

OPERA FUOCO



SEASON
2026 - 2027

Opera fuoco



Editorial

Opera Fuoco's 2026-27 season promises to be filled with many collaborations. We have forged creative projects with new and long-time partners in France and across borders.

Our season begins with a renewed cooperation with the recently renovated historic Marmottan Library in Paris-Boulogne, a perfect spot for a masterclass and Encounter concert. We then make a quick visit to one of our international partners in Vienna, the Theater an der Wien, for a revival of Handel's Hercules with the Namur Chamber Choir, Avery Amerau, Edwin Crossley Mercer and two of our young artists.

We continue with another revival of La Bohème in a youthful and close-up reading by director, Elsa Rooke.

In collaboration with a longtime partner, the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, this production also marks the beginning of an exciting new partnership between two young artist programs across Europe, that of the Folkoperan in Stockholm and our own - a big thank you to Opera Europa for introducing us!

In December, we return to the Saint Quentin-en-Yvelines Theater, our former residence, with Mozart's last opera, La Clemenza di Tito in a staging by Héloïse Sérazin and an additional first performance at the historic Théâtre Impérial de Compiègne;

The focus of our Spring projects is on two wonderful artistic collaborations - one historic and one contemporary. We are performing the 1841 reworking of Bach's Saint Matthew Passion by Félix Mendelssohn in both Massy, our current theater of residence and at the Bachfest in Leipzig, our longtime partner.

Our big staged performance of the season is a collaboration with fellow artist-in-residence at Massy, the choreographer and director, Anne Nguyen, who will bring an urban dance perspective to Monteverdi's extraordinary last opera, Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria. Ulysses is Back is a singular collaboration in which Monteverdi's mature and psychologically complex work unfolds in a contemporary, global and power-hungry world. The 14-member cast will represent an exceptional line-up of 5 generations of Opera Fuoco's Young Artists Program, most of them now confirmed artists in their own right.

Until then, we will enjoy our third and last year with the 6th generation of young artists and two masterclasses with magnificent new guests, Annick Massis and Anna Bonitatibus - time flies!

David Stern & Katharina Wolff



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I

Operas



HERCULES

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1745)
Concert Version



A monument to Greek tragedy, Sophocles' *Trachinia* immortalizes the timeless drama of marital jealousy. *Hercules* returns from the siege of Oechaly with a war hostage, the young Iole. Faced with the beautiful prisoner and driven by jealousy, Dejanira attempts to secure her husband's fidelity with a gift. She goes mad as she realizes the centaur Nessus' precious tunic is poisoned and that she has accidentally killed her husband. *Hercules* contains some of the composer's most innovative pieces,

such as the chorus "*Jealousy infernal pest*." Handel always wanted this oratorio in English to be considered a musical drama. In order to reinforce the dramatic tension and to give *Hercules* its operatic colors, David Stern proposes an interpretation based on the original manuscript and the reworkings that Handel made in 1749 and 1752. Opera Fuoco and David Stern collaborate with the Namur Chamber Choir to honor the greatest hero in Greco-Roman mythology.

ARTISTS

David Stern Music Director

Guest Soloists

Edwin Crossley-Mercer Hercules

Avery Amereau Dejanira

Current & former soloist from the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program

Thaïs Rai-Westphal Iole

Bastien Rimondi Hyllus

Opera Fuoco Orchestra
Namur Chamber Choir

OCTOBER 21st, 2026, 7:00 PM

THEATER AN DER WIEN - VIENNA

DURATION : 2H45

LA BOHÈME

GIACOMO PUCCINI (1896)

