



Press Release

April 16, 2019

**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
in Cooperation with the Embassy of Italy
announces programming for**

Unexpected Italy: A Celebration of Italian Culture

**Participants and Genres include:
Gianandrea Noseda and the National Symphony Orchestra
Washington National Opera
Jazz Artists Mario Biondi, Simona Molinari, and Doctor 3
Multi-Genre Pianist/Composer Ludovico Einaudi
Free Millennium Stage Programs**

May 3–June 1, 2019

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces programming details for the Center-wide celebration of Italian culture, *Unexpected Italy*, which has been organized in cooperation with the Embassy of Italy and the Italian Institute of Culture, and takes place from May 3–June 1, 2019. Inspired by National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Music Director Gianandrea Noseda, these three weeks of programming aim to celebrate the wide range of music from all genres that has come from Italy, but also to offer opportunities for audiences to experience aspects of Italian culture that may be less familiar, or even unexpected.

“When I was appointed Music Director of the NSO, one of the first things I proposed was a series of events celebrating Italian culture,” said Gianandrea Noseda. “We are surrounded by Italian culture each and every day, from food to fashion and art to music. My goal was not to bring the expected Italy, but an unexpected experience. For many years I have dedicated myself to bringing

underperformed Italian musical works to the forefront. I'm pleased that our celebration next month will include music by Alfredo Casella, a composer of great importance who even had a connection to Washington, D.C., but over the years has faded with few performances of his work. We will also explore Rossini through his *Stabat Mater*, a lesser known work yet one that illustrates his genius in full vibrancy. I hope audiences enjoy the Kennedy Center's exploration into *Unexpected Italy*."

"The *Unexpected Italy* celebration organized with the Kennedy Center reflects the great cooperation we enjoy and America's deep love for Italian culture," said Ambassador Varricchio, Honorary Chair of the celebration. "I am confident that this collaboration will grow stronger and deeper thanks to this outstanding program, introducing to the American public well-known and newer aspects of our artistic and cultural heritage. From the most acclaimed to the less renowned, from the most traditional to the most current, a broad range of Italian music will be represented."

In addition to concerts, *Unexpected Italy* also showcases another element of Italian culture—food and wine. Guests to the Kennedy Center will find authentic Italian and Italian-inspired menu items in the restaurants—including some of Gianandrea Nosedà's favorite dishes—with suggested Italian wine pairings throughout the weeks of the celebration. D.C.'s Café Milano is also partnering with the Center to promote Italian culture through cuisine.

CLASSICAL

Italy was the birthplace of opera centuries ago, and the Kennedy Center's celebration fittingly features a classic from this catalogue: Puccini's *Tosca*, presented by **Washington National Opera** in an eight-performance run from May 11–25 in the Opera House. Italian conductor Speranza Scappucci—whose star is rising quickly as she earns rave reviews from opera houses in Vienna, Lucerne, Rome and Zurich—conducts the WNO Orchestra and two casts in this production from the Seattle Opera.

NSO Music Director Gianandrea Nosedà leads the **National Symphony Orchestra** in two weeks of Italian-themed programs as the centerpiece of this celebration. On May 16 and 17, the program features Liszt's *Dante* Symphony—the great Italian poet Dante Alighieri inspired Liszt's

work with his characters from the *Divine Comedy*—and Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*. Rossini’s work—a signature piece for Nosedà—also features University of Maryland Concert Choir, and four (Italian) vocal soloists, three in their NSO debuts: soprano Erika Grimaldi, mezzo-soprano Chiara Amarù, tenor Michele Angelini, and bass-baritone Marko Mimica.

On May 30 and June 1, Nosedà leads the NSO in a program of music by Respighi, Rachmaninoff, and Alfredo Casella, an Italian composer who lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whose music Nosedà has championed. This program features the NSO’s first-ever performances of Casella’s Symphony No. 2. Also featured are Respighi’s *Ancient Airs and Dances*, and Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, which claims an Italian connection through its subject—Paganini was one of Italy’s most famous composers, a virtuoso violinist, and, centuries after he lived, still the father of modern violin technique. Pianist Francesco Piemontesi is the soloist, making his NSO debut on these concerts.

