

New Mascarade Opera Studio announces first participants

September 2020 – June 2021
Mascarade Opera Studio 2020



"With the foundation of its Mascarade Opera Studio, which offers a year of intensive training for young opera singers on the cusp of a professional career, NGF is bound to become an important platform, showcasing the best in singing talent from all over the world."

Opera Now

Mascarade Opera Studio announces its first ten **Studio Artists** following applications from ambitious opera talent from all over the world. From September 2020, the new opera studio launching in Florence will offer its nine-month training programme for eight exceptional young singers and two répétiteurs.

Beyond the carefully-designed programme of enhanced opera skills training and continuing professional development, Mascarade Opera Studio Artists will become part of the international **New Generation Festival** network, with its connections and career opportunities. Held in the historic Palazzo Corsini al Prato in Florence, places on the programme for singers and répétiteurs are fully funded.



Complementing their studio training, participants will take part in a number of public events including orchestral showcases in Florence and Berlin, performances at Milan's Villa Medici Giulini, as well as regular recitals and opera galas in the Tuscan capital and in Andermatt, Switzerland.

Auditions took place in New York, London, Berlin, Florence and Glasgow in November and December 2019, welcoming applicants from all over the world.

The ten emerging professionals in the first cohort are all 30 years or under in age and come from nine countries around the world.

Mascarade Opera Studio Artists 2020

- **Sopranos** Alexandria Wreggelsworth (USA), Marianna Hovhannisyan (Armenia)
- **Mezzo-sopranos** Gabrielė Kupšytė (Lithuania), Lauren Young (Scotland), Xenia Tziouvaras (USA)
- **Tenor** Ángel Vargas (Puerto Rico)
- **Baritones** Faik Mansuroğlu (Turkey), Thandolwenkosi Zwane (Eswatini, Swaziland)
- **Répétiteurs** Henry Websdale (UK), Kristina Yorgova (Bulgaria)

The Studio Artists are graduates and alumni of renowned conservatoires and opera training programmes including Cape Town Opera Studio, the Georg Solti Accademia, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Manhattan School of Music, Rice University, Royal Academy of Music, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and Yerevan State Conservatory.

They have been successful in a number of prestigious competitions including the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the Mildred Miller International Voice Competition and the Clonter Opera Prize. Faik Mansuroğlu appeared in the New Generation Festival's 2019 production of *Le nozze di Figaro* as Count Almaviva.

Studio Director Dr Ralph Strehle commented:

"Over the last three years we have done our homework and developed a training programme based on characteristics of elite performers in the world of music, sports and business. We have selected a group of exciting performers that we are confident will thrive in the operatic world."



[Watch the Introduction to Mascarade Opera Studio: https://youtu.be/Y0W5gW2M-MU](https://youtu.be/Y0W5gW2M-MU)

Dr Ralph Strehle is interviewed in the April issue of [Opera Now Magazine](#) ahead of the Studio's opening and has previously written about the Studio in [Classical Music Magazine](#).

Mascarade Opera Studio

Mascarade Opera Studio was created to prepare young and exceptionally talented opera singers and répétiteurs for major careers in opera. Teaching is based on four core pillars: technical mastery, artistry, acting and performance psychology. Tailored to every studio artist's individual needs, Mascarade Opera Studio will offer repertoire coaching, masterclasses, residencies, psychological skills training, classes in performance, technique, language, acting and stagecraft, regular opportunities for performance, and extensive career management and career coaching with industry experts.

Mascarade Opera Studio has been developed by the **New Generation Festival**, co-founded by Maximilian Fane, Roger Granville and Frankie Parham, and follows the successful NGF Summer School which provides the chorus for the NGF main stage productions.

Maximilian Fane, Mascarade Opera Studio Chief Executive, commented:

"Florence – the birth place of opera – is the ideal place for a Renaissance in opera training. The aim of our programme is not just to prepare young and exceptionally

talented opera singers and répétiteurs for major careers in opera. We want to re-evaluate opera training and the function of opera in society."

The Studio benefits from the support and expertise of two major operatic leaders: legendary Italian soprano **Mariella Devia** as Honorary President and world-renowned English baritone **Sir Thomas Allen** as Honorary Patron.

