

## Record participation in World Opera Day 25 October 2020

Opera Europa announces today a record participation in World Opera Day 2020 on Sunday 25 October, an initiative run by the European network of opera companies in conjunction with Opera America and Opera Latinoamérica.

Last Sunday, OperaVision, Opera Europa's freeview streaming platform supported by the European Union's Creative Europe programme, recorded its highest ever number of views for a single day since the launch of the platform in October 2017. OperaVision's dedicated World Opera Day programme counted **57 978 views** on 25 October and **124 282 views** in total for the whole week of World Opera Day celebrations on OperaVision.

The digital offer on OperaVision was on an unprecedented scale. OperaVision streamed four 45-minute concerts throughout World Opera Day at 15:00 in four time zones (Tokyo, Moscow, London, New York), as well as three different approaches to Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

Programmed in collaboration with Opera for Peace, the **World Opera Day celebration concerts** remain available to view on OperaVision for the next six months. Audiences around the world – in notably large numbers in Israel, Japan, Mexico, Russia and USA – enjoyed these short concerts, in particular the chance to see and hear young talented singers such as Chuma Sijeqa (baritone) and Vuvu Mpofu (soprano) from South Africa, Siobhan Stagg (soprano) from Australia, Alan Pingarrón (tenor) from Mexico and Hera Hyesang Park (soprano) from South Korea, alongside world-renowned singers such as Sondra Radvanovksy, Luca Pisoni, Denyce Graves, Nicole Car and Etienne Dupuis. These concerts were supported by strong statements from four ambassadors: Ai Weiwei (Chinese artist), Bernard Foccroulle (Belgian composer), Peter Sellars (American theatre director) and Ernesto Ottone (Chilean Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO).

OperaVision is also in the forefront of sharing opera of the highest quality in new forms with audiences across the globe. Taking Beethoven as its emblem for World Opera Day 2020, OperaVision streamed three versions of *Fidelio*: the recent, excellent and socially-distanced version from **Garsington**, the version by **Birmingham Opera Company** which saw performers and the local community rubbing shoulders in a viscerally exciting promenade performance in different times (2002) and a brand new 15-minute adaption for animation commissioned by OperaVision from the Flemish theatre collective **Walpurgis**. The latter seems to have a particularly caught people's imagination: *'I adored it – so poetic'* Suzanne Gervais *France Musique*. *'An ideal format to introduce young people to Beethoven's opera about love and humanity'* Céline Dekock *RTBF*.

These digital celebrations on OperaVision echoed events in a number of opera houses across the world. Some opera houses were able to open their doors to visitors, including 20 theatres in France under the auspices of *Tous à l'Opéra*. Last Sunday, the French Ministre de la Culture Roselyne Bachelot visited Opéra national de Bordeaux before attending a masterclass by Karine Deshayes at Opéra Comique in Paris. The Spanish network of opera companies **Ópera XXI** celebrated with an Award Ceremony, a version of which remain available to view as video on demand.

In difficult times for the cultural and creative industries, the opera sector joined forces for a powerful statement and achievement on global scale. As theatre director Peter Sellars says of opera in his message during the last act of the World Opera Day Concert, *'Everything coming together to create the space of justice, a shared space where human beings work together to become fully human and maybe partially divine.'*

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