran Theatre, on 18, 20, 22, 24, and 26 September 2026.

The season will close with a twentieth-century diptych, consisting of ***The Telephone*** by **Gian Carlo Menotti**, exactly eighty years after its world première, and ***Trouble in Tahiti*** by **Leonard Bernstein**, a title that is being performed in Venice for the very first time. An opera buffa in one act, to a libretto by the same author, *Menotti's Telephone* was composed precisely eighty years ago at the invitation of the New York Ballet Society, which asked Menotti for a comic counter-attraction for the evening dedicated to the staging of another of his scores, *The Medium*, with which it is still very often combined today. Lasting around twenty minutes, the short one act premiered at the Heckscher Theater in New York on February 18, 1947, but was also staged by the Ethel Barrymore Theater on Broadway, where it enjoyed a success that lasted for hundreds of performances. In Europe has been staged since 1948 (London, Paris) while the Italian premiere was at the Venice International Music Festival (1948), paired with the dodecaphonic *Nightmare* by Riccardo Nielsen. ***Trouble in Tahiti*** by Leonard Bernstein will be a Venetian premiere: the opera in one act and seven scenes to a libretto by Bernstein himself is one of the only two works for the opera house for which the American composer wrote both words and music, together with *Peter Pan*. With its dark, gloomy, mysterious character, this score by the young Bernstein seems to want to represent an autobiographical picture of his family life, with almost self-punishing points of sarcasm. *Trouble in Tahiti* debuted on June 12, 1952, at Bernstein's Festival of the Creative Arts on the campus of Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, in front of an audience counting nearly three thousand people. The diptych will be presented in a new production with direction by Gianmaria Aliverta. Musical direction will be by Francesco Lanzillotta. The cast includes the baritone, Allen Boxer. There will be five performances at Teatro Goldoni on 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 October 2026.

As part of the **Education programme** dedicated to the audience of schools, young people and families, the new work by the acclaimed composer **Giovanni Sollima** to a libretto by **Giancarlo De Cataldo** ***Piccolo orso e la montagna di ghiaccio***, will have its première. This is not the first time Sollima and De Cataldo have worked together, having recently been applauded at La Fenice for the contemporary work for an audience of all ages *Acquaprofonda*, winner of the Filippo Siebancek Prize. The new, unpublished score by Sollima – which will be staged in a new production by Fondazione Teatro La Fenice in co-production with AsLiCo and in collaboration with the Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada and Opéra Grand Avignon – will celebrate the World Glacier Day established by the United Nations in conjunction with the 2025 International Year for the Conservation of Glaciers. The production will be directed by Lorenzo Ponte, with scenes by Alice Benazzi, costumes by Giulia Rossena and light design by Emanuele Agliati. Musical direction will be by Julia Cruz. It will be staged at the Malibran Theatre on 29, 30, 31 January, 1, 3, 4 February 2026, with performances reserved for schools and reruns dedicated to the general public.



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Also as part of the Education programme, **Pierangelo Valtinoni's *Il piccolo principe***, the opera for children to a libretto by Paolo Madron inspired by the famous story by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry will be staged in Venice. Written in 2022, it was commissioned by Teatro alla Scala in Milan. It will be produced under the direction of Emanuele Gamba with musical direction by Luisa Russo, as part of La Fenice's successful collaboration with the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice. There will be four performances at the Malibran Theatre, including performances reserved for schools and reruns open to the public: on 15, 16, 17, and 18 April 2026.

Once again, this year, La Fenice will be offering a package of **four shows of *Danza***, which, from February to October 2026, going hand in hand with the opera productions of the same Season, will include great classics, modern creations and works by contemporary authors.

The first title is ***The Nutcracker Suite***, an immortal masterpiece in the history of classical ballet, created by the great choreographer Marius Petipa to the music of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. It was commissioned by Ivan Vsevolozhsky, impresario of the Imperial Theatres, who, in the wake of the success of *Sleeping Beauty*, was urging a new collaboration between the choreographer and the musician, commissioning both a ballet and an opera: the result was the single act *Iolanta* and in fact, it was performed on the same single evening with *The Nutcracker*, in December 1892, on the stage of the Mariinsky Theatre. For the ballet Petipa drew inspiration from a story by E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Nussknacker und Mausekönig* (*Nutcracker and King of the Rats*, 1816), resulting in an enchanted scenario of a real fairy tale, covering the disconcerting and disturbing thrill of the literary source with a graceful and childish tone. *The Nutcracker* will be proposed in a new version created by the Canadian choreographer Wayne Eagling in collaboration with Tamás Solymosi. The interpretation will be entrusted to *étoiles*, prima ballerinas, soloists and dance corps of the Budapest National Opera, for whom the choreography was specifically designed. The music will be performed by La Fenice Theatre Orchestra, conducted by Gábor Hontvári. There will be five performances at Teatro La Fenice, on 25, 26, 27, 28 February, and 1 March 2026.

Another highly prestigious ballet event in the new season will be the **Martha Graham Dance Company**, which will be coming to Venice – fifty-one years after its last appearance in the lagoon – to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of its foundation. Founded in 1938 by Martha Graham to replace the previous Dance Group born in 1926, it can be considered the oldest American modern dance company. Defined ‘one of the seven wonders of the artistic universe’ by the *Washington Post*, the Martha Graham Dance Company will perform three creations by its founder, *Diversion of Angels* (1948), to music by Norman Dello Joio, *Lamentation* (1930) to a score by Zoltán Kodály; and *Chronicle* (1936) to music by Wallingford Riegger. These exceptional ‘pieces’ of modern dance history will be flanked by *Imagine*, a new production signed by American choreographer Hope Boykin, to music by Leonard Bernstein proposed in the arrangement by Christopher

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Rountree. There will be five performances at Teatro La Fenice, on 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 May 2026.

This will be followed by two dance performances that address the troubling topicality of war from different perspectives. In the first of the two events, the **Hamburger Kammerballett** will debut in Venice, a dance company composed of professional dancers with classical training, founded in 2022 with the aim of supporting Ukrainian dancers who are refugees in Germany. Edwin Revazov is currently artistic director, since 2003 dancer and since 2010 first soloist of the John Neumeier Hamburg Ballet. The company will be presenting two choreographies in Venice, both by John Neumeier: ***Hamlet Connotations***, to music by Aaron Copland, created for the American Ballet Theatre in 1976; and ***Petruška Variations***, to music by Igor Stravinsky. Pianist will be Michal Bialk. The performance will be staged at the Teatro Malibran twice, on 16 and 17 October 2026.

The second is ***Dear Son***, the portrait of a family shaken by the loss of a son who has left for war. A story of love, hope and memory that, transcending the barriers of time and space, wants to encourage reflection on the fragility of life in a society marked by the persistence of wars and conflicts. The choreography, to music by various authors, is the work of **Sasha Riva and Simone Repele**, two dancers and choreographers who have made their names on the international scene with an aesthetic style that is able to combine a theatrical approach and a neoclassical vocabulary with a strongly contemporary language and aesthetics, characterised by the centrality of gesture and movement. The performance will be staged at the Teatro Malibran twice, on 23 and 24 October 2026.

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