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SIMONE KERMES & AMICI VENEZIANI

BELCANTO DI NAPOLI

SATURDAY 25 JANUARY 2020 - 7:30 PM





Simone Kermes & Amici Veneziani

Belcanto di Napoli

Saturday 25 January 2020 - 7:30 PM

Teatru Manoel, Valletta

The Valletta Baroque Festival

Since its launch in 2013, the Valletta Baroque Festival has treated audiences to a unique event featuring some of the best soloists and ensembles in the baroque music scene. Taking as its main venue one of the oldest working theatres in the world, Teatru Manoel, this prestigious two-week festival also plays out within many wonderful baroque and historical venues, such as St. John's Co-Cathedral and Verdala Palace. This year's musical programme has once again secured some of the best contemporary exponents of Baroque music from the international and local sphere to contribute to the celebration of Malta.

Front Cover Image

Detail from the composite portrait of the Van Lennep Family by Antoine Favray (1706-1798) from the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

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Welcome Note

Owen Bonnici

Minister for Justice, Culture & Local Government

It gives me great pleasure to introduce once again the Valletta Baroque Festival which is now going into its eighth edition. This exquisite winter festival brings the best exponents of early music to our shores for a tight programme of glorious music which for the most part was composed at the same time when our capital, Valletta, was being built by the Knights of St John. This period of Malta's history was culturally one of the most influential; colouring our literature, art, architecture and indeed music for generations to come.

This is why this festival is such an important landmark in our cultural calendar as it showcases the beauty of locations like Verdala Castle or the Parish Churches around our island in addition to the proliferation of baroque locations in Valletta itself like St John's Co Cathedral or significantly the Teatru Manoel itself a jewel of 18th century theatrical architecture from which the festival operates.

Since 2013 the festival and the theatre have gone from strength to strength presenting the general public with high level and well-produced events which a theatre of the Manoel's status deserves as does its discerning public. Concurrently with the spirit of the

festival, the general programme of the theatre, which now runs to eleven months a year thanks to the climate control system that was installed two years ago with the support of EU funds, also showcases Maltese cultural achievements and will next September present an opera by Maltese composer Gerolamo Abos which was composed for Rome's Teatro Argentina in 1747.

Our historical uniqueness in the centre of the Mediterranean formed for almost three centuries by a chivalric order made up of the finest European houses, has created a very special melange with the subsequent British period as it picks the best of the Latin and Anglo Saxon along with Malta's ancient Semitic roots and creates something inimitable.

I am extremely proud of this festival and delighted that the programme for January 2021 is already set and can be found at the back of this booklet.

This professionalism reflects what this government strives to achieve in all its endeavours. I am convinced that Malta's success depends very much on its singular character and that no expense should be spared to preserve, propagate and enhance it.

Foreword

Kenneth Zammit Tabona

Artistic Director, Valletta Baroque Festival & Teatru Manoel

Some ten years ago there was a concert scheduled in the Malta Summer Arts Festival by the European Union Baroque Orchestra popularly known as EUBO which, because of the July heat and humidity, had to be moved to the airconditioned Ambassador's Room at the Auberge de Castille. Very few of us then had ever seen or heard a proper baroque orchestra with its particular instruments like the viola da gamba, the theorbo or the harpsichord - delicate instruments that lend that inimitable colour to the baroque world that conjures up visions of silks, periwigs and lace.

The lacuna in our local mix was staring at us in the face. Despite living on an island where it is obvious that the baroque idiom is bred in the bone and where our capital city built mainly between 1566 and 1798 leads the way in architectural style, we did not have a music festival to complement and enhance the dyed-in-the-wool baroque elements all around us.

This is what led to the first festival in January 2013; January being the antithesis of July and a period during which we could actually boost cultural tourism in the most intellectually tasteful way possible.

We are now experiencing the 8th edition and the programme of the 9th edition can also be found in this programme booklet. These are programmes that are as top flight as any of the great established music festivals throughout Europe. They are also varied and sometimes a trifle quirky. This is what makes them esoterically intriguing. Although never consciously tying myself

up in a thematic knot, somehow there is always something which distinguishes one festival from another; sometimes it is different compositions of the same text like *Dixit Dominus*, or a preponderance of instruments like the gamba.

This year we have a Neapolitan element running through the programme the temperament of which reminds us of the blue Mediterranean skies which are found both in the landscape paintings of Vesuvius and those depicting our Grand Harbour in Valletta. In fact, it is called Posillipo Blue!

There was a great cultural rapport between the capital of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the capital of the unique monastic principality established by the crusading Order of St. John.

