

New director for Monte-Carlo Opera appointed

Cecilia Bartoli to take over from Jean-Louis Grinda on 1 January 2023

At a press conference in Salle Garnier on Tuesday 3 December, H.R.H. the Princess of Hanover, Chair of the Monte-Carlo Opera Board of Directors, made an important announcement: Cecilia Bartoli will take over from Jean-Louis Grinda as director of the Monegasque institution on 1 January 2023.

“In March 2019, Jean-Louis Grinda informed Me and H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince of his intention to eventually leave his post as director of the Monte-Carlo Opera. Having occupied this position since July 2007, he felt that, in all good conscience, the time had come to hand over to someone who would bring new ideas to opera in the Principality.

Jean-Louis Grinda then mentioned the name of Cecilia Bartoli, whom he had informally consulted. In addition to her personal and professional qualities, Cecilia already has strong ties to the Principality, having led the Musicians of the Prince as artistic director since the ensemble was established in 2016. This attractive proposition naturally caught my interest and attention as Chair of the Opera’s Board of Directors. After receiving the agreement of H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince, a proposal was officially made to Cecilia Bartoli which, I am delighted to say, she accepted,” said Her Royal Highness.

Cecilia Bartoli will thus become the first woman to lead the Monte-Carlo Opera. She will also stay on as director of the Musicians of the Prince. “Cecilia Bartoli will, of course, be free to pursue her exceptional career as a singer, just as Jean-Louis Grinda has been free to work as a stage director,” concluded the Chair of the Board of Directors.

“This is a great honour and an enormous responsibility, and I would like to thank H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince, H.R.H. the Princess of Hanover and the Opera’s Board of Directors from the bottom of my heart for their confidence in me. Thank you also to Jean-Louis Grinda for his friendship, for having thought of me, and for his promise to continue to make himself available to me and to the Opera as an advisor,” responded an emotional Cecilia Bartoli, who was keen to reiterate her commitment to the Principality and to stress the role it has played in her career: “I made my debut in Monte-Carlo in *The Barber of Seville* in 1989, right at the very start of my career, and I have felt an attachment to Monaco ever since. Salle Garnier is probably one of the most beautiful opera houses in the world. Its dimensions and acoustics are perfect – a real gem... In 2016, Jean-Louis Grinda and I established the Musicians of the Prince. In no time at all, the orchestra had appeared in more than 70 concerts, recordings and opera productions all over Europe. It received universal acclaim from international audiences and critics, and was described as one ‘of the best period instrumental ensembles’, introducing Monaco to major classical music audiences...”

The diva finished by commenting with enthusiasm on the future that now awaits her: “Taking on the leadership of the Monte-Carlo Opera is a new phase in this career, but it also represents the realisation of a dream. I will be the first woman to occupy this position, as well as the first opera singer since Guy Grinda, Jean-Louis Grinda’s father. This is a perfect illustration of my motto: ‘Draw on tradition and bring innovation!’ As on my first day, I’m brimming with ideas and will take tremendous joy in placing my creativity and passion for music at the service of the Monte-Carlo Opera!” Cecilia Bartoli now has three years to prepare calmly for her first season.

Monte-Carlo Opera

Press conference, 3 December 2019

Statement by H.R.H. the Princess of Hanover

Ladies and gentlemen,

In March 2019, Jean-Louis Grinda informed Me and H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince of his intention to eventually leave his post as director of the Monte-Carlo Opera. Having occupied this position since July 2007, he felt that, in all good conscience, the time had come to hand over to someone who would bring new ideas to opera in the Principality.

Jean-Louis Grinda then mentioned the name of Cecilia Bartoli, whom he had informally consulted. In addition to her personal and professional qualities, Cecilia already has strong ties to the Principality, having led the Musicians of the Prince as artistic director since the ensemble was established in 2016.

This attractive proposition naturally caught my interest and attention as Chair of the Opera's Board of Directors. After receiving the agreement of H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince, a proposal was officially made to Cecilia Bartoli which, I am delighted to say, she accepted.

Ms Bartoli will take up post on 1 January 2023, becoming the first woman ever to lead the Monte-Carlo Opera. She will also stay on as director of the Musicians of the Prince, which she will continue to develop. Cecilia Bartoli will, of course, be free to pursue her exceptional career as a singer, just as Jean-Louis Grinda has been free to work as a stage director.

The announcement of this nomination on 3 December 2019, made in the presence of the current and future directors of the Monte-Carlo Opera, shows that the reins will be handed over smoothly, amicably and professionally. Ms Bartoli now has three (3) years to prepare calmly for her first season, with Jean-Louis Grinda continuing to lead the Opera until the end of 2022.

I would like to offer my warmest thanks to both, and they will now be available to answer your questions.

Thank you.

Press conference, 3 December 2019

Statement by Cecilia Bartoli

Your Highness, Mr Director – my dear Jean-Louis – ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank you for welcoming me so warmly to the Monte-Carlo Opera.