Studio Director Dr Ralph Strehle, performance coach at the National Opera Studio and former Associate Head of Vocal Performance at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, has put performance psychology at the heart of the studio's programme. Renowned accompanist and vocal coach **Julia Lynch** will oversee the studio's coaching provision as Head of Coaching. The team will be supported by **Francis Parham**, NGF's Executive Producer, as CFO of the Mascarade Opera Studio.

Mascarade Opera Studio has appointed a full Artistic Advisory Board including BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Finalist **Anush Hovhannisyan**, leading Wagnerian soprano **Susan Bullock**, conductors **Jessica Cottis** and **Jonathan Santagada**, and vocal coaches **Jonathan Papp** and **Carmen Santoro**. Further direction comes from **Christophe Boehmke** from the International Opera Studio at Hamburg State Opera, alongside **Samantha McShane**, Head of Artistic Planning at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, **Claudia Assmann**, press and media expert, and **Roger Granville**, creative director of the New Generation Festival.

Over half of the members of the artistic advisory board are women: Mascarade Opera Studio feels strongly that women are under-represented in key roles in the opera and music industry.

Further visiting staff in 2020-2021 include Leonardo Catalanotto, Elias Corrinth, Frédéric Rouillon, Laetitia Ruccolo, Jane Irwin, Scott Johnson, Professor Julie Kaufmann, Professor Michail Lanskoï, James Platt, and Marie Lambert.

The opening five-year budget from September stands at €2,100,000, with €35,000 per year to be directly invested annually into each participant. That is a total of €1,750,000 invested into 50 artists over five years, representing a programme-focused efficiency rate of 83%.

mascaradeoperastudio.it/

The New Generation Festival

The New Generation Festival (NGF) was founded in 2017 to promote emerging young artists from around the world. Taking place 26 – 29 August 2020 in Florence, Italy, The New Generation Festival will be taking over the Gardens of the Palazzo Corsini for its highly anticipated fourth year, creating an international platform for the most promising young musical talent.



After a triumphant third year, co-founders Maximilian Fane, Roger Granville and Frankie Parham, have collaborated with a diverse and young team for 2020's Festival, gathering some of the world's most exciting performers and rising stars. An annual event that breaks down barriers between generations, this is a Festival by a new generation of artists to inspire a new generation of audiences. Throughout the weekend, audiences will take to the Corsini Gardens in the heart of Florence for open-air musical and dramatic performances.

Growing significantly since its inaugural year in 2017, the Festival now sells over 2,000 tickets to a diverse and international audience that represented over 25 countries. Over the past three years, the Festival has worked with over 400 young artists, creatives and technicians in fields including stage management, costume and stage design, company management and stage direction.

The New Generation Festival prides itself on being an annual event that breaks down barriers between generations, and 2019 did just that: the ages of the Festival's audience ranged from 8 to 91 and over 50% of the audience for the opera performance was under 35. Inspired by the achievements of the Italian Renaissance, the NGF celebrates creativity and stimulates it through the connection of art forms, cultures and generations.

In 2019, the New Generation Festival expanded internationally, and now presents the finest talents in opera, music, theatre and the visual arts in a programme that runs throughout the year across spectacular locations, ranging from the Swiss mountains of Andermatt to its flagship summer festival in Florence. Hosting three festivals and a young artist recital series over Andermatt Concert Hall's first season, the New Generation Festival team have presented artists including Daniel Barenboim and orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

The New Generation Festival team now collaborate at the highest level with competitions and organisations across the world, including: the Concours musical international de Montréal (CMIM), The Solti Accademia, The Royal Academy of Music, and the Concorso Lirico Internazionale di Portofino (CLIP).

In collaboration with Mascarade Opera Studio, the New Generation Festival hosts a Summer School for talented singers from conservatoires across Europe to study with leading professional teachers and coaches. As well as daily in-depth individual coaching sessions, voice lessons, performance classes, performance psychology workshops, a public masterclass and a lunchtime concert, participants in the Summer School form the chorus for the NGF main stage productions.

"A wonderful night at the opera."

Oper! das Magazin

"NGF is bound to become an important platform, showcasing the best in singing talent from all over the world."

Opera Now

"the fine selection of wonderfully harmonious young voices creates a Mozartean ensemble of the highest standard."

Concerti Magazin

newgenerationfestival.org

For more information on any of the above, please contact:

Nicky Thomas Media

2-6 Baches St, London N1 6DN

+44 (0)20 3714 7594 | +44 (0)7768 566 530

info@nickythomasmedia.com

www.nickythomasmedia.com