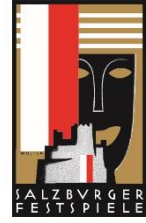


SALZBURG WHITSUN FESTIVAL 26 – 29 May 2023

Artistic Director: Cecilia Bartoli



Final Press Release of the 2023 Salzburg Whitsun Festival

(SF, 29 May 2023) Rewarded with a wildly enthusiastic reception from the audience and 98% of seats filled, the 2023 Salzburg Whitsun Festival has drawn to a close. The myth of Orpheus and his journey into the underworld was the thematic focus chosen by ‘Kammersängerin’ and Artistic Director **Cecilia Bartoli**; with a homage to Daniel Barenboim, she also paid reverence to one of her closest artistic friends and great mentors, on the occasion of his recent significant birthday.

“Last year, amidst many imponderables but inspired by Descartes, we daringly decided to call the programme of this year’s Salzburg Whitsun Festival ‘Les passions de l’âme’ – at the time, we had not even the slightest idea how powerfully the various versions of the Orpheus myth, with their fusions of dance, instrumental music, vocalism and filigree puppetry, would influence our joint music-making with beloved friends and companions – truly moving, enthralling and inspiring us. We are deeply honoured and grateful that a very broad audience follows us on our path, with undiminished interest, in sold-out performances. To me, this is further proof that music, and the arts in general, offer rich nourishment for our souls, in difficult as well as joyful times. We feel these vibrations on stage as you feel them in the auditorium, when we experience a performance together, and, most importantly, live,” says **Artistic Director Cecilia Bartoli** about this year’s Salzburg Whitsun Festival.

“Once again, Cecilia Bartoli has set standards for the very highest artistic quality. Once more, her wisely designed programme masterfully managed to present stylistic diversity within a delicately textured overall theme. Her unique handwriting has been inscribed indelibly upon the Whitsun Festival for many years, and we consider ourselves very fortunate to have her on our side,” **Markus Hinterhäuser, Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival**, sums up the Whitsun Festival.

“The immense enthusiasm of our audience from 48 countries demonstrates the extraordinary esteem Cecilia Bartoli is held in by the art world. This is only underlined further by her receiving the professional title of an Austrian ‘Kammersängerin’. We are delighted that she has received this recognition and grateful for the many touching moments she has once again given us. The Whitsun Festival is an important pillar of our success, both in artistic and commercial terms,” says **Festival President Kristina Hammer**.

“Our gratitude for the artistic and commercial success of the 2023 Whitsun Festival is due to Cecilia Bartoli, all the artists involved, and our Festival team – on stage, behind the scenes and throughout our theatres. As a worldwide audience magnet, the Whitsun Festival acts as a challenge and motivation to pursue our chosen path, working towards the Festival District 2030, so that we can permanently fulfil the high expectations placed in our performance venues,” says **Executive Director Lukas Crepaz**.

Approximately 12,050 guests attended the 2023 Salzburg Whitsun Festival. In terms of attendance, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, the USA, Italy, Great Britain, Spain, the Netherlands and Japan were the ten leading nations, among a total of 48.

The Press Office accredited 70 journalists contributing to media in 16 countries. Apart from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France and other European countries, these media are located in North and South America, Japan and Australia.

The Festival began with the celebrated new production of Christoph Willibald Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* directed by Christof Loy. After the successful *Ariodante* in 2017, this was his second collaboration with Cecilia Bartoli and Gianluca Capuano at the Whitsun Festival. Staging the Parma version of 1769, he merged elements of dance with the opera action; his sets were inspired by reminiscences of the Festival's history. The production hit a nerve, as evidenced by the audience's frenetic applause. Cecilia Bartoli as Orfeo, Mélissa Petit in the role of Euridice and Madison Nonoa as Amore were the brilliant soloists. The dancers were celebrated alongside Les Musiciens du Prince – Monaco and Il Canto di Orfeo, all conducted by Gianluca Capuano. For her outstanding artistic achievements, Cecilia Bartoli was distinguished after the performance when Andrea Mayer, Undersecretary of State for Culture, awarded her the professional title 'Österreichische Kammersängerin'. She accepted the honour to standing ovations from the audience.

Cecilia Bartoli then sang the role of Euridice in a concert performance of Joseph Haydn's opera *L'anima del filosofo*. At the Felsenreitschule, it was obvious that her championing of this rarely-performed work was richly rewarded: in addition to Cecilia Bartoli, Thomas Hampson (Creonte), Rolando Villazón (Orfeo) and Mélissa Petit (Genio) received rapturous accolades from the audience.

The Hamburg Ballet's appearance also met with enthusiastic applause. Choreographed and directed by John Neumeier, Gluck's *Orphée et Eurydice*, his French version of the Orpheus tale, offered a masterful combination of the art forms of ballet and opera at the Großes Festspielhaus. The singers and dancers delivered an impressive performance with contemporary references. Outstanding vocalism and flawless dance aesthetic were delivered by Maxim Mironov and Edvin Revazov (Orphée) and Andriana Chuchman and Anna Laudere (Eurydice). The substantial forces of both Camerata Salzburg and the Salzburg Bach Choir under the baton of Yazuki Kamada opened up generous sonic spaces.

Returning to the very beginnings of the opera genre, Claudio Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* was presented at the Haus für Mozart – a work whose history is also related to Salzburg: in 1614, while its composer was still alive, it received its first performance outside of Italy in Salzburg, at the Carabinieri Hall of the Prince-Archbishops' Residence. The work was performed at the Haus für Mozart in a special form of collaboration with the Puppet Company Carlo Colla & Figli from Milan, which looks back on 200 years of history. With impressive artistry, the Italian puppeteers brought the tale to life. The members of Les Musiciens du Prince – Monaco also proved their outstanding instrumental abilities.

Music by Schubert in an exquisite chamber music setting was featured at the Schubertiade Cecilia Bartoli had planned especially in honour of Daniel Barenboim: together with Lang Lang, Cecilia Bartoli sang selected songs, and the piano duo Lucas and Arthur Jussen played four-hand piano works. Il Canto di Orfeo sang under the baton of Gianluca Capuano.

The finale of this year's Whitsun Festival was the Benefit Gala "Homage to Daniel Barenboim" with several musical highlights. Cecilia Bartoli joined Martha Argerich, Sonya Yoncheva,

Rolando Villazón, Lang Lang and Plácido Domingo on stage – long-time artistic companions of Daniel Barenboim celebrating him on the occasion of his 80th birthday last year. The Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino joined them under the baton of Zubin Mehta. To the audience's great pleasure Daniel Barenboim conducted the second half of the concert and played the piano in Mozarts Recitativo and Aria "Ch'io mi scordi di te?" - "Non temer, amato bene" for Soprano, piano and orchestra.

In the summer, the staged production of ***Orfeo ed Euridice*** will be revived: the premiere is scheduled for 4 August 2023. Further performances take place on 7, 9, 12 and 14 August at the Haus für Mozart.

The 2024 Salzburg Whitsun Festival takes place from 17 to 20 May. The programme will be announced during this year's Salzburg Festival.



Photos are available here: <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/presse/fotoservice-2023>

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Kind regards,
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