Our composers used to go to Naples to study and many established themselves both in the 'geographical expression' that was Italy at the time besides Malta. A perfect example is the Maltese composer Gerolamo Abos who in addition to being maestro di Cappella at St John's co cathedral, also composed operas for prestigious houses like the Argentina in Rome. We will in fact be staging one of his operas, *Pelopida*, for the first time in living memory next September.

Meanwhile our quest for baroque excellence continues to be led by an historic theatre built in 1731 set in a tiny fortified baroque city straddling the commercial and strategic waterways of the Mediterranean and in the process transforming it into the opulent setting for what is becoming one of the top early music festivals in Europe.

Programme

Antonio VIVALDI (1678-1741)

Concerto (Sinfonia) in G Major RV 146
Allegro, Andante, Presto

Nicola Antonio PORPORA (1686-1768)

Mitridate - Aria Oronta
Vedra turbato il mare

Antonio VIVALDI

Concerto in D minor RV 128
Allegro non molto, Largo, Allegro

Nicola Antonio PORPORA

Polifemo - Aria Aci
Alto Giove

Antonio VIVALDI

Olimpiade - Overture

George Frideric HANDEL (1685-1759)

Serse - Aria Serse
Ombra mai fu

Nicola Antonio PORPORA

Semiramide regina dell'Assiria - Aria Nino
Come nave in ria tempesta

[interval]

Antonio VIVALDI

La Griselda - Arie Ottone
Dopo un'orrida procella

Antonio VIVALDI

Concerto in G minor RV 156
Allegro, Largo, Allegro

Antonio VIVALDI

Farnace - Arie Farnace
Gelido in ogni vena

Johann Adolf HASSE (1699-1783)

Symphony in G minor op. 5 No. 6

Giovanni Battista PERGOLESI (1710-1736)

L'Olimpiade - Aria Aristeia
Tu me da me dividi

Antonio VIVALDI

La fida ninfa - Aria Moraastro
Dite, ohimé

Johann Adolf HASSE

Viriato - Aria Siface
Come nave in mezzo all'onde

Musicians

Raffaele Tiseo, concert master and violin

Gianpiero Zanocco, violin

Albero Salomon, viola

Maurizio Fornero, harpsichord

Giuseppe Mulé, cello

Luca Stevanato, double bass

Gianluca Geremia, theorbo

Simone Kermes, soprano

Programme notes

The programme promises to be like a beautiful fireworks display. The works presented, which were composed during the golden era of Naples, include arias written for Farinelli, Cafarelli, and other virtuoso castrati, as well as music describing "La Tempesta" by: Vivaldi, Porpora, Pergolesi, Hasse, Handel and others.

Lyrics

ORIGINAL

Nicola Antonio Porpora **Vedrà turbato il mare**

Vedrà turbato il mare
il passeggero audace,
ne men chiaro il chelo
l'agricoltor sagace,
e pure senza timore
all'onde, a quell'orrore
la speme affiderà

Nicola Antonio Porpora **Alto Giove**

Alto Giove, è tua grazia è tua vanto
il gran dono di vita immortale
che il tuo cenno sovrano mi fà.
Ma il rendermi poi quella
già sospirata tanto
diva amorosa e bella
è un dono senza uguale
come la tua beltà.

George Frideric Handel **Ombra mai fu**

Ombra mai fu
di vegetabile,
cara ed amabile,
soave più.

ENGLISH

Nicola Antonio Porpora **Vedrà turbato il mare**

The brave voyager
will see a storm-tossed ocean,
the wise farmer
will see a cloud-filled sky,
and yet without fear
will place his hope
in those waves, in that storm

Nicola Antonio Porpora **Alto Giove**

Mighty Jove, the wondrous gift of im-
mortal life,
accorded me by your sovereign gesture,
bears witness to your grace and virtue.
but your returning to me
the loving, beautiful goddess
for whom I have so longed
is a gift which, like your beauty,
has no match

George Frideric Handel **Ombra mai fu**

Never was a shade
of any plant
dearer and more lovely,
or more sweet.

Nicola Antonio Porpora
Come nave in ria tempesta

Come nave in ria tempesta
combattuto è il mio pensiero,
che risolvere non sò.
In qual parte io volgo il ciglio
veggo orror, veggo periglio,
nel crudel cemento e fiero
(giusto Ciel) che far dovrò!

Antonio Vivaldi
Dopo un'orrida procella

Dopo un'orrida procella
Splende chiaro il ciel sereno
Che disgiombra il nostro seno
Dall'affanno, e dal timor.
Così suole la fortuna
Vicendevole con noi
Ristorare i danni suoi
Altemando il suo rigor.

Antonio Vivaldi
Gelido in ogni vena

Gelido in ogni vena
Scorrer mi sento il sangue.
L'ombra del figlio esangue
M'ingombra di terror.