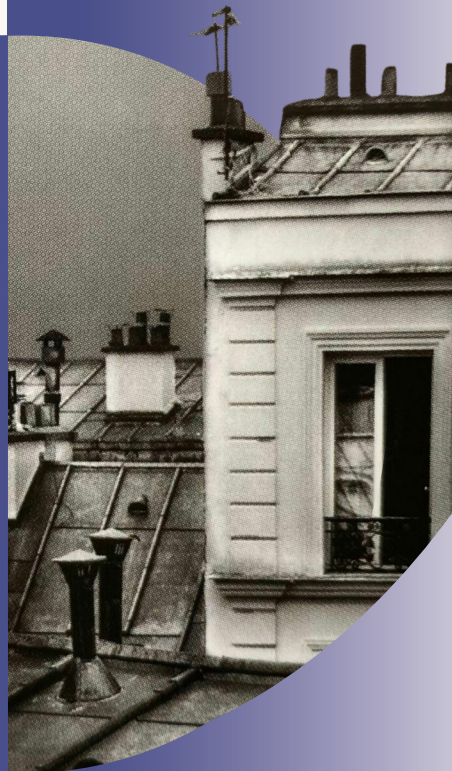
David Stern and Opera Fuoco propose a rendition of this timeless story which captures the true spirit of the opera: one of youth, of starving artists who live out their fantasies in the garrets of wintry Paris, defying fate for art and love.

Due to the composer's lavish orchestration, it is rare to hear *La Bohème* sung by young artists.

Opera Fuoco offers a chamber version which not only heightens the audience's experience but also allows the young operatic stars to bring truly uninhibited youthful passion to the stage.

The spirit of youth
Experience Puccini's timeless masterpiece in an intimate chamber version.

Elsa Rooke's close-up actors direction beautifully captures the raw emotion and uninhibited passion of our Young Artists Program soloists.



ARTISTS

David Stern Music Director
Elsa Rooke Director

Current & former soloists from the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program

Serafima Liberman Mimi
George Seymour Rodolfo
Thaïs Rai-Westphal Musetta
Matthieu Walenzdik Marcello
Aymeric Biesemans Schaunard
Olivier Gourdy Colline
Julien Ségol Benoît / Alcindoro
Juliette Sabbah Piano & Coach

NOVEMBER 6th, 2026, 8:00 PM
NOVEMBER 9th, 2026, 8:00 PM

ÖREBRO KONSERTHUS
STOCKHOLM FOLKOPERAN

Swedish Chamber Orchestra

DURATION : 2H00

LA CLEMENZA DI TITTO

W. A MOZART (1791)



Mozart's ultimate masterpiece, *La Clemenza di Tito*, transcends the opera seria genre to offer a complex and richly orchestrated score. A reflection of Enlightenment ideals, this opera examines a ruler's ethics when confronted by the perilous nature of human passions. At the heart of the plot stands the fascinating Vitellia, daughter of the fallen emperor. Wounded and manipulative, her psychological complexity informs the drama, including her ultimate confession.

In Héroïse Sérazin's staging, each character is treated with equal importance and finesse in order to emphasize the complexity of feelings, decision-making and the impact of one character on another. The idea, consequently, is to sublimate the characters' journeys and relationships, rather than to give precedence to the political significance of the work.

CREATIVE TEAM & ARTISTS

David Stern	Music Director
Héroïse Serazin	Director
Marc Delamézière	Lighting
Yann Philippe	Vidéos
Laurianne Scimeni del Francia	Costumes

Current & former soloists from the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program

Hongrui Ren	Titus
Margaux Poguet	Vitellia
Marion Vergez-Pascal	Sesto
Thaïs Rai-Westphal	Servilia
Sophia Stern	Annio
Julien Ségol	Publio

Opera Fuoco Orchestra
Massy Opera Young Artists - Choir

DECEMBER 4th, 2026, 8:00 PM
DECEMBER 11th, 2026, 8:00 PM

SAINT-QUENTIN EN YVELINES THEATER
COMPIÈGNE IMPERIAL THEATER

DURATION : 2H00

THE RETURN OF ULYSSES

An Urban Myth



APRIL 23th, 2027, 8:00 PM
APRIL 25th, 2027, 8:00 PM

OPÉRA DE MASSY
OPÉRA DE MASSY

MONTEVERDI (1640)

New Co-production Opera Fuoco, Opéra de Massy

Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* could be considered the first psychological drama in the history of opera. Monteverdi plays with contrasting states of consciousness and develops an irresistible musical language through which he brings to life human, subtle, and believable characters. By combining the rhetoric of the early Baroque with a contemporary physicality, David Stern and Anne Nguyen invite the audience to experience *The Return of Ulysses* in a new and powerful way.

