



LA FENICE

notiziario di informazione musicale e avvenimenti culturali

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2026-2027 Opera and Ballet Season 2026-2027 Symphony Season

The 2026-2027 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 Franco Bolletta and the general manager Andrea Erri.

The **2026-2027 Opera and Ballet Season** features ten operas, five dance productions, and two Education programmes. It brings together timeless masterpieces, fascinating rediscoveries, and contemporary works that have long been absent from the Venetian stage. The season will open with *Fedora* by Giordano, in a new Hugo de Ana production conducted by Donato Renzetti. Three titles that have long been absent from the Venetian stage will also return: *Hänsel und Gretel* by Humperdinck, under the direction of Cecilia Ligorio, with the conductor Maestro Xu Zhong; Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*, featuring a staging by director Mario Pontiggia and conducted by Riccardo Frizza, in a co-production between the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari and Abao Bilbao Opera; and lastly, Leoš Janáček's *Jenůfa* will be making a triumphant return to La Fenice this season, marking eighty-five years since its March 1941 Italian première, in a fresh production directed by David Alden and conducted by Andriy Yurkevych. John Axelrod will conduct *Carmen* by Bizet under the direction of Romain Gilbert, presented in a prestigious international co-production. A new staging of *Norma* by Bellini will also debut, co-produced with the Teatro Nazionale della Georgia, under the direction of Ramon Tebar and conducted by Maria Todaro. Two titles that have never been performed in Venice will also be presented: Antonio Smareglia's *Nozze istriane*, in a new production directed by Renato Bonajuto and conducted by Francesco Cilluffo, and Handel's *Partenope*, the Halle-born composer's first foray into the 'comic' genre, directed by Jacopo Spirei and conducted by Giulio Prandi. The season includes two revivals, chosen from the most beloved shows in La Fenice's repertoire: *Madama Butterfly* by Puccini – conducted by Daniele Callegari – in the evocative *mise-en-scène* directed by Alex Rigola, scenes and costumes by the Japanese artist Mariko Mori, which was a special project of the fifty-fifth International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. And *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini – conducted by Salvatore Percacciolo – with the highly successful production by Bepi Morassi.

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As part of the **Education programme**, there will be a new production of *Noah's Ark* by Benjamin Britten, the fruit of the proven synergy between La Fenice, the Venice Academy of Fine Arts and the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice; this will be followed by a revival of *Piccolo Orso e la montagna di ghiaccio* by Giovanni Sollima on a libretto by Giancarlo De Cataldo; this was a co-production with AsLiCo which met with great success when it debuted last season.

La Fenice is offering **five dance performances** as part of the 2026-2027 Opera and Ballet Season. From 12 December 2026 to 17 October 2027, five productions will alternate with the opera titles in this new season, offering great classics, modern creations, and works by contemporary authors. The first will be a piece from the great repertoire with *Les Étoiles*, an exciting gala of classical dance in which some of the best ballet talents of the moment will exhibit their skill. This will be followed by performances by two companies of great international prestige: Maurice Béjart's Béjart Ballet Lausanne, which celebrates in 2027 the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Maurice Béjart (1927-2007) and the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of his company, and the American Parsons Dance by David Parsons. A great dance classic, *Giselle* will be staged, performed by the Wiener Staatsballett and directed by Alessandra Ferri. Finally, we have the MM Contemporary Dance Company by Michele Merola.

Finally, here is some useful **ticketing information**. Ticket sales and the signing of new subscriptions will begin on Friday 11 September 2026 at 11.00 am. The pre-emption for the 2026-2027 Opera and Ballet Seasons and 2026-2027 Symphony season ticket holders will be from Monday, August 31 from 11.00 am to Thursday, October 15, 2026. Once again, this Season will also offer a *Carnet Danza*, a subscription to the five ballets in the Season (price € 300, stalls), available for a limited number of seats.

The main partner of the Season is Intesa Sanpaolo.