JAZZ

Singer and composer **Mario Biondi** makes passionate, yet lighthearted and ironic music. Biondi’s 2006 debut album, *Handful Of Soul*, recorded with the High Five Quintet, reached platinum status and he has released nearly a dozen more since. The soul and R&B influences of Al Jarreau, Isaac Hayes, and Lou Rawls have helped shape his particular vocal styling and Biondi puts his own unique spin on the soul and jazz genres. (May 21)

Singer-songwriter **Simona Molinari** has collaborated with such renowned artists as Al Jarreau, Gilberto Gil, Peter Cincotti, Ornella Vanoni, Lelio Luttazzi, Renzo Arbore, Massimo Ranieri, Fabrizio Bosso, Franco Cerri, Stefano Di Battista, Dado Moroni, Roberto Gatto, Roy Paci, and Danny Diaz. She is best known for her hit song, “In Search of You,” and for her two appearances at the Sanremo Festival in 2009 and 2013, when she appeared with Peter Cincotti in their Gold Record duet, “La felicità.” Molinari’s latest album, *Maldamore*, was released in March. (May 26)

Doctor 3 is an Italian jazz trio formed by Danilo Rea on piano, Enzo Pietropaoli on double bass, and Fabrizio Sferra on drums. In May 2014 they released their new self-titled album *Doctor 3*. The album stays true to the unique stylistic hallmark of the trio, and their program includes arrangements of hit songs from across the decades from the ‘50s to the ‘70s. (May 28)

CONTEMPORARY

Ludovico Einaudi has played piano on an Arctic glacier, performed at huge pop music festivals, and become the most-streamed classical artist in the world, but the composer and pianist's new album may be his most ambitious project yet. On March 15, 2019, he released the first episode of a seven-part new album called *Seven Days Walking* (Decca Records/Universal); this performance at the Kennedy Center kicks off his North American tour. *Seven Days Walking* will be released in seven episodes modeled after the days in a week, one episode a month through September. (May 31)

MILLENNIUM STAGE

Four free Millennium Stage programs feature today's rising and established talent from Italy across a variety of genres.

Singer-songwriter Chiara IZZI is a visionary performer blurring lines between jazz and pop, America and Italy, and dream and lyricism. With her warm Mediterranean voice, she and Kevin Hays—one of the most celebrated and admired pianists and composers on the American jazz scene—bring to life their unique fusion of influences. (May 3)

Milan-based singer-songwriter, poet, writer, and entertainer, **Vinicio Capossela** debuted in 1990 under the aegis of Renzo Fantini (Paolo Conte, Francesco Guccini) with the record "All'un e trentacinque circa," which won him the Targa Tenco. His style blends influences from Italian folk music and classic literature with the musical style of American songwriter Tom Waits. (May 5)

Sardinian guitarist, composer, ethnomusicologist, and instrument builder **Paolo Angeli** and his extraordinary custom-built Sardinian guitar—an instrument larger than a standard guitar and augmented with two banks of sympathetic strings, a set of foot operated hammers (each linked to a primary string), and a series of motorised propellers—perform a one-man show of music that combines Sardinian music, flamenco, jazz, post-rock, and experimental music. (May 12)

Category-defying artist **Joe Barbieri** performs music that harks back to the greatest Italian and French songwriters, as well as jazz and bossa nova artists, and the tradition of the Italian *cantautori* (singer-songwriters). (May 16)

UNEXPECTED ITALY—COMPLETE PROGRAM DETAILS

All performances take place at the Kennedy Center unless otherwise noted.

Programs and artists subject to change.

Friday, May 3, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Millennium Stage

Chiara Izzi & Kevin Hays

A visionary journey between jazz and pop, America and Italy, Chiara Izzi, brings her warm, Mediterranean voice with Kevin Hays, one of the most celebrated and admired pianists and composers on the American jazz scene.