E per maggior mia pena
Vedo che fui crudele
A un'anima innocente,
Al core del mio cor.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi
Tu me da me dividi

Tu me da me dividi,
Barbaro, tu m'uccidi
Tutto il dolor ch'io sento
Tutto mi vien da te.

No, non sperar mai pace.
Odio quel cor fallace;
Oggetto di spavento
Sempre sarai per me.

Nicola Antonio Porpora
Come nave in ria tempesta

Like a ship in a wild storm
my thoughts are tossed about,
and I cannot make any decision
Whenever I turn my gaze
I see horror and danger;
in this cruel, savage trail,
dear heavens, what should I do?

Antonio Vivaldi
Dopo un'orrida procella

After a fearful storm
the calm sky shines clearly
and unburdens our hearts
of anxiety and fear.
Thus destiny deals with us
in turn
wounding
then healing.

Antonio Vivaldi
Gelido in ogni vena

I feel my blood like ice
coursing through every vein.
The shade of my lifeless son
afflicts me with terror.

And to make my agony worse
I see that I was cruel
to an innocent soul,
to my heart's beloved.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi
Tu me da me dividi

You send me from myself,
cruel one, you kill me,
all the torment I feel
comes from you.

No, never hope for peace.
I hate your deceitful heart,
an object of fear is what
you shall always be to me.

Antonio Vivaldi
Dite, ohimé

Dite, ohimé, ditelo al fine:
Deggio vivere o morir?
Sta mia vita in su'l confine.
Pronta è già l'alma ad uscir.

Johann Adolf Hasse
Come nave in mezzo all'onde

Come nave in mezzo all'onde
Si confonde il tuo pensiero;
Non temer che il buon nocchiero
Il cammin t'insegnerà.
Basterà per tuo conforto
L'amor mio nella procella;
La tua guida, la tua stella,
Il tuo porto egli sarà.

Antonio Vivaldi
Dite, ohimé

Tell me, alas, tell me at last,
Must I live or die?
My life stands on the brink,
my soul is already prepared to depart.

Johann Adolf Hasse
Come nave in mezzo all'onde

Like a ship upon the sea,
so confused
are your thoughts.
Trust in the good helmsman
To show you the way.
Sufficient for your comfort
is my love in the storm.
your guide, your star,
your harbor
it shall be.

Artist Biography

Amici Veneziani

The birth of Amici Veneziani arose from the long-time musical collaboration between Simone Kermes and some of the musicians. Their experience of playing music together in different combinations and orchestras united them.

Over the years, they became friends - the time to form an orchestra had come. Playing together means love and respect on a high artistic level - with lots of energy. Or in the words of the musicians:

"Music gives me the opportunity to express myself in a unique way. It enables me to come into contact with many people and different realities. It gives me an opportunity to experience things that I could not do elsewhere. "

Simone Kermes, soprano

Simone Kermes, born in Leipzig in 1965, is prized for her unique stage presence and tremendous virtuosity.

Her focus is on concert performance. She has developed her own musical projects and tours successfully around the world with her outstanding musicians Amici Veneziani.

Her highly acclaimed concept albums, which she creates herself and produces together with Sony Classical, have even reached the pop charts. Her artistic world knows no boundaries - she is at home in all musical styles.

Founded in 2017, Simone's personal orchestra Amici Veneziani was, as she says, "a necessary development based on long years of experience working with musicians; to bring together, to experience and to carry on both the musical and human quality."

Kermes Artists GmbH, her own agency, was also founded in the same year. Simone Kermes gives masterclasses around the world. It is very important for her to support young people and to share her musical knowledge and experience with them.

Simone Kermes performs at major opera houses and concert halls worldwide. She won first place at the Mendelssohn and Bach competition, and has received prestigious awards such as the ECHO KLASSIK for the "Female Singer of the Year", as well as "Opera Recording of the Year".

For her performance in Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* she was honoured with the esteemed Russian opera award The Golden Mask.

Her current album *Mio Caro Händel* is dedicated to her idol and inspiration George Frideric Handel. It stormed the classical charts and was overwhelmingly received by international critics. Both Simone and her orchestra *Amici Veneziani* have been highly praised.

Inferno e Paradiso, her next concept album, will be released in 2020. It includes *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Virtues*: arias and pop songs (!) with fresh Baroque glamour and a surprising style. Numerous world premiere recordings are foreseen!

Together with *Amici Veneziani*, in 2020 she will embark on the concert tour *Inferno e Paradiso* in leading venues such as *Elbphilharmonie*, Hamburg and *Salle Gaveau*, Paris.