Anne Nguyen portrays Ulysses as a man who bears the torments and scars of war. To reclaim his name, his history, his role within his family, and his place in society, the war hero must trade his identity for that of the eternal migrant, a victim of the choices made by those in power. Ulysses' return to his homeland will only be possible if he acquires the moral discernment that will allow

him to reconcile the multiple layers of reality upon which power is founded. The set design is built around the symbol of the bridge, a place of transcendence and transition, and the gradual unveiling of the cargo inside a shipping container, an emblem of migration. From jet-set-style gods to would-be heads of state, the singers of Opera Fuoco embody the turbulent relationships between figures representing modern power.

Alongside them, the powerful dance of three breakdancers celebrates the will of the gods and the passions of the human soul.

Faced with oblivion and alienation, it is by asserting himself as king, as father, and then as the guardian of justice and moral order that Ulysses will finally be able to reclaim full possession of his inner self and restore his ability to act freely in the world.

CREATIVE TEAM & ARTISTS

David Stern	Artistic & Musical director
Anne Nguyen	Stage director, Choreography, Set Design
Claire Manjarrès	Associated stage director & acting direction
Simon Huet	Costume designer
Christophe Chaupin	Lighting designer
Jean-Luc Tournée	Set builder
Pedro Octavio Diaz	Dramaturgy
Nora Darganzani	Harpsichord & Vocal coach

Dancers from the par Terre Company

Jérémy Marie-Joseph
Tengis Jambaatsadmid
Jesus Gil

Current & former soloists from the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program

Benoît Rameau	Ulisse
Floriane Hasler	Penelope
Sophia Stern	Minerva / Fortuna
William Shelton	Humana Fragilita
Guy Elliott	Telemaco
Max Latarjet	Tempo / Nettuno
Olivier Bergeron	Eumete
Lucas Pauchet	Iro
Étienne de Bénazé	Eurimaco
Cécile Madelin	Melanto
Marco Angioloni	Giove / Pisandro
George Seymour	Anfimono
Thaïs Rai-Westphal	Amore / Giunone
Caroline Meng	Eriplea
Julien Ségol	Antinoo

Opera Fuoco Orchestra

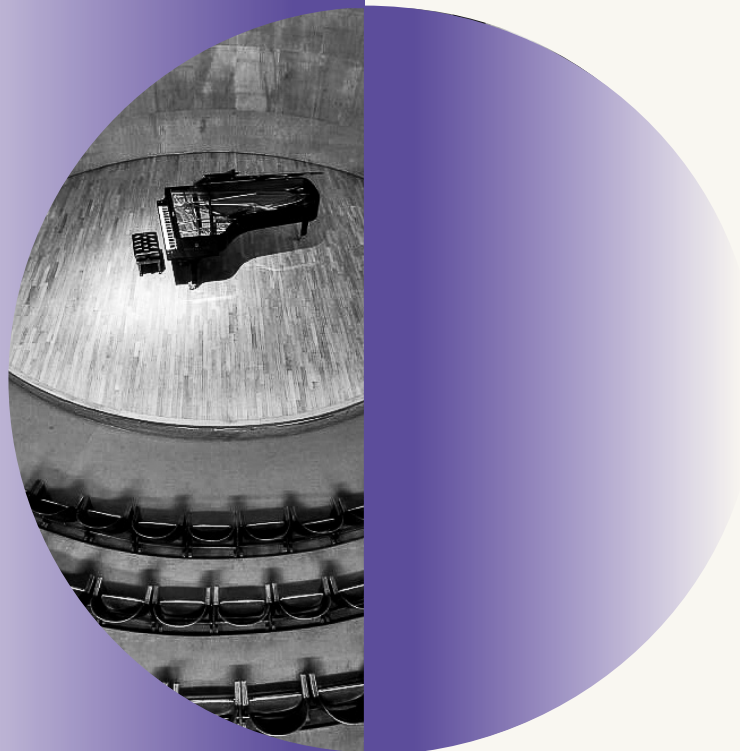
DURATION : 2H30

II

Concerts



ARTS ARENA 20th anniversary!



