



RAVENNA FESTIVAL 2017

25 May -11 July 2017
"The Noise of Time"

8 July 2017
The Roads of Friendship
Riccardo Muti & Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra

17 - 23 November 2017
Autumn Trilogy
Cavalleria rusticana, Pagliacci, Tosca

Home to eight UNESCO World Heritage sites, Ravenna has historically been a crossroads of people and culture - the gateway between the East and West - and it is the city's rich history which is the inspiration for a multi-faceted festival, now celebrating its 28th season.

Every year from May to July, the entire city of Ravenna becomes a stage for two months: its staggering gilded basilicas, encrusted with mosaics, its elegant historical theatres, its cloisters, gardens, squares and ancient buildings are brought back to life with music, film and dance in a myriad of genres. Alongside the main festival strands which this year include **Revolutions in Music, A Passage to India, The Magic of Dance** and a tribute to **Music and Cinema**, the Festival hosts daily performances celebrating Ravenna's extraordinary history and its special relationship with **Dante Alighieri** who lived and died in the city.

Each summer the festival curates **The Roads of Friendship** - a musical pilgrimage which is inaugurated at home in Ravenna with **Riccardo Muti** and the **Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra** and takes the musicians on a journey to symbolic sites of both ancient and contemporary history. And every November the festival goes on to host an opera **Autumn Trilogy** nurturing emerging Italian talent.



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"The Noise of Time" : Revolutions in music

The main theme of the 2017 Festival explores revolutions in music, taking as its starting point the October revolution of 1917 which resulted in the fall of the Tsarist Empire. In the collective imagination, this is the ultimate Revolution, one that brought about the radical subversion of thinking habits and everyday reality, bursting with long-suppressed energy and creating a wealth of hopes and illusions. Euphoria quickly gave way to disillusionment and to the bleak, tragic decades of Stalinism and Soviet totalitarianism. The lacerating relationship between the intellectuals and power is one of the Festival's themes, centred on a well-known, albeit controversial, example: Shostakovich. Hence the title of this year's Festival, "The Noise of Time", borrowed from Julian Barnes's novel on the Russian composer, and from Osip Mandelstam's memoirs.

The Festival will follow the trajectory of the Russian Revolution, from Alekei Kruchonykh's Futurist opera "**Victory Over the Sun**" (Wednesday 21 June), to a concert by the **Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra** (Tuesday 4 July) dedicated to Shostakovich. The opera, set to music by Matiushin with sets provided by Malevich, is a true compendium of the aesthetics of the Revolution, and its Italian début will be staged by **Stas Namin Theatre, Moscow**. Meanwhile the concert by the legendary Philharmonic, conducted by **Yuri Temirkanov**, will feature Shostakovich's Symphony no. 7, composed and heroically performed during the terrible siege of Leningrad. The symphony will be complemented by Shostakovich's Concerto no. 1 for piano, trumpet and string orchestra, with **Denis Matsuev** at the piano. With "**1917**" (Wednesday 28 June) especially commissioned to Ravenna-based group **ErosAntEros**, the Festival will give a new voice to those who sang the Revolution, reconstructing their enthusiasm for the coming of a new era. Music from Quartet no. 8, one of Shostakovich's most bitter and visceral scores will be performed live.



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Eternal Ravenna: home of Dante and the city of mosaics

Celebrating the city and its history is forever at the heart of the daily festival programme (25 May - 2 July) and this year features the first part of a Dante Trilogy with "**Inferno**" to be performed in the Rasi Theatre - a poor convent in Dante's time - whilst the great poet's own tomb will be the setting for the "**Young Artists of Dante**" project.

Twenty years have now passed since eight of Ravenna's early Christian and Byzantine monuments were acknowledged as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and the Festival continues to "live" in the city's basilicas, weaving together spirituality, music and mosaics. In addition to **Vespers at San Vitale** which take place every evening from 25 May - 2 July there are an array of performances from international artists including the Nordic Protestant sound of Hannu Norjanen's **Cantores Minores** (Sunday 18 June), Anatoly Grindenko's **Orthodox Choir of the Moscow Patriarchate** (Sunday 25 June) and the **Orlando Consort** (Sunday 2 July). The Festival also pays tributes to Claudio Monteverdi, another champion of a musical revolution, whose 450th anniversary will be celebrated at both San Vitale and Sant'Apollinare in Classe.

The Roads of Friendship led by Riccardo Muti

One of the most important events of each summer is the Roads of Friendship concert conducted by Ravenna's resident cultural ambassador, **Riccardo Muti**. These concerts form a bridge of brotherhood between Ravenna and other historical cities and sites around the world. Founded in 1997 the Roads of Friendship has to date included performances in Sarajevo, Jerusalem, Yerevan, Istanbul, Beirut, Damascus, Moscow and New York (Ground Zero). Riccardo Muti is joined by the **Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra**, which he founded and personally mentors, for this unique performance in Ravenna on 8 July. Details of the programme and this year's place of pilgrimage will be announced at a later date.

