Press Office 29/05/2024

# **7 JUNE AT THE ARENA DI VERONA**

**LA GRANDE OPERA ITALIANA PATRIMONIO DELL’UMANITÀ**

# **EVENT BROADCAST WORLDWIDE BY RAI**

***The Ministry of Culture celebrates Italian opera with an extraordinary event at the Arena di Verona, broadcast worldwide by RAI. Opera singing is the absolute protagonist of the event, with 160 conductors and 300 chorus artists from the Italian lyrical symphonic Foundations.***

***With a special guest appearance by Maestro Riccardo Muti.***

***On a single evening, in the world's largest open-air theatre, Anna Netrebko, Jonas Kaufmann, Juan Diego Flórez, Ludovic Tézier, Vittorio Grigolo, Luca Salsi, Eleonora Buratto, Francesco Meli and many other artists will perform, with dancing by Roberto Bolle and Nicoletta Manni.***

***Alberto Angela, Cristiana Capotondi and Luca Zingaretti will take the audience on an enthralling journey through the Opera which has contributed to the history of music and Italy itself.***

On Friday, 7 June, the Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with the Fondazione Arena di Verona, will celebrate Italian opera singing and its status of cultural heritage of humanity in an extraordinary evening at the Arena di Verona. In one night, the same stage will host the most beautiful opera works and the best performers in the world.

This unique event in the history of opera will be broadcast worldwide by RAI, with a large orchestra of 160 elements and a chorus of 300 artists from the Italian lyrical symphonic Foundations, with a special guest appearance from Maestro Riccardo Muti.

The event, organised with the participation of SIAE, ANFOLS, Teatro alla Scala and Accademia di Santa Cecilia, will be hosted by Alberto Angela, Cristiana Capotondi and Luca Zingaretti. The audience will include leading Italian authorities, representatives of cultural institutions, UNESCO and ambassadors from those countries where opera is most popular.

**MAESTRO RICCARDO MUTI**. The performance will open with maestro Riccardo Muti on the podium, as an ambassador of Italian excellence around the world. He will conduct the first part of the evening, and the most significant orchestral and choral pieces from the great Italian operas: from the Bel canto era of *William Tell* and *Norma*, to the Verdi and Risorgimento epics of *Nabucco* and *Macbeth*, along with the magnificent symphonic and choral pieces from *Mefistofele* and *Manon Lescaut*.

The world's largest open-air theatre, home to the oldest and most popular international opera festival, will host a huge celebration that brings together the world of culture and the greatest international artists, remarkably on the same stage.

**OPERA STARS**. In addition to the great works that have made the history of music, and of Italy itself, the second part of the evening will offer an exciting anthology of the most famous opera pieces by Puccini, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Giordano, interpreted by a unique cast. This comprises stars from all over the world, united by the world of Italian opera singing, such as sopranos Anna Netrebko, Eleonora Buratto, Rosa Feola, Juliana Grigoryan, Jessica Pratt, Mariangela Sicilia, mezzo-soprano Aigul Akhmetshina, tenors Jonas Kaufmann Renè Barbera, Juan Diego Flórez, Vittorio Grigolo, Brian Jagde, Francesco Meli, Galeano Salas, baritones Nicola Alaimo, Luca Salsi, Ludovic Tézier, and bass Alexander Vinogradov, conducted by the young maestro Francesco Ivan Ciampa.

**DANCE**. For this occasion, the Fondazione Arena di Verona, in collaboration with Filippo Tonon, has designed an original set that will welcome the orchestra and the chorus on stage, transforming the orchestra pit into a new stage for another Italian excellence in the world: dance. Étoiles **Roberto Bolle** and **Nicoletta Manni** will perform two choreographies by Massimiliano Volpini, created especially for this event and performed for the first time. To the music of the great maestros, including Giacomo Puccini (whose centenary of death is being commemorated this year), the two Étoiles from Milan's Teatro alla Scala will first perform a pas de deux to the music of *Madama Butterfly*. This will be followed by Bolle's solo to *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Also on stage during the evening will be 50 dancers from the Fondazione Arena Corps de Ballet.