Gianluca Geremia, theorbo

"The moment when we are musically searching for a certain resonance, trying to share with each other the acoustic sounds and musical gestures, you find a sense of intense presence as well as a music that is nothing less than a metaphor for life."
Luca Stevanato, double bass

Each musician is a soloist. Musicians play in different orchestras, for example: *La Scala* in Milan, *Teatro La Fenice* in Venice, the orchestras of Rome, Padua, Palermo, Turin and the many other Baroque ensembles around the world. But in this orchestra, special energies are released which the audience can immediately sense.

Future *Amici Veneziani* projects include CD productions and concerts with Simone Kermes in all the major concert halls around the world: *Prinzregententheater München*, *International Music Festival Dresden Kulturpalast*, *Meraner Musikwochen Südtirol*, *Salle Gaveau Paris*, *Berliner Konzerthaus* and *Philharmonie*, *Elbphilharmonie Hamburg*, *Wiesbaden International May Festival*, *Lithuania Festival*, *MDR Musiksommer*, *Kölner Philharmonie*, *Valetta International Baroque Festival Malta*.

2021 Programme

Friday 15 January 2021

7:30 pm
Bach - The Four Orchestral Suites
Les Passions de L'Ame

Saturday 16 January 2021

12 noon
Chorale for Organ and Viola da
Gambas & Dialogos
Accademia del Piacere

5:30 pm
Baroque XXL
Hansjörg Albrecht - Organ

7:30 pm
Meets Flamenco
Accademia del Piacere

Sunday 17 January 2021

11:30 am
A Solo harpsichord programme
of Rameau
Stephen Devine

3:30 pm
The Piper and the Fairy Queen
Camerata Kilkenny

7:30 pm
Lust and love lust
*Combattimento Ensemble -
Claudia Patacca (soprano)*

Monday 18 January 2021

12 noon
Delicatessen
Stephen Divine and Kate Semmons

7:30 pm
Switched on Bach, Back to the 70s
On The Moog - Stephen Devine

Tuesday 19 January 2021

12 noon
The Bach Family, Marais, Dowland
and others
*Isang Enders (Cello) and Mahan
Esfahani (Harpichord)*

7:30 pm
Magnificat
VIBE - Valletta Baroque Ensemble

Wednesday 20 January 2021

12 noon
Roma Sconosciuta
*Il Sogno Barocco and counter tenor
Filippo Mineccia*

7:30 pm
Handel - Apollo and Daphne
*Orchestra of the Age of the
Enlightenment*

Thursday 21 January 2021

12 noon
Music from the Court of Versailles for
Baroque Viola and Theorbo
*Sarah Spiteri and Pablo Zapico - Viola
and Theorbo*

7:30 pm
Eroe
*Il Giardino d'amore and
countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński*

Friday 22 January 2021

12 noon
Bach on Mandolin
Avi Avital

7:30 pm
Steps in love
Weaver Ensemble - Dance

Saturday 23 January 2021

12 noon
Bach, Handel, Scarlatti
Roberto Cominati - Piano

4:30 pm
The Goldberg Variations
Signum Saxophone Quartet

7:30 pm
Return to forever
Il Giardino d'amore
*Stefan Plewniak, Stan Plewniak and
Natalia Kawalek*

Sunday 24 January 2021

11:30 am
Bach Transcriptions
Vassilis Varvarevos - piano

3:30 pm
Beware the Spider
Palisander - Recorder ensemble

7:30 pm
Biber & Piazzola
lautten compagney BERLIN

Monday 25 January 2021

12 noon
Il Transilvano
Prisma Ensemble

7:30 pm

Ardet Cor Meum
Arsenale Sonore dir. Boris Begelman
Francesca Aspromonte (Soprano)

Tuesday 26 January 2021

12 noon
CPE Bach Sonatas
Johanna Rose - Viola Da Gamba

7:30 pm
Giardino delle Rose - Caldara
Ensemble Divino Sospiro

Wednesday 27 January 2021

12 noon
Due begl'occhi guerrieri
The rediscovered madrigals
of the Mdina archives
The Monteverdi Project

7:30 pm
Inspired by Baroque
MPO - Malta Philharmonic Orchestra

Thursday 28 January 2021

12 noon
Eloquentia
Alia Mens - dir. Olivier Spilmont

7:30 pm
Charlie Siem - Violin

Friday 29 January 2021

12 noon
Delirio Amoroso
*Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli
(Soprano)*

7:30 pm
Combattimento
*Cantar Lontano, dir. Marco
Mencoboni*

Saturday 30 January 2021

12 noon
Kuhnau biblical sonatas
Mahan Esfahani - Harpsichord

7:30 pm
Jomelli's Requiem
Coro e Orchestra Ghislieri

Sunday 31 January 2021

11:30 am
Of Gods and Monsters
*VIBE - Valletta Baroque Ensemble -
Trevor Bowes (Bass)*

(PROGRAMME AT THE TIME OF PRINTING)

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