Meanwhile, the symphonic programme, which is at the heart of the Festival, will open at Pala De André with the **Munich Philharmonic** and **Semyon Bychkov** (Sunday 28 May) who will perform Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and are then joined by soloist **Jean-Yves Thibaudet** for Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto no. 1. Violinist **Anne-Sophie Mutter** will appear at the Festival for the first time performing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in D minor with the **Orchestre National de Lyon** conducted by **Leonard Slatkin** (Thursday 15 June) and **Juraj Valcuha** will lead the **RAI National Orchestra**, with **David Fray** as soloist in Schumann's Piano Concerto (Friday 30 June).

For further press information please contact:

Red House Productions - lucy@redhousepr.com - Tel: + 46 - (0)70 - 38 80 255



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A Passage to India

Almost a festival within the Festival, the Darbar weekend will provide a full immersion in Indian classical music, with the most important event that celebrates these traditions in Europe for a "Passage to India" showcasing Carnatic to Hindustani music, bewitchingly beautiful in their absolute distance from Western aesthetics. Fifty years after the release of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, the Beatles' manifesto of the hippy psychedelic revolution, which revealed the sound of the sitar to the world, **Anoushka Shankar** will be one of the principal artists leading the Festival's tribute to India in the 70th anniversary of its independence, with her new work "**Land of Gold**" (Sunday 9 July). Choreographer **Shobana Jeyasingh**, also stages her latest project "**Material Men**" (Saturday 10 June) - an intense creation for two performers of the Indian diaspora, with contrasting styles between classical and hip hop.

The Magic of Dance

The Festival's dance programme this year features three companies: **Olivier Dubois**, director of Centre Chorégraphique National de Roubaix / Ballet du Nord, returns to Ravenna with "**Les mémoires d'un seigneur**" (Thursday 8 June), featuring Sébastien Perrault and 40 male performers. The work explores the notions of power and temptation in a portrait of hell very much in Caravaggio's style. The prestigious **National Ballet of Cuba**, founded by Alicia Alonso in 1948, presents "**The magic of dance**" (Thursday 29 June), a rich concentration of classical ballet and Cuban national spirit. A counterpoint to "Victory over the Sun", "**Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna**" (Thursday 1 June) is a compendium of Futurism as practised by Marinetti's movement: choreographer Silvia Barberini, a disciple of the only Futurist dancer, Giannina Censi, stages the performers of the 'Paolo Grassi' Civic School of Theatre, Milan.

Music & Cinema

A trilogy of historic films with live music are the cinematic focus of this year's festival featuring Robert Wiene's 1919 "**The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari**" (Saturday 3 June), with live electronics by **Edison Studio**, Carl Theodore Dreyer's 1928 "**La passion de Jeanne d'Arc**" (Saturday 1 July), accompanied by a live soundtrack compiled from XV century music by the **Orlando Consort**, and one of Charlie Chaplin's finest films from 1925, "**The Gold Rush**" (Tuesday 11 July), restored by Cineteca di Bologna. The score, reconstructed and conducted by **Timothy Brock**, the foremost authority on silent-film music, will be performed by the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra.

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The Autumn Trilogy: on the verge of the XX Century

The changes brought about by the transition between the XIX and the XX centuries will be the focus of Autumn Trilogy 2017, which will feature three operas staged at the Alighieri Theatre on consecutive nights. All composed in the last decade of the 19th century, "**Cavalleria Rusticana**" (17 and 21 November), "**Pagliacci**" (18 and 22 November), and "**Tosca**" (19 and 23 November) form a triptych of the new realism of opera. Among the first pupils of Riccardo Muti's Italian Opera Academy, conductor **Vladimir Ovodok** leads the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in all three operas which are directed by the Ravenna Festival's founder **Cristina Mazzavillani Muti**.

A Brief History of Ravenna

Ravenna is the capital city of the Province of Ravenna, in the Emilia-Romagna region of Northern Italy. It was the capital city of the Western Roman Empire from 402 until that empire collapsed in 476. It then served as the capital of the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths until it was re-conquered in 540 by the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire. Afterwards, the city formed the centre of the Byzantine Exarchate of Ravenna until the invasion of the Lombards in 751. Exiled from Florence, poet Dante Alighieri found his "last refuge" in Ravenna, where he finished his *Paradiso* while a guest of lord Guido Novello da Polenta, and where he was buried in 1321.

A Brief History of the Ravenna Festival

The Festival was founded by Cristina Mazzavillani Muti in 1990 on the invitation of the city. Born and bred in Ravenna, she trained as a singer and made her debut in Milan under the baton of Riccardo Muti. After marrying in 1969 she gave up her career, returning to Ravenna which remains the family's home. Cristina Muti and her husband have constantly nurtured the city's arts and so the invitation to create a festival was a natural extension to both her work and involvement in the region. In 2000 she was awarded the Jerusalem Foundation Award on occasion of the concert held in Jerusalem within the Roads of Friendship project, and, in 2005, received the honour of Grand Officer of Merit of the Italian Republic by the President of the Italian Republic.