MARCH 20th, 2027, 7:00 PM SALLE CORTOT, PARIS

Opera Fuoco is delighted to join
The Arts Arena's
20th anniversary celebrations
at the Salle Cortot!

Our official partnership with the
Arts Arena began in January, 2026 with a
memorable evening celebrating Leonard
Bernstein's life and music with his
daughter, Jamie, followed by
Opera Fuoco's performance of *Trouble
in Tahiti and Arias and Barcarolles* at the
Paris Philharmonie.

We enjoyed previous events as an invited
guest of The Arts Arena, including several
concerts with David Stern and soloists of
our young artists program at the Grande
Salle Ginsberg-Leclerc,
Columbia Global Center.

ARTISTS

David Stern	Speaker
Katharina Wolff	Violin
Thäis Rai-Westphal	Soprano
Kenneth Weiss	Piano

PROGRAM

Excerpt from *Saint Matthew Passion*
J.S. BACH, Mendelssohn version
« Erbarme dich, mein Gott »

SAINT MATTHEW PASSION



MARCH 26th, 2027, 8:00 PM
JUNE 11th, 2027, 8:00 PM
OCTOBER 7th, 2027, 8:00 PM

OPÉRA DE MASSY
GEWANDHAUS, BACHFEST, LEIPZIG
GRAND MANÈGE, NAMUR

J. S. BACH (1736)
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY (1841 version)

The St. Matthew Passion is Bach's most theatrical work. With its double chorus and two orchestras, this musical narration of the biblical Passion story is at times operatic in its intensity, imagery, and expressiveness. When Felix Mendelssohn reimagined the work, he romanticized the piece in order to entice the public with a taut and dramatic rendition of a work that had not been heard for 100 years. An experienced and successful composer and conductor, Mendelssohn also was a clever dramaturg, who knew the taste

and needs of his audience. Approaching Bach from Mendelssohn's point of view, Opera Fuoco uses historic instruments from the romantic period and strives to evoke the youth, vigor and dramatic nature of Mendelssohn's mid-19th century understanding of Bach's monumental oeuvre. This interpretation allows today's public to enter the heart of the 19th-century Bach revival, so significant for the history of music performance, and to gain a new perspective on the St. Matthew Passion on the occasion of its 300th anniversary.

ARTISTS

David Stern Music Director

Soloists & former soloists from the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program

Bastien Rimondi Evangelist
Adrien Fournaison Jesus
Thaïs Rai-Westphal Soprano
Marion Vergez-Pascal Alto
Guy Elliott Ténor
Matthieu Walenzik Baryton

Fiat Cantus / Opéra de Massy Young Artists Program

Chorus director Thomas Tacquet

MDR Rundfunkchor Leipzig

Chorus director Philipp Ahmann

Opera Fuoco Orchestra

DURATION : 2H00

III

**Masterclass &
Encounter
Concerts**



DONIZETTI ROSSINI



OCTOBER 6th-9th, 2026
OCTOBER 9th, 2026

MASTER CLASSE
ENCOUNTER CONCERT

THE FRENCH TOUCH

After the Napoleonic era, Paris remained one of Europe's leading cultural capitals. The two leading masters of early 19th-century Italian opera visited Paris and composed for the city at the request of an audience increasingly enamored with the dramatic flourishes of bel canto. Rossini and Donizetti permanently transformed French opera with their vision of drama and comedy.

Their writing finally brought together the French declamatory style and Italian virtuosity in a form that would become, in the works of Meyerbeer and Halévy, the "Grand Opéra à la française."

In this masterclass, soprano Annick Massis, a specialist and iconic performer of this repertoire, guides the soloists of the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program through the formidable intricacies of masterpieces such as Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* and *Guillaume Tell*, and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Fille du régiment*.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE MARMOTTAN
BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT

VENTI TURBINI



ITALIAN VIRTUOSO ARIAS

When we think of Italian Baroque opera, the first things that come to mind are vocal virtuosity, elaborate ornamentation, and endless brilliant coloratura.