It is a great honour to have been invited to take over from Jean-Louis Grinda and to assume leadership of the Monte-Carlo Opera from 1 January 2023. This is a great honour and an enormous responsibility, and I would like to thank H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince, H.R.H. the Princess of Hanover and the Opera's Board of Directors from the bottom of my heart for their confidence in me.

Thank you also to Jean-Louis Grinda for his friendship, for having thought of me, and for his promise to continue to make himself available to me and to the Opera as an advisor.

I made my debut in Monte-Carlo in *The Barber of Seville* in 1989, right at the very start of my career, and I have felt an attachment to Monaco ever since. Salle Garnier is probably one of the most beautiful opera houses in the world. Its dimensions and acoustics are perfect – a real gem.

The Monte-Carlo Opera has a long tradition. Thanks to the support of the Principality and its Princes, partners such as the Société des Bains de Mer, and the Friends of the Opera Association, and sponsorship from Rolex, the Monte-Carlo Opera has been able to reach new heights, holding its own alongside the great European opera houses.

Since the nineteenth century, the Opera has sought to collaborate with the top contemporary performers, including Nellie Melba, Toti dal Monte, Conchita Supervia, Enrico Caruso, Feodor Chaliapin, Beniamino Gigli and many others! With the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1856, and conductor Kazuki Yamada, the Opera enjoys access to a first-class orchestra. Sergei Diaghilev and his Ballets Russes laid the foundations for the renowned Ballets de Monte-Carlo and I'm already looking forward to talking to their director, Jean-Christophe Maillot, about future collaborations.

Since 2012, I have been artistic director of the Salzburg Whitsun Festival, where I have had the privilege of programming a festival and putting on numerous opera productions. I have paid particular attention to creating unifying dramatic themes, tirelessly pursued excellence and established the highest quality criteria. Above all, the role has allowed me the honour of being able to invite and work with the best artists – both friends and colleagues – who have supported me throughout my career, forging lasting artistic collaborations.

In 2016, Jean-Louis Grinda and I established the Musicians of the Prince. In no time at all, the orchestra had appeared in more than 70 concerts, recordings and opera productions all over Europe. It received universal acclaim from international audiences and critics, and was described as one 'of the best period instrumental ensembles', introducing Monaco to major classical music audiences from the Musikverein in Vienna to the Philharmonie de Paris, not to mention Munich, Naples, Berlin and the Salzburg Festival. In recent years, I've also had the opportunity to observe the excellent working environment, strong sense of personal commitment and professionalism of the Monte-Carlo Opera team.

Taking on the leadership of the Monte-Carlo Opera is a new phase in this career, but it also represents the realisation of a dream. I will be the first woman to occupy this position, as well as the first opera singer since Guy Grinda, Jean-Louis Grinda's father. This is a perfect illustration of my motto: 'Draw on tradition and bring innovation!' As on my first day, I'm brimming with ideas and will take tremendous joy in placing my creativity and passion for music at the service of the Monte-Carlo Opera!

Cecilia BARTOLI

An outstanding artist and singer, Cecilia Bartoli has become a role model for an entire generation of musicians. It is, however, not only her virtuosic singing technique, her profound musicianship and captivating stage presence, which make her the prototype of a modern opera singer, but her ability to combine art with conceptual thinking, creativity with scientific research, passion with professionalism.

In 1987, the talented Roman gave her debut as Rossini's Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* in her hometown. What followed was the spectacular beginning of a world career: within a very short time Daniel Barenboim, Herbert von Karajan and Nikolaus Harnoncourt's interest was drawn towards the young artist. Since then, the most famous opera houses and concert halls have been inviting her – from Australia, Asia, Europe to America.

Her discography is no less impressive. More than 12 million video and audio products sold make Cecilia Bartoli the most successful classical artist of our times. The *Vivaldi-Album*, published in 1999 and the result of a fascinating expedition through the virtually unknown scores of Vivaldi's operas, established her reputation as *Indiana Jones* of music history. Other successful titles included are *Opera proibita*, *Sacrificium*, *Mission* and *St Petersburg*. 2019 sees the release of her latest album in this series, *Farinelli*. Since 2018 she has been supporting promising young musicians through her own label "mentored by Bartoli", founded by the Cecilia Bartoli Music Foundation.

For many years, Cecilia has been actively involved in historically informed performance. Since 2016 she regularly works with Les Musiciens du Prince – Monaco. This orchestra was formed at her initiative and was granted the generous patronage of the princely family of Monaco. They are acclaimed and joyfully welcomed by the public and the international press.

Since 2012, Cecilia has been serving as artistic director of the Salzburg Whitsun Festival, where her contract was recently extended until 2026. Salzburg has become the perfect creative outlet for her talent for combining artistic excellence with conceptual thinking.

