



The Sferisterio arena

The Sferisterio arena is unique in its shape and structure. Built on the initiative of the Hundred Comrades (Cento Consorti), it was designed in 1829 by Neoclassical architect Ireneo Aleandri to host the game with ball and bangle. In 1921, it was used as an opera theatre for the first time (the first opera to be staged was *Aida*) and it's still the only open-air opera theatre with boxes.

After *Gioconda*, which was performed in 1922, activities were summoned again only in 1967. The season opened with Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*, featuring Mario Del Monaco in the leading role. Since then, the Sferisterio has welcomed the most extraordinary artists of our time: Luciano Pavarotti, Katia Ricciarelli, Renato Bruson, Montserrat Caballé, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Raina Kaibaivanska, Mariella Devia, Anna Caterina Antonacci, Désirée Rancatore, Francesco Meli, Rolando Villazon, Rudolf Nureyev, Carla Fracci, Roberto Bolle.

With its 2,500 seats, 104 boxes and one of the longest stages in Europe, the Sferisterio ensures perfect visibility and wonderful acoustics.

A majestic yet intimate theatre, the Sferisterio was thus defined by tenor **Luciano Pavarotti**: "it is the most fascinating open-air theatre I have ever seen, I will never forget it".

Macerata Opera Festival

From 20 July to 12 August 2018

The 2018 theme is #verdesperanza

The main issues threaded into our next summer festival are connected with a green, clean environment and sustainability, with planting the seeds of a better future through the art of hope. Our aim is to build strong ties with other bodies and institutions working on these issues, building a dialogue on sustainability and bringing together culture, nature and the community. All three operas on stage will recall the four natural elements: water, air, earth and fire. These timeless masterpieces will be re-interpreted in close connection with today's world: the initiatory trials of Tamino and Pamina in *Flauto Magico*, along with Graham Vick's own reading, the earth (sand) and water (sea) of Michieletto's *Elisir d'Amore*, the liquid mirrors of the historic *Traviata* of the mirrors (Henning Brockhaus), along with the air, or aria, which is so intrinsically part of all operas.

Even more Sferisterio at the Macerata Opera Festival

A Festival programme that, alongside the three opera masterpieces *Il flauto magico*, *L'Elisir d'amore*, and *La traviata*, and the traditional Night of the Opera, includes complementary events, the return of dance to the Sferisterio, the contemporanea and three thematic parties on stage Vinicio Capossela, Francesco Micheli with Elio, Max Gazzè, Lella Costa, and Eleonora Abbagnato: these are the stars that will feature in the three operas to be performed from 20 July to 12 August 2018, in Macerata

An opera festival for the young

Over the years, viewers under 30 years of age have come to the Sferisterio more and more, making the Macerata Opera Festival an absolute leader in terms of young participants' numbers.

Accessibility

In 2008, the Macerata Opera Festival launched an ambitious and unique accessibility project with the aim of providing its audience with a wide range of free access services. These services do not only make the opera experience but also the theatre itself, with its backstage areas, accessible to the widest possible audience, including those with special needs.

Since 2008, all opera performances are audio described for blind or partially sighted people. In ad-



dition, the theatre opens its doors to the audience before all audio-described evening performances with fully guided tactile tours. Since 2009, surtitles, are projected onto the big wall of the Arena Sferisterio, during all opera performances so that not only people with a hearing impairment but also the whole audience, can easily follow the librettos. And since 2017 two new worthy additions: the translated English version of the surtitles will be supplied for all opera performances, and a sign-language-interpreted tour will guide the hearing impairedt through the theatre, the stage, and its backstage areas.