



2019-2020 Opera and Ballet Season

NABUCCO

**Donato Renzetti conducts the Teatro Regio Orchestra and Chorus
in Giuseppe Verdi's masterpiece. New staging by Andrea Cigni**

Teatro Regio, Wednesday, February 12 at 8 pm

On Wednesday, February 12 at 8 pm, the first performance of the undisputed masterpiece of Risorgimento melodrama will be performed at Teatro Regio: *Nabucco* by Giuseppe Verdi. During the ten performances (until February 22), the roles will be alternated by Leo Nucci, Giovanni Meoni and Damiano Salerno.

Due to the persistence of an illness, Saïoa Hernández can't take part in our production. The role of Abigaille will be alternated by Csilla Boross (February 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22) and Tatiana Melnychenko.

Ștefan Pop and Robert Watson play the role of Ismaele, Riccardo Zanellato and Rubén Amoretti the role of Zaccaria, and Enkelejda Shkosa and Agostina Smimmo, Fenena. Other members of the cast include: Romano Dal Zovo (High Priest of Baal), Enzo Peroni (Abdallo), and Sarah Baratta (Anna). Another great protagonist, masterfully instructed by Andrea Secchi, is the Chorus, to which the most beautiful and well-known pieces of the opera are dedicated, and Maestro Donato Renzetti will be the conductor of the Teatro Regio Orchestra. The new staging at Regio, created in co-production with Teatro Massimo in Palermo, is directed Andrea Cigni, with the scenery by Dario Gessati, costumes by Tommaso Lagattolla, and lighting by Fiammetta Baldiserri.

This production of *Nabucco* has been made possible thanks to the contribution from Reale Mutua. Its President Luigi Lana declared: «Reale Mutua, a Founding Partner of the Teatro Regio Foundation since 2012, has always been involved in promoting the development and diffusion of culture as an essential tool for the social and economic growth in the territory where it has been operating for over 190 years. Therefore, we are pleased to continue to offer concrete support in favor of lyric opera and the activity of one of the most prestigious theaters in the international artistic and musical scene, by participating in Turin's opera season again this year on the occasion of the famous opera by Verdi, *Nabucco*».

A regular guest at Teatro Regio, Donato Renzetti is one of the most famous conductors in the world; his long career has led him to conduct in the most important theaters, including the Opéra in Paris, Covent Garden in London, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, and the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall in New York.

Two performances, on February 16 and 22, already sold out, will feature the great baritone Leo Nucci, who has made the role of Nabucco one of the cornerstones of his fifty-year career. Giovanni Meoni, who will be playing that role for the performances on February 12, 14, 18, and 20, has already been seen on Regio's stage in the 2018 production of *Traviata*; the winner of numerous awards, he has performed in the main theaters around the world, excelling in the great baritone roles of the Verdi repertoire thanks to his refined phrasing and perfect stage presence. Performing one of the vocally most demanding parts of the entire opera repertoire, will be the Hungarian soprano Csilla Boross, trained at Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest by the guide of Judith Németh, Boldizsár Keönch, Ilona Tokody and Gabriella Imre. For her performance as *Madama Butterfly* in Brno she won prestigious *Czech Television's Prize*. The tenor Ștefan Pop, who we remember in *Rigoletto* presented at Teatro Regio last year, is the winner of numerous musical prizes, including the first prize and the audience award in the *Operalia* competition and the sixth edition of the *Seoul International Music Competition*, sings the role of Ismaele, the nephew of the king of Jerusalem. The bass Riccardo Zanellato, who has been a guest artist at Regio on several occasions, is the main interpreter of the important role of Zaccaria, the high priest of the Jews; he has sung under the guidance of the most important conductors, and in particular, has had a continuous collaboration with Riccardo Muti, who has chosen him for many productions. The role of Fenena is sung by the Albanian mezzo-soprano Enkelejda Shkosa, who, after winning the international competition *Leyla Gencer*, has performed on the most important stages worldwide, from the Metropolitan in New York to the Staatsoper in Vienna, the Opéra in Paris, the Teatro Real in Madrid, and La Scala in Milan.