Five Grammys, more than a dozen Echos and Brit Awards, the Polar Music Prize, the Léonie-Sonning-Music Prize, the Herbert von Karajan Prize and many other honours provide evidence of Cecilia Bartoli's important role in the history of music. And bearing in mind her inexhaustible curiosity and creativity we may expect a string of further innovative ideas to materialize over the forthcoming years.

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The Monte-Carlo Opera

Since it was officially opened in 1879, the Monte-Carlo Opera has been renowned for its prestigious performers (including Caruso, Chaliapin, Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Cecilia Bartoli, Roberto Alagna, José Cura, Annick Massis, Marcelo Alvarèz, Ramón Vargas, Bryn Terfel, Leo Nucci, Erwin Schrott and Sonya Yoncheva) and outstanding productions. Starting in 1892, it showcased a number of world premieres, including *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame* (1902), *Chérubin, Thérèse* (1907), *Don Quixote*, *Cléopâtre* and *Amadis* by Jules Massenet, Puccini's *La Rondine*, Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (1927) and *L'Aiglon* (1937), thanks to its famous director Raoul Günsbourg, who was in post for nearly 60 years. Subsequent directors followed this same prestigious guiding principle.

Since his appointment in 2007, Jean-Louis Grinda, a Monegasque national with several years' experience of leading opera companies, a stage director and a huge admirer of Raoul Günsbourg, has embodied the exuberance and international renown of the Monte-Carlo Opera. He has launched world premieres such as *The Marquise of O* and a production of the 1861 Paris version of *Tannhäuser* in French; created, exported and co-produced new productions all over the world; and attracted top international artists to take part in his projects. In 2016, he established a baroque ensemble, the Musicians of the Prince, together with artistic director and performer Cecilia Bartoli. The ensemble has represented the Monte-Carlo Opera at Europe's leading theatres, and recently in Salzburg, where it enjoyed triumphant success.

THE MUSICIANS OF THE PRINCE OF MONACO



The Musicians of the Prince of Monaco ensemble was created at the Monte-Carlo Opera in spring 2016, based on an idea from Cecilia Bartoli working together with Opera Director Jean-Louis Grinda. The project immediately earned the support of H.S.H. Prince Albert II and H.R.H. the Princess of Hanover.

Since then, the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco and Cecilia Bartoli have toured Europe's leading concert halls to universal international press and public acclaim. Performer and artistic director Cecilia Bartoli has brought together the best international musicians on period instruments to create an orchestra that reconnects with the traditional music played in the great princely, royal and imperial courts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe.

Cecilia Bartoli's artistic vision focuses on the leading composers of the baroque period, such as Handel and Vivaldi, as well as a repertoire of works by Rossini. She seeks out pieces that have rarely, if ever, been performed, hoping to awaken the public's curiosity with an orchestra whose flexibility and range of tone colours open up a world of sound that is very different from that produced by a modern orchestra.

The ensemble's inaugural concert took place on 8 July 2016 in the Royal Courtyard of the Prince's Palace in Monaco, and was attended by the royal family. In November of the same year, the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco and Cecilia Bartoli embarked on their first European tour, performing the programme from the inaugural concert.

To celebrate the bicentenary of the creation of *La Cenerentola* in 2017, Cecilia Bartoli and the ensemble undertook their second European tour, under the musical direction of Gianluca Capuano. They also performed in Salzburg (at the Whitsun Festival and Summer Festival), with a stage production of *Ariodante* and a concert version of *La donna del lago*.

Jean-Louis Grinda, Director of the Monte-Carlo Opera, included Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's historic version of *La Cenerentola* on the programme for the 2017/2018 season. The production was conducted by Gianluca Capuano and featured the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco and Cecilia Bartoli. All four performances sold out.

In May 2018, the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco appeared in Salzburg and in Pavia with Javier Camarena, performing the programme of the CD they recorded with the Mexican tenor, which was produced by Cecilia Bartoli – Music Foundation and released by Decca.

Following a concert of Vivaldi music in the Royal Courtyard of the Palace in Monaco on 25 July 2018, the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco headed off on another European tour, visiting nine countries, performing 20 or so concerts and an unforgettable *Ariodante* on the stage of the Monte-Carlo Opera for the first time, with musical direction by Gianluca Capuano, who was appointed chief conductor in March 2019. Cecilia Bartoli and the Musicians of the Prince of Monaco kicked off their 2019/2020 season at the prestigious Whitsun and Summer Festivals in Salzburg, performing in Handel's *Alcina* and presenting a special concert: *Farinelli and Friends*. Still to come are more than 20 dates across Europe, not forgetting, of course, a stopover in the Principality of Monaco in March 2020, when the ensemble will perform Rossini's *Le Comte Ory*.

THE MUSICIANS OF THE PRINCE OF MONACO ARE IN RESIDENCE AT THE MONTE-CARLO OPERA.