However, this richly expressive style varied from region to region. Handel's virtuosic vocal writing is completely different from that of Vivaldi or Porpora.

This masterclass will be led by Italian mezzo-soprano Anna Bonitatibus, who has lent her voice to some of the most demanding roles in the Baroque repertoire.

The soloists of the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program will thus tackle some of the most virtuosic scores ever written for an era when castrati reigned supreme in the world of opera.

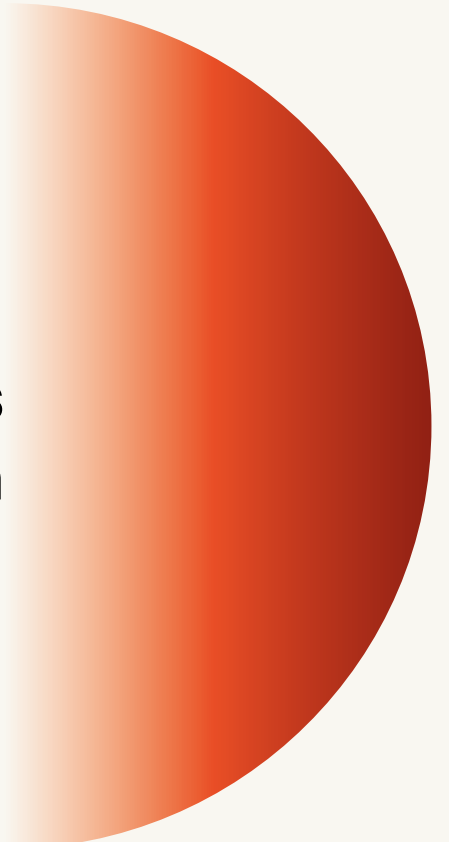
MAY 19th - 22nd, 2027
MAY 22nd, 2027

MASTERCLASSE
ENCOUNTER CONCERT

VENUE TBD

IV

**Young Artists
Program**





YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

Opera Fuoco offers a unique, custom-made experience to young singers of all backgrounds transitioning from conservatory to professional life. Singers are able to work with Maestro Stern, experienced vocal coaches, stage directors and choreographers in various contexts ranging from masterclasses and curated chamber concerts with Fuoco Obbligato to large-scale performances with orchestra and fully staged opera productions. With residencies at the Opera de Massy and several Paris-area museums, the company also has strong international partners in Europe, China and the US. Opera Fuoco's repertoires spans not only several centuries but a variety of genres, from baroque to contemporary, including musical comedy and jazz. The *lauréats* of the Opera Fuoco Young Artists Program are amongst the most sought-after in the opera world today.



V

Outreach



European Early Music Day (JEMA)

The Opéra de Massy will feature conferences, instrument demonstrations, and possibly a surprise concert. It's the perfect opportunity to enjoy timeless works that still speak to us today.

David Stern and the Opera Fuoco soloists open the doors to Massy's public, allowing them to discover Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, a work at the heart of the baroque canon. This will be an opportunity to discover the musical structure, dramatic elements such as recitatives, and the subtleties of the more contemporary and dramatic rewriting of this monumental work by Felix Mendelssohn in 1841.

A day dedicated to the baroque repertoire and music from past centuries.