FREE

Sunday, May 5, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Millennium Stage

Vinicio Capposela

Singer-songwriter, poet, writer and phantasmagorical entertainer, Vinicio Capposela (Hannover 1965) debuted in 1990 under the aegis of Renzo Fantini (Paolo Conte, Francesco Guccini) with the record “All’un e trentacinque circa”, which won him the Targa Tenco, which was awarded three times in the years to how. His first “pre-biographical” records, “Modì ” (1992) and “Camera a sud” (1994), cemented his genius both in Italy and abroad with a prestigious sold out at Theater de la Ville in Paris in 1995.

FREE

Saturday, May 11, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Sunday, May 12, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 17, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Monday, May 20, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 25, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Opera House

Tosca

Washington National Opera

Speranza Scappucci, conductor

Ethan McSweeney, director

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

Keri Alkema, Tosca (5/11, 14, 17, 20, 22, 25)

Latonia Moore, Tosca (5/12, 19)

Riccardo Massi, Cavaradossi (5/11, 14, 17, 20, 22, 25)

Robert Watson, Cavaradossi (5/12, 19)
Alan Held, Scarpia
David Cangelosi, Spoletta
Samson McCrady, Sciarrone
Michael Hewitt, Angelotti
Wei Wu, Sacristan
Samuel Weiser, Jailer

Tickets: \$35-\$300

A free Opera Insight will take place 1 hour and 15 minutes before the performance on May 22.
Tosca Talkback's are scheduled for May 12, 19, and 20.

Sunday, May 12, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Millennium Stage
Paolo Angeli

Paolo Angeli and his extraordinary extended Sardinian guitar—an instrument larger than a standard guitar and augmented with two banks of sympathetic strings, a set of foot operated hammers (each linked to a primary string), and a series of motorised propellers—wow audiences in 22.22 Free Radiohead. Performing hits from Radiohead, this one person and one instrument concert is a rarity.

FREE

Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Millennium Stage
Joe Barbieri

Any attempt to find a term to define Joe Barbieri's art form would fall short in describing all of its inherent nuances—whether musical, prosaic, literary, linguistic, or auditory. Barbieri's music harks back to the greatest Italian and French songwriters, as well as jazz and bossa nova artists. Every one of his songs encapsulates a perfectly formed universe in which attention to every detail achieves spontaneous beauty.

FREE

Thursday, May 16, 2019, at 7 p.m.

Friday, May 17, 2019, at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 19, 2019, at 2 p.m. at Carnegie Hall in New York

National Symphony Orchestra
Gianandrea Noseda, conductor
Erika Grimaldi, soprano
Chiara Amarù, mezzo-soprano
Michele Angelini, tenor
Marko Mimica, bass-baritone
University of Maryland Concert Choir, Edward Maclary, director

LISZT
ROSSINI

Dante Symphony
Stabat Mater

Tickets: \$15 - \$89.

A free *ForeWords* preconcert talk takes place 75 minutes prior to the performance on May 17.

Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Terrace Theater
Mario Biondi

With a trademark deep voice reminiscent of Barry White, Isaac Hayes, and Lou Rawls, singer and composer Mario Biondi makes music passionately, while at the same time lighthearted and ironic. Biondi puts a new spin on jazz—his Italian heritage and love of soul music shape his unique style.

Tickets: \$25.

Sunday, May 26, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Family Theater
Simona Molinari

Singer-songwriter Simona Molinari is among the most well-loved of the Italian music scene. Molinari has collaborated with world famous artists like Al Jarreau, Gilberto Gil, Peter Cincotti, Andrea Bocelli, Dado Moroni, Danny Diaz, and many more. Currently, she's on a tour of over 100 concerts around the world, playing venues including the New York Blue Note, the Estrada Theater in Moscow, the Umbria Jazz Arena, and more!

Tickets: \$25.

Tuesday, May 28, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Family Theater
Doctor 3

Doctor 3 is an Italian jazz trio formed by Danilo Rea on piano, Enzo Pietropaoli on double bass, and Fabrizio Sferra on drums.

Tickets: \$25.

Thursday, May 30, 2019, at 7 p.m.

Saturday, June 1, 2019, at 8 p.m.

National Symphony Orchestra
Gianandrea Noseda, conductor
Francesco Piemontesi, piano

RESPIGHI	<i>Ancient Airs and Dances</i> , Suite No. 2
RACHMANINOFF	<i>Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini</i>
CASELLA	Symphony No. 2

Tickets: \$15 - \$89.