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2026-2027 Opera and Ballet Season

The Season will open with ***Fedora* by Umberto Giordano**, a work that has been missing from the stage since of La Fenice since 1968. One of the most representative and passionate titles of mature Italian verismo, *Fedora* is a three-act melodrama by Arturo Colautti, based on the eponymous play by Victorien Sardou, which the composer saw in 1889 in Naples with Sarah Bernhardt. The opera premiered in Milan, at the Teatro Lirico Internazionale, on 17 November 1898: it was a resounding success from the outset, also thanks to the presence of the tenor Enrico Caruso in the role of Loris Ipanoff. Presented by Mahler in Vienna, it was also applauded in Paris where it also met with the admiration of Massenet and Saint-Saëns. The opera will be staged in a new production with direction, scenes and costumes by Hugo de Ana. Maestro Donato Renzetti will conduct the Orchestra and Choir of Teatro La Fenice. He will lead a stellar cast featuring Maria Agresta, Vincenzo Costanzo, Ekaterina Bakanova, who will all make their highly anticipated role debuts and Simone Piazzola. Five performances are scheduled at Teatro La Fenice on November 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 22, 2026.

Madama Butterfly, one of the most acclaimed productions of Teatro La Fenice in recent years, is returning to the Venetian Opera House. Giacomo Puccini's masterpiece returns to Campo San Fantin in a celebrated 2013 production by the Venetian Foundation. Directed by Àlex Rigola, this acclaimed staging features scenography by Japanese artist Mariko Mori and lighting by Albert Faura, originating as a special project of the 55th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. A timeless Japanese tragedy in two acts with a libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica—adapted from John Luther Long's story and David Belasco's play—*Madama Butterfly* returns to the stage conducted by Daniele Callegari, featuring an internationally acclaimed cast of today's brightest stars: Maria José Siri, Manuela Custer, Roberto De Candia and Joseph Dahdah, the latter making his debut as Pinkerton. Nine performances are scheduled on 30, 31 January, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 February 2027.

Absent from the Venetian stage for over thirty years, ***Hänsel und Gretel* by Engelbert Humperdinck** will finally return to the stage. A fairytale comedy in three scenes, based on a libretto by Adelheid Wette reworked from the famous fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, the opera premiered at the Weimar Court Theatre on 23 December 1893. It won immediate acclaim for its accessible charm, while boasting a surprisingly sophisticated symphonic score. Following triumphant early performances in Weimar, Munich, and Karlsruhe, the work quickly spread, not only in Germany but worldwide. Today, it remains a cornerstone of the repertoire in German-speaking theatre. The opera premieres in a new production directed by Cecilia Ligorio. The acclaimed Chinese conductor Xu Zhong will lead the musical direction. The cast includes the principal performers Michela Guarrera, Chiara Maria Fiorani and Arlene Miatto Albeldas. Five performances are scheduled for the Malibran Theatre on February 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27, 2027.

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A masterwork of Slavic realism, **Leoš Janáček's *Jenůfa*** makes its highly anticipated return to the Teatro La Fenice. This season marks a historic milestone for the venue, bringing the iconic score back to Venice over eighty-five years after its 1941 Italian debut. Based on the play *Její pastorkyňa* by Gabriela Preissová, this three-act opera premiered in a provincial theatre in Brno on January 21, 1904. Though initially a local success, it took twelve years for the masterpiece to reach the European stage. Its broader recognition was secured in 1916 at the National Theatre of Prague, using a revised orchestration by the composer in collaboration with director Karel Kovařovic. Much like the original work that inspired it, this opera is celebrated for its gripping realism, tracing a tragic infanticide and a subsequent journey toward redemption. The Moravian composer worked there between 1894 and 1903, a period marked by the death of his two sons. However, this lengthy development is mainly due to the creation of a fresh, original language, fully realised here for the first time. The show will be staged by the English National Opera under the direction of David Alden, scenes by Charles Edwards, costumes by Jon Morrell, lights by Adam Silverman, and choreography by Maxine Graham. Andriy Urkevych will be entrusted with the musical direction, leading a cast that includes John Findon, Ingela Brimberg, Joyce El-Khoury and Dalibor Jeniš in the main roles. Five performances are scheduled at Teatro La Fenice on March 12, 14, 16 18 and, 20 2027.

