Festivals

CARNEGIE HALL

La Serenissima

MUSIC AND ARTS FROM THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

February 3–21, 2017
Serenissima
MUSIC AND ARTS FROM THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

Home to architectural marvels that seem to have appeared from a fantasy, Venice stands as a living monument to a remarkable bygone time. The Venetian Republic—also known as La Serenissima, or “the Most Serene Republic”—reached preeminent heights of maritime supremacy, democratic and social progressiveness, financial prosperity, and cultural achievement and innovation, flourishing for 1,000 years until its fall to Napoleon in 1797.

With key ports and territories throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, Venice bridged East and West, linking the Byzantine and Ottoman empires and other Asian civilizations with Europe. Combined, these cultures shaped Venice, infusing it with cosmopolitan vibrancy that was further enhanced by its immense trade and commerce-driven wealth—all of which helped to establish its independence from the Papacy as a model of self-rule that was distinct from the rest of Europe’s feudalism and monarchies.

Venice’s affluence also fueled the cultural and artistic mecca it would become, introducing concepts like public opera performances and sacred, intricate antiphonal choral writing, and producing transformative composers like Monteverdi, Cavalli, Vivaldi, and the Gabriels; incandescent visual artists such as Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, Tiepolo, and the Bellinis; seminal architects Palladio and Sansovino; and the celebrated playwright Goldoni, not to mention Marco Polo and Casanova.

Carnegie Hall salutes La Serenissima’s dazzling artistic legacy with concerts that feature vocal masterpieces and virtuoso instrumental music, continuing the Hall’s recent emphasis on early-music programming. Highlights include Gateway to the East: The Millenarian Venice, a survey of more than 1,000 years of music from Venice, Istanbul, Cyprus, and Crete with Jordi Savall and his ensembles Hesperion XXI, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, and Le Concert des Nations; Vivaldi’s dramatic oratorio Juditha triumphans with the Venice Baroque Orchestra; and Monteverdi’s monumental—and final—opera, L’incoronazione di Poppea performed by Concerto Italiano led by Rinaldo Alessandrini. Also featured is chamber music performed by Quicksilver, the New York–based TENET, presenting Music By, For, and About Women in 17th-Century Italy, chamber orchestra Il Pomo d’Oro, with emotionally wrought opera arias and duets by lesser-known composers, as well as an evening of Vivaldi violin concertos and other works that feature Dmitry Sinkovsky; and The Tallis Scholars, who lead a Weill Music Institute workshop for young singers that culminates in a joint concert, performing polyphrphal repertoire written expressly for Venice’s St. Mark’s Basilica.

The celebration also extends citywide with events at leading cultural institutions such as the Centro Primo Levi; Columbia University’s Department of Italian and The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America; The Frick Collection; The Juilliard School; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; The Morgan Library & Museum; New York University’s Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò; and Save Venice, Inc., including lectures, art exhibits, panel discussions, and other performances that examine both the unparalleled cultural innovations of the Venetian Republic and also the scandalous, ribald, and libertine history that the passage of time has rendered less familiar.

**SONATAS FROM LA SERENISSIMA**

Chamber music from the Venetian Republic is some of the most inventive and expressive of the Baroque era. Quicksilver, praised for “impeccable, soulful playing” (The New York Times), performs music from 17th- and 18th-century greats, ranging from the then “radical” sonata composers Castello and Marini, and the operatic lyricism of Legrenzi to the spectacular virtuosity of Vivaldi.

**DEATH IN VENICE: THE VENETIAN LAMENT AND ITS ENGLISH IMITATORS**

Two masterpieces by Monteverdi and emotionally charged laments by others reveal this popular form’s development in Venice and its influence on English and Flemish composers.

**MUSICA NOVA: RICERCARI, CANZONE, SONATE E DANZE VENEZIANE**

One of early music’s living legends, Jordi Savall leads his ensemble Hespèrion XXI in Venetian instrumental music from the 16th and 17th centuries. Composers of dance music—including Andrea Gabrieli, Giovanni Gabrieli, Marini, and Merula—heralded a new era of instrumental brilliance where melodic beauty was married to daring explorations of harmony, rhythm, and form. Many of these older dance tunes and songs also provided the inspiration for inventive works where instrumental voices intertwine, imitate, and soar.