A free *AfterWords* post-concert Q&A with the artists takes place after the concert on May 30.

A free *ForeWords* preconcert talk takes place 75 minutes prior to the performance on June 1.

Friday, May 31, 2019 at 8 p.m.

Concert Hall

Ludovico Einaudi: *Seven Days Walking Tour*

The most streamed classical artist in the world, Ludovico Einaudi kicks off the North American tour of his new masterwork *Seven Days Walking*.

Tickets: \$39-\$99. VIP packages available for \$250 and \$375.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The 2018–2019 season marks the National Symphony Orchestra’s 88th, and Gianandrea Noseda’s second as its music director. The Italian conductor serves as the Orchestra’s seventh music director, joining the NSO’s legacy of such distinguished leaders. Its artistic leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Steven Reineke and Artistic Advisor Ben Folds.

Founded in 1931, the Orchestra has always been committed to artistic excellence and music education. In 1986, the National Symphony became an artistic affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where it performs year-round. The NSO’s community engagement projects are nationally recognized, including NSO In Your Neighborhood, an annual week of approximately 50 performances in schools, churches, community centers, and other unexpected venues; Notes of Honor, which offers free performances for active, veteran, prior service, and retired members of the military and their families; and Sound Health, a collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its affiliated organizations. Career development opportunities for young musicians include the NSO Youth Fellowship Program and its tuition-free Summer Music Institute. For more information, visit nationalsymphony.org.

ABOUT GIANANDREA NOSEDA

ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Washington National Opera (WNO) is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Under the leadership of General Director Timothy O’Leary and world-renowned Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, the company presents a diverse repertory of grand opera across three main venues of the Kennedy Center. From classic operas to more contemporary pieces each season, WNO’s artistic output also includes several commissioned American works and a variety of special concerts, youth operas, and events.

Recent celebrated productions have included the world premiere of Philip Glass’s reconceived *Appomattox*, presented in conjunction with cultural events throughout Washington, D.C.; the powerful performances of Kurt Weill’s *Lost in the Stars*; and the massive feat of WNO’s first-complete *Ring* cycle, which was helmed by Zambello and played to sold-out houses following international acclaim.

Founded in 1956 and an artistic affiliate of the Kennedy Center since 2011, WNO has a storied legacy of more than 100 new productions, plus world premieres, international tours, live recordings and radio broadcasts, as well as innovative education and community-engagement programs. Throughout its history, WNO has been led by titans in the opera field, including the legendary Plácido Domingo who headed the company for 15 years, as well as luminaries such as Music Director Heinz Fricke and Director of Artistic Operations Christina Scheppelmann.

Among the company's most successful programs is the *American Opera Initiative (AOI)*, a commissioning program that develops new one-act works for WNO's annual festival. By mentoring emerging composers and librettists, the Initiative works to expand the American operatic repertory and enhance its relevance to our time. Since its inception, AOI has commissioned 28 chamber opera world premieres, with some going on to future productions around the country.

With a commitment toward youth, WNO contributes to the future of opera through two signature artist-development programs. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, now in its 17th season, is one of the nation's most competitive professional training programs, providing two years of intensive study to a highly selective cadre of young singers and collaborative pianists. Alumni of the program have won major competitions and gone on to successful careers at major opera houses worldwide. The WNO Opera Institute nurtures the ambitions of high-school-age singers from across the nation during an intensive three-week summer program held at American University in Washington.

The most popular of WNO's community-engagement programs is *Opera in the Outfield*[®], a free Kennedy Center Opera House production broadcast on the high-definition scoreboard at Nationals Park. The company's other education programs include the Kids Create Opera program at local elementary schools, Look-In performances for students in grades 3–8, and the Student Dress Rehearsal Program for middle and high school students. The company also offers free Opera Insights programs before every performance in the Opera House.