Nabucco is the emblematic title of this Italian melodrama, a monumental work, beloved above all thanks to its majestic choral compositions that for almost two centuries now have been imprinted into the collective memory of the general public, which is decidedly difficult to sing and stage. It also marks the beginning of the

great career and immortal fame of Giuseppe Verdi, who finally met with success with this opera in 1842, after a serious artistic fiasco (with his unsuccessful opera buffa *Un giorno di Regno*, 1840) and the personal tragedy of the death of his wife and two children. Verdi himself recounted its genesis: depressed, he had lost the desire to get back to work and go back to composing. It was the impresario Bartolomeo Merelli who kept insisting and proposed a libretto by Temistocle Solera with the challenging title of *Nebuchadnezzar* to the young Maestro. The verses told a story of love, reason of state, freedom, and a search for the divine inspired by the Holy Scriptures. The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, imprisons the Jews and demands to be worshipped by them, but is struck by a curse from the true God, which reduces him to madness. His daughter Abigaille, who is actually a slave, proclaims herself queen and condemns all the Jews to death, including her half-sister Fenena, who has since converted to Judaism; at the sight of his daughter in chains, the ousted king repents and invokes the forgiveness of the God of Israel. One of his faithful soldiers, Abdallo, leads the army against Abigaille and the worship of the idol Baal: Nebuchadnezzar will reign once again, free the Israelites, and order the reconstruction in Jerusalem of the temple of the only true God, to whom the last great choral composition of the opera, "Immense Jehova", is dedicated. When reading the libretto, the composer's eye fell on the poignant words taken from Psalm 137, in which the people of Israel sit along the rivers of Babylon and mourn the memory of Zion, without being able to intone the songs; through Giuseppe Verdi's pen, these moving verses became the chorus *Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate*, (*Go, thought, on golden wings*), which immediately became a Risorgimento hymn and is still perhaps the most famous chorus in the entire history of opera. *Nebuchadnezzar*, abbreviated familiarly by the public in *Nabucco*, entered the hearts of Italians forever.

For the *Conferences* at Teatro Regio series, on **Wednesday, February 5, at 5:30 pm** in the Foyer del Toro, **Antonio Rostagno**, with participation by **Andrea Secchi**, director of the Teatro Regio Chorus, will preside over the presentation entitled *Nabucco. Soundtrack of the Risorgimento or an opera about peace?* Admission is free. The **live radio broadcast** of the opera, curated by **Susanna Franchi**, will be on **Rai Radio 3 on Wednesday, February 12 at 8 pm**.

Tickets are on sale at the Teatro Regio Ticket Office, piazza Castello 215 - Tel. 011.8815.241/242, at Infopiemonte-Torinocultura, at the Vivaticket points of sale, online on www.teatroregio.torino.it **without commission costs** and on www.vivaticket.it and by telephone at no. 011.8815.270. Ticket prices: the performance on February 12 costs €160 - 125 - 105 - 80 - 55; performances on February 13, 15, and 21 cost €90 - 80 - 70 - 65 - 30; performances on February 14, 16, 18, 20, and 22 cost €100 - 90 - 80 - 70 - 30 and the performance on Feb. 19 costs €60 - 55 - 50 - 45 - 30. There are tickets reduced by 20% for those under 30 and 10% for those over 65. With the 18app, it is possible to purchase tickets (in any sector) at a cost of €25 for the premiere on February 12. An hour before the shows, any tickets still available will be on sale with a 20% reduction on the full price. The reductions are not valid for the performance on February 19th.

For further information: Tel. 011.8815.557 and www.teatroregio.torino.it.



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PRESS OFFICE

Teatro Regio, Communications and Press Office - Paola Giunti (Director), Sara Zago (Press relations)
Tel. +39 011.8815.239/730 - ufficiostampa@teatroregio.torino.it - giunti@teatroregio.torino.it - zago@teatroregio.torino.it - www.teatroregio.torino.it

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