**WORLDWIDE LIVE BROADCAST BY RAI**. The event will be broadcast live worldwide on Rai 1 from 8.30 pm. Introducing the general public to the exceptional heritage of Italian opera and opera singing will be three different narrators, together for the first time: Alberto Angela, Cristiana Capotondi and Luca Zingaretti. They will be moving around the different spaces of the Arena, among the audience and behind the scenes of this monumental set, a jewel built by the Romans and perfectly preserved. Every summer since 1913, the Arena has hosted the most complex, accomplished and grandiose live performance ever: opera.

**OPENING** **HOURS FOR THE PUBLIC**. The public can enter the Arena from 6.30 p.m. until 8.10 p.m. The evening, consisting of more than 30 musical moments, will have an intermission. This is the first event of its kind, which the Ministry of Culture hopes to repeat every year, on 7 June, in the most evocative places around Italy.

Present this morning at the press conference in Rome at the Ministry of Culture were the Minister of Culture, **Gennaro Sangiuliano;** the Under-secretary for Culture, **Gianmarco Mazzi;** the General Manager of the Fondazione Arena di Verona and Vice-President of ANFOLS, **Cecilia Gasdia;** the Director of Rai Cultura and Rai Educational, **Silvia Calandrelli;** and the Deputy Artistic Director of the Fondazione Arena di Verona, **Stefano Trespidi**.

*"The concert on 7 June, promoted by the Ministry of Culture, will see the entire Italian performing arts world come together to celebrate the inclusion of Italian opera singing on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list on 6 December. The extraordinary orchestra, conducted by Maestro Riccardo Muti, is made up of musicians and members of the chorus from all the national opera and symphony foundations and the major Italian opera orchestras. A unique and once-in-a-lifetime event, broadcast live throughout the world on RAI 1, in which the audience and listeners will be able to experience the most famous and popular arias of our opera production, which is fully part of the authentic Italian image that the government is working on in various ways”,* stated the Minister of Culture, **Gennaro Sangiuliano**.

“*This Ministry of Culture event was conceived on the day UNESCO awarded opera singing the status of intangible cultural heritage*,” explained the Under-secretary for Culture, **Gianmarco Mazzi***. “Opera sets us apart on a global scale and is an important way of protecting and spreading our language*. *The strength of opera lies in the fact that it is an exceptional artistic machine that, after more than 450 years, without recourse to technology, but solely on the basis of human talent, manages to create sublime performances capable of competing with and astonishing contemporary audiences. To the credit of those who work there. I would like to thank Maestro Riccardo Muti," concluded* ***Mazzi****, "who has always given me his encouragement in this initiative.”*

*"We kick off the new century of the Arena di Verona Opera Festival by celebrating the inclusion of Italian opera singing as part of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. We could not be any happier*,” said **Cecilia Gasdia**, General Manager of the Fondazione Arena di Verona. “*On 7 June, the world spotlight will be on Verona and the Opera, thanks to this special event promoted by the Ministry of Culture*. *This is a source of pride for all opera and symphonic foundations in our country. I would therefore like to thank Minister Sangiuliano and Under-secretary Mazzi, who believed in and made this possible, enhancing the international value of our artistic heritage.”*

*"We have worked day and night to achieve this incredible result*," emphasised **Stefano Trespidi**, Deputy Artistic Director of the Fondazione Arena di Verona. "*On a single evening, we will have the best artists in the world on the same stage. Despite their many international commitments, they will all come together here in Verona*. *My thanks go to each and every one of them and to the staff and team of the Fondazione Arena di Verona who, with great commitment, have provided their services to create what will be a unique event.”*

*“Never-ending emotion, dizzying excitement and magic, a journey into great music: this is the celebration of Italian opera, a cultural heritage of humanity,"* concluded **Silvia Calandrelli**, director of Rai Cultura and Rai Educational, *"an incredible show of beauty and wonder. Words, colours, shapes and sounds... a gift to the Italian public with the biggest names in international music. This is RAI's commitment to music and culture.”*

Info: [www.arena.it](http://www.arena.it/)

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