The season presents a cornerstone of the French repertoire: **Georges Bizet's *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 Paris on 3 March 1875: it was Bizet's last work as he passed away three months later. *Carmen* brought a radical new twist to the Opéra-Comique. It presented characters far removed from the French bourgeoisie, exploring a vibrant, illicit world of smugglers, cigar makers, women of ill repute and dubious figures caught up in passion and corruption. Teatro La Fenice will present a new production of Georges Bizet's *Carmen* directed by Romain Gilbert. This staging revives the historic 1875 staging that originally introduced the opera to the Venetian public. The international co-production is made possible by Opéra Royal - Château de Versailles, Opéra Orchestre Normandie Rouen, Bru Zane France, and Palazzetto Bru Zane. It will be conducted by John Axelrod. Principal performers include Anna Goryachova, Angelo Villari, Ruth Iniesta and Devid Ceconi. Eight performances are scheduled at Teatro La Fenice on 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30 April, and 2, and 4 May 2027.

One of the most successful shows of La Fenice repertoire will be returning this season: ***Il barbiere di Seiglia* by Gioachino Rossini**. Composed in just a few weeks, Rossini's masterpiece is based on Cesare Sterbini's libretto from Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais's comedy *Le Barbier de Séville ou La précaution inutile* (Paris, 1775). It premiered at Rome's Teatro Argentina on February 20, 1816, as *Almaviva, ossia L'inutile precauzione*. Rossini chose this title both to show reverence to the composer Giovanni Paisiello—who wrote an earlier *Barbiere* (Saint Petersburg, 1782)—and to elevate the tenor role for Manuel García, making the Count a true protagonist. Though it suffered a famously disastrous premiere, the opera quickly triumphed during the last nights of its first carnival season. It has since

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endured as one of the world's most frequently performed works and the ultimate Rossini masterpiece. The highly successful production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* returns this season. Directed by Bepi Morassi with set and costume designs by Lauro Crisman, the revival features conductor Salvatore Percacciolo leading a stellar principal cast that includes Antonino Siragusa, Bruno Taddia, and Adriano Gramigni. Seven performances are scheduled at La Fenice Theatre: on 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 May, and 1 June 2027.

The upcoming season marks the premiere at La Fenice of Antonio Smareglia's *Nozze Istriane*. Highly esteemed by musical legends Giacomo Puccini and Franz Lehàr, this masterpiece by the Istrian-born composer now firmly belongs to the standard repertoire of international opera houses. A lyrical drama in three acts to a libretto by Luigi Illica, *Nozze Istriane* was inspired by a local news story that happened in Dignano, near Pula: a murky story of love and jealousy, culminating in the death of one of the protagonists. While steeped in the emotional realism typical of the verismo style, the score distinguishes itself with a refined sense of scale, elegant musical timbres, and a vivid portrayal of Istrian life. The opera premiered at Teatro Comunale di Trieste on 28 March 1895. Directed by Renato Bonajuto and conducted by Francesco Cilluffo, this brand-new Teatro La Fenice production brings the opera to life through rich orchestration that perfectly captures the vibrant spirit of Istrian life. Principal performers include Chiara Isotton, Mikheil Sheshaberidze and Franco Vassallo. Five performances are scheduled at the Malibran Theatre, on 18, 20, 22, 24, and 27 June 2027.

The new season will also see the Venetian premiere of Georg Frideric Handel's *Partenope*. The composer from Halle masterfully subverts the formal structure of opera seria here, delivering a work defined by its brilliant irony and playful humour. Based on a 1699 libretto by Silvio Stampiglia, the three-act opera *Partenope* made its historic debut at London's King's Theatre on February 24, 1730. The score was an immediate triumph but later faded into obscurity. It remained largely forgotten until its international rediscovery in the late twentieth century, perfectly coinciding with the broader revival of the Baroque repertoire. Both fascinating and delightfully witty, the production explores the eternal themes of love and romantic competition, centering on four characters captivated by the charming Queen Parthenope. This is a new production with direction by Jacopo Spirei and conducted by Giulio Prandi. Five performances are scheduled at the Malibran Theatre, on 2, 4, 7, 9 and 12 September 2027.