ABOUT SPERANZA SCAPUCCI

ABOUT JAZZ AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

Kennedy Center Jazz, under the leadership of Artistic Director Jason Moran, presents legendary artists who have helped shape the art form, artists who are emerging on the jazz scene, and innovative multidisciplinary projects throughout the year. The KC Jazz Club, launched in 2002 and dubbed "the future of the jazz nightclub" by *JazzTimes*, hosts many of these artists in an intimate setting; while the Crossroads Club, launched in 2012, is a nightclub dance venue. Annual Kennedy Center jazz events include the professional development residency program for young artists, Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead; NPR's A Jazz Piano Christmas, the Kennedy Center holiday tradition shared by millions around the country via broadcast on NPR; and the Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival, created in 1996 by the late Dr. Billy Taylor (Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz, 1994–2010). The Center co-produces the annual NEA Jazz Masters Tribute Concerts, celebrating iconic figures in the music.

ABOUT MARIO BIONDI

ABOUT SIMONA MOLINARI

ABOUT DOCTOR 3

Doctor 3 had experienced a huge success, with both critics and the public, since the band's inception and throughout the initial eleven years of activity. Their albums received numerous awards such as Best Jazz Album in 1998, 1999, and 2001). The band performed in Italy where they received an enthusiastic reaction, not only by the jazz audience, and their fame rapidly increased throughout Europe, the USA, China, Brazil and North Africa. However, as often happens due to transitions being unavoidable and physiological, the band broke up in 2009. This period, however, was not idle or fruitless as the artists benefited from the separation to explore new ideas and different experiences. In 2014, Danilo Rea, Enzo Pietropaoli and Fabrizio Sferra decide to meet in order to continue their journey together, melding their creative influences with fresh enthusiasm and sharing their growth as individual performers during those years spent apart. Not long after, in May 2014, they record their new album Doctor 3 (released by Music Park

Records and Jando Music), to be followed by a tour throughout Italy, with their reunion debut concert taking place on June 8 at the Auditorium Parco della Musica of Rome. The design and concept of this innovative record project single it out from the previous ones. There aren't any unpredictable music incursions from one song to another, although this creative process cannot be precluded from live performances. A constant factor remains the band's unique stylistic hallmark, unaltered for the past two decades, with their repertoire being accessible to all audience genres. Among the 12 songs selected for the album, a large number are of the 60s and 70s: David Bowie, The Doors, The Bee Gees, The Beatles, Henry Mancini, Carole King, Leonard Cohen, and dig into the origins of jazz with Irving Berlin standards. Doctor 3's musical journey continues with still many stories to tell.

ABOUT LUDOVICO EINAUDI

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets to all performances are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, online at kennedy-center.org, and via phone through Instant Charge, (202) 467-4700; toll-free at (800) 444-1324. For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540.

FUNDING CREDITS

Unexpected Italy is presented in cooperation with the Embassy of Italy.

Additional support is provided by the National Italian American Foundation.

David M. Rubenstein is the Presenting Underwriter of the NSO and WNO.

The NSO Music Director Chair is generously endowed by **Vicki† and Roger Sant**.

Major support for the NSO at Carnegie Hall is provided by Ms. Constance Milstein.

The NSO's performances in New York City are supported in part by the Blavatnik Family Foundation.

The Abramson Concert Series is made possible by the generous support of the Leonard and Elaine Silverstein Family Foundation Fund in Honor of Ronald D. Abramson.

Major support for WNO and *Tosca* is provided by Jacqueline Badger Mars.

WNO acknowledges the longstanding generosity of Life Chairman Mrs. Eugene B. Casey.

WNO's Presenting Sponsor is General Dynamics.

Generous support for WNO Italian Opera is provided by Daniel and Gayle D'Aniello.

The Centene Charitable Foundation is the Presenting Sponsor of Millennium Stage.

The Millennium Stage is brought to you by Target and The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation.

Generous support of Millennium Stage is provided by The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation and The Karel Komárek Family Foundation.

International Programming at the Kennedy Center is made possible through the generosity of the Kennedy Center International Committee on the Arts.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, visit kennedy-center.org.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets.

When available, *MyTix Student Rush* tickets (\$10–20) can be purchased online or at the box office with valid student I.D. beginning 2 weeks prior to a performance.

For more information, visit kennedy-center.org/mytix

UnexpectedItaly

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