VI

Calendar



2026

2027

OCTOBER

Masterclass

OCTOBER 6th-9th

Encounter Concert

OCTOBER 9th - 7:30 PM

Bibliothèque Marmottan
Boulogne-Billancourt

Hercules

Austria Tour

OCTOBER 21st - 7:00 PM

Theater an der Wien, Vienna

NOVEMBER

La Bohème

Swedish Tour

November 6th - 8:00 PM

Örebro Konserthus

November 9th - 8:00 PM

Stockholm Folkoperan

DECEMBER

La Clemenza de Titto

DECEMBER 4th- 8:00 PM

Théâtre de Saint-Quentin en
Yvelines

DECEMBER 11th-8:00 PM

Théâtre Impérial de
Compiègne

MARCH

JEMA

European Early Music Day

MARCH 20th

Opéra de Massy

ARTS ARENA

20th Anniversary Concert

MARCH 20th

Salle Cortot, Paris

Saint Matthew Passion

MARCH 26th - 8:00 PM

Opéra de Massy

APRIL/MAY

The Return of Ulysses

APRIL 23rd - 8:00 PM

APRIL 25th - 4:00 PM

Opéra de Massy

Masterclass

MAY 19th-22nd

Encounter Concert

MAY 22nd - 7:30 PM

Venue TBD

JUNE

Saint Matthew Passion

JUNE 11th - 8:00 PM

Gewandhaus, Bachfest
Leipzig, Germany

VII

The Team





David Stern
Artistic & Music Director



Katharina Wolff
Co-Artistic Director



Lucile Didier
Co-administrator
Production manager



Marion Lecapelain
Co-administrator
Tour manager



Elisa Perez
Communications &
Assistant production manager




Pedro Octavio Diaz
Artistic advisor & Strategy

Board Members

Philippe Alter, Sophie Tombeck, Philippe Billot, Anne Dufermont,
Francis Lepigeon, Alain-Pierre Khan, Karen Stone

VIII

**Partners
& Donors**



ARTISTIC PARTNERS 26/27 & NETWORKS

Cie par Terre
Choeur de Chambre de Namur
Swedish Chamber Orchestra
L'ONDIF
MDR Rundfunkchor Leipzig
Choeur Fiat Cantus

FEVIS (Fédération française des Ensembles
Vocaux & Instrumentaux Spécialisés)
Scène Ensemble
OPERA EUROPA

SUPPORT & FOUNDATIONS

Région Île-de-France
DRAC Ile-de-France/Ministère de la
Culture et de la Communication
Centre National de la Musique (CNM)

GROW Annenberg Fondation
The Kovner Fondation
Danny and Sylvia Fine Kaye Fondation
Maecenata International
The Len Ari Fondation
Opera Verace Fondation
The Mitchell Wolfson Fondation

IX

OPERA FUOCO WARMLY THANKS
its loyal audience, its professional partners and
its generous donors in France and abroad!

The Opéra de Massy, the Philharmonie de Paris, the Bachfest Leipzig, the Theater an der Wien, the Folkoperan Stockholm, the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, the Théâtre de Saint-Quentin en Yvelines, the Théâtre Impérial de Compiègne, the Musée National de la Renaissance/ Château d'Ecouen, the Festival Septembre de l'Orne, the Bibliothèque Marmottan, The Arts Arena, Reid Hall and the Mairie de Touques.

Bruce and Suzy Kovner, Richard Divine, William G Brown, Ari Rifkin, Dena Kaye, Scott and Monica Laurans, Judy and Jerry Kaufman, Sanford Fisher, Joan and David Genser, Mitchell Wolfson, Mary Greer, Bonnie Simon, Judy and Bernard Boulet, Katharina and Jacques Bouhet, Lynn and Russel Kelley, Karen Stone, Alain Pierre Kahn, Robert Hurley, Judith Symonds and the Opera Fuoco Friends Circle.

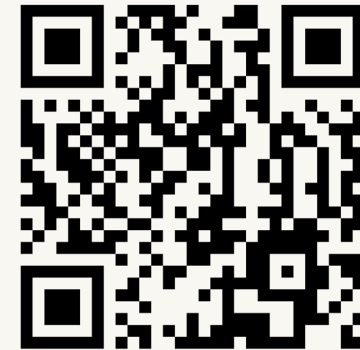
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Join Us!

BE PART OF THE ADVENTURE

The Friends Circle helps to ensure all the company's activities including concerts, masterclasses, operas and outreach programs. Pooling private donors, foundations and companies, the Circle allows Opera Fuoco to develop and maintain its growing Young Artist Program, to perform at the highest possible level in France as well as internationally and to reach the most diverse audience. Your support will help bring to light the latest generation of young vocal talent and offers you an insider's view of David Stern's work with the young artists and of Opera Fuoco's productions. Please help sustain our masterclasses and work with stage directors, choreographers, coaches and our period-instrument orchestra for the 5th generation of singers so we can continue bringing you both real and virtual performances of the highest level.

Join Us !



operafuoco.fr



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DAVID STERN
Opera fuoco