Norma, the masterpiece by **Vincenzo Bellini**, will take the stage: widely considered the pinnacle of Italian vocal expression, the opera is celebrated for its melodic purity, dramatic intensity, and psychological depth. A lyric tragedy in two acts with a libretto by Felice Romani, based on the homonymous tragedy by Alexandre Soumet, *Norma* is the third-to-last opera by the Catania-born composer, as well as his most frequently performed. Premiering at Milan's Teatro alla Scala on 26 December 1831 before taking the stage at Venice's Teatro La Fenice exactly one year later to the day, this opera plunges audiences into a world of divided loyalties. It brilliantly contrasts the secret, forbidden romance of the protagonist and the Roman proconsul Pollione with the desperate struggle of the Gallic people rising up against

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their Roman conquerors. Directed by Maria Todaro, this new staging is a major international co-production with the Georgia National Theatre. It will be conducted by Ramon Tebar. Principal performers include Marigona Qerkezi, Martin Muehle, George Andguladze and Hamsik Torosyan. Nine performances are scheduled at Teatro La Fenice on 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30 September and 1, 2, 3 October 2027.

The opera season will conclude with *Adriana Lecouvreur* by **Francesco Cilea**, a highly anticipated masterpiece making its grand return to the Venetian stage after more than thirty years. Ideally concluding our season's programming, this four-act opera features a libretto by Arturo Colautti, returning to the work of the *Fedora* librettist. The subject is inspired by the legendary real-life actress Adrienne Lecouvreur. Famous for her relationships with Voltaire and Count Maurice of Saxony, her sudden death from alleged poisoning by a rival has become the stuff of theatrical legend. Colautti crafted an exceptional libretto that elevates the composer's style, perfectly balancing his lyrical, elegiac melodies with a charming taste for eighteenth-century *divertissement*. Like the production of *Fedora*, this opera boasts a rich history. Legendary tenor Enrico Caruso starred as Maurizio in the world premiere at Milan's Teatro Lirico on November 6, 1902. The premiere was a triumph, establishing the work as a beloved staple in the international repertoire. *Adriana Lecouvreur* will be staged in a critically acclaimed co-production by the Teatro Lirico di Cagliari and Abao Bilbao Opera, with stage direction by Mario Pontiggia and musical direction by Riccardo Frizza. Principal performers include Jamez McCorkle, Carlos Álvarez, Saioa Hernández and Chiara Mogini. Five performances are scheduled at the Teatro La Fenice, on 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 October 2027.

As part of the **Education programme**—which is dedicated to schools, young people, and families—the acclaimed work by composer Giovanni Sollima and librettist Giancarlo De Cataldo *Piccolo Orso e la Montagna di ghiaccio* will return to Venice after its highly successful debut in the 2025-2026 season. The creative team of Sollima and De Cataldo—whose contemporary opera *Acquaprofonda* won the prestigious Filippo Siebanek Prize and was highly applauded at the Fenice—returns with this new production. Conceived by Fenice Education and AsLiCo for the thirtieth anniversary of Opera domani, the European co-production involves the Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada and Opéra Grand Avignon. The staging features direction by Lorenzo Ponte, sets by Alice Benazzi, costumes by Giulia Rossena, choreography by Livia Bartolucci, and lighting by Emanuele Agliati. Julia Cruz will be conducting the Orchestra 1813. It will be running daily at the Malibrán Theatre from January 19 to 23, 2027, featuring both student matinees and performances for the general public.

The Education programme also includes a new staging of *Noah's Ark* by **Benjamin Britten**, a title that has never been staged at La Fenice until now. The original title, *Noye's Fludde*, refers to a one-act opera based on Chester's fifteenth-century *Miracle Plays*, a mystery play that originated in Britain in the late Middle Ages and that told through verses and everyday language the highlights of biblical history, from the fall of Lucifer to the Last Judgment. Benjamin Britten set the Old Testament episode of Noah's Ark to music in his celebrated opera, *Noye's Fludde*.

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Discovering the 15th-century Chester miracle play in 1957 through librettist Eric Crozier, Britten brought the work to its world premiere on June 18, 1958, at Orford Church as part of the Aldeburgh Festival. Britten created this piece to celebrate and empower young musicians of the East Anglian communities. In fact, the performers for the very first production were drawn entirely from Suffolk schools: Royal Hospital School, Leiston Modern School, Woolverstone Hall, and Framlingham College. Driven by this same vision, Teatro La Fenice will present a new production directed by Emanuele Gamba and Luisa Russo. This staging is a creative collaboration with the Academy of Fine Arts of Venice and features the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory Orchestra. Four performances are scheduled at the Malibran Theatre, on 17, 18, 19 and 20 March, 2027.

For more information visit www.teatrolafenice.it