**LOVERS’ PASSIONS: AGONY AND ECSTASY**

Arias, duets, and instrumental selections from Cavalli’s *Pompeo magno*, Cesti’s *L’Argia*, Majo’s *Ipermestra*, Porpora’s *Gli orti esperidi*, and Sartorio’s *L’Orfeo*; as well as vocal and instrumental works by Albinoni, Clari, Falconieri, Motta, Rossi, and Ziani.
Monday, February 20 at 7:30 PM | Weill
Ensemble ACJW
Program to include
VIVALDI Trio Sonata in D Minor, Op. 1, No. 12 (Variations on “La Folia”)
MARCELLO Oboe Concerto in D Minor
CAROLINE SHAW New Work (NY Premiere, commissioned by Carnegie Hall)

The Academy—a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute—in partnership with the New York City Department of Education Major funding has been provided by The Diller-Van Houten Family Foundation, Susan and Edward C. Fuchs and Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., Max H. Gluck Foundation, the Irving Harris Foundation, The Koret Foundation, Mrs. and Mr. Lewis S. Mirel, Mr. and Mrs. Pryde and Charlie Rosemont, The Mullen and Aimee Shubert Fund at Eileen and Harvey Lurie Foundation.

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Columbia University’s Department of Italian and The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America present a panel discussion titled EAST OF VENICE: La Serenissima as Seen from its Eastern Frontiers, featuring Harry Wolff (New York University), Molly Greene (Princeton University), Natalie Rothman (University of Toronto), Patricia Fortini Brown (Princeton University), and Daphne Lappia (European University Institute, Florence), moderated by Konstantina Zanou (Columbia University).

Viewing the history of the Venetian Republic through the lens of its neighbors to the east in the Balkans and its East Mediterranean frontiers, the panel examines exchanges—cultural, linguistic, religious, and others—between the Ottoman and the Venetian worlds, East and West.

The Frick Collection offers a seminar on its Venetian paintings led by Peter Jay Sharp Curator Xavier Salomon, a guest lecture, and an online Venetian Republic–themed tour that highlights book and image collections at the Frick Art Reference Library and The Frick Collection.

The Juilliard School’s Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts and Juilliard415, the school’s flagship period-instrument ensemble, team up for Handel’s pathbreaking opera Agrippina, composed in less than one month for the 1709–1710 Carnival season in Venice. Wildly successful upon its debut, Agrippina marked the 24-year-old composer’s first operatic masterpiece, establishing his international reputation and setting the course for future triumphs.

Juilliard offers a concert performance in Alice Tully Hall, conducted by Laurence Cummings.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art presents a two-part lecture series on the culture, personalities, and great artists from the height of Venice’s creative output, featuring Andrea Bayer, the museum’s Jayne Wrightsman Curator in the Department of European Paintings, and Kevin Salatino, the Huntington Library in Pasadena, as well as an online exhibit that highlights prominent parts of its Venetian collection.

Carnegie Hall’s partnership with Princeton University’s Festival of the Arts will continue with a series of lectures and performances by leading scholars and artists, including the department’s Director of Musical Studies, Patricia Fortini Brown.

The Juilliard School presents a round-table discussion that touches on Italian Jewish history and culture. Save Venice, Inc. and The Morgan Library & Museum co-present a lecture/conversation, Music in S itu, delivered by leading Monteverdi scholar Ellen Rosand, the George A. Saden Professor Emeritus of Music at Yale University. Using musical excerpts and slides of Venetian buildings restored by Save Venice, Inc., in which music would have been performed during the musical eff lorescence that marked the last centuries of La Serenissima, Professor Rosand provides a seductive glimpse into the Republic’s rich past.

A complete La Serenissima festival calendar will be published in late 2016. Visit carnegiehall.org/venice in the coming months for more details.

New York University / Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò presents a round-table discussion and a series of readings centering on the extraordinary tradition of early modern Venetian women’s writing, based on recent scholarship. Key figures in this tradition include the courtesan Veronica Franco, the dissident Baroque nun Arcangela Tarabotti, and the early feminist theorist Moderata Fonte.

KairoS Italy Theater, Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò’s resident theater company, performs a staged version of 18th-century playwright Carlo Goldoni’s Memoirs (Mémoirs). This play has been staged only once in a version directed by the legendary Giorgio Strehler; this performance marks the work’s US premiere. The same company also presents a version of Moderata Fonte’s proto-feminist dialogue The Worth of Women (6600)—also a US premiere—in collaboration with the work’s translator, New York University Professor Virginia Cox.

The Centro Primo Levi, in partnership with New York University / Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, hosts a roundtable discussion that touches on Italian Jewish history and culture.

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A La Serenissima subscription package is currently available. Single tickets for all Carnegie Hall events go on sale to subscribers and members on August 22, and to the general public on August 29. Please note that tickets for partner presentations will only be made available through the specific organization’s box office.

For more information and updates, visit carnegiehall.org/venice or call CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800.