



## The New Generation Festival Announces Mascarade Opera Studio

The New Generation Festival, a music and opera festival co-founded by Maximilian Fane, Roger Granville and Frankie Parham has announced a brand new international opera studio, opening in Florence in September 2020.

Mascarade Opera Studio (MOS) will welcome ambitious opera talent from all over the world, offering a carefully designed high-ability nine-month training programme for eight singers and two répétiteurs. Providing extensive performance skills training by expert coaches, vocal consultants, performance specialists and internationally acclaimed masterclass teachers, the young team led by chief executive Maximilian Fane and MOS director Dr Ralph Strehle also benefits from the support and expertise of two major operatic heavyweights; legendary Italian soprano Mariella Devia as Honorary President and world renowned English baritone Sir Thomas Allen as Honorary Patron.

The Artistic advisory board, created to take on active role in curating the programme and promoting the studio's international interests, boasts an exciting mix of established and upcoming stars. This list includes sought after British soprano Susan Bullock CBE, exciting internationally established and next generation conductors such as Jessica Cottis and Jonathon Santagada, German press and media expert Claudia Assmann, the youngest ever Head of Artistic Planning at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Samantha McShane, and Cardiff Singer of The World Finalist Anush Hovhannisyan.

Training at MOS will culminate in performance showcases staged with orchestra and a variety of other selected performance opportunities. Places on the programme for singers and répétiteurs will be fully funded. *"The aim of our programme is not just to prepare young and exceptionally talented opera singers and répétiteurs for major careers in opera. We want to re-evaluate opera training and the function of opera in society"* says Fane.

Fane believes Florence is the ideal place for an opera training Renaissance. *"We believe that at conservatoire level the pursuit of obtaining a degree can lead to loss of focus on what it is to train singers and répétiteurs, and indeed at the young artist level, onstage demands often distort the final delicate stages of training. We will be able to focus on career and competition preparation in a way that is truly going to benefit our singers."* And there is plenty of help from industry professionals at the top of their game. According to Fane, *"the willingness with which people have responded to this project is amazing."*

In accordance with its founding ethos, Mascarade Opera Studio envisages to be a place where knowledge and practices are exchanged freely. *"The hierarchy of this institution is relatively flat with regard to knowledge exchange, which is also reflected in the studio's staffing policy."* explains Dr Strehle.

Exceptionally talented people at all career stages will contribute to the studio's training programme, with up and coming coaches such as Elias Corrinth from National Theater Mannheim playing as important a part as seasoned vocal consultants such as Professor Dr Michail Lanskoï. With its planned studio enrichment programmes, mid-career management courses and talent identification programmes, Mascarade Opera Studio, will be a centre for excellence, that enriches the cultural fabric of Tuscany and Italy.

For further information: [info@newgenerationfestival.org](mailto:info@newgenerationfestival.org)  
Press contact: [katy@kapranos-pr.com](mailto:katy@kapranos-pr.com)

Instagram: [@new\\_generation\\_festival](https://www.instagram.com/new_generation_festival)  
Facebook: [@NewGenerationFestival](https://www.facebook.com/NewGenerationFestival)  
Twitter: [@NGF\\_Firenze](https://twitter.com/NGF_Firenze)

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

### The New Generation Festival, Florence, 2019

Taking place 28th – 31st August 2019 in Florence, Italy, The New Generation Festival will be taking over the Gardens of the Palazzo Corsini for its highly anticipated third year, creating an international platform for the finest young musical talent.

After a triumphant second year, co-founders Maximilian Fane, Roger Granville and Frankie Parham, have collaborated with a diverse and young team for 2019's festival, gathering some of the world's most exciting performers and rising stars. An annual event that breaks down barriers between generations, this is a festival by new generation artists to inspire new generation audiences. Throughout the weekend, audiences will take to the Corsini Gardens in the heart of Florence for open-air musical and dramatic performances.

Growing significantly since its inaugural year in 2017, the 2018 festival sold over 2,000 tickets to a diverse and international audience that represented over 25 countries. The team received an impressive 800 applications from musicians under the age of 35 based in 78 different countries, each hoping for a spot in the NGF orchestra.

The New Generation Festival prides itself on being an annual event that breaks down barriers between generations, and 2018 did just that: the ages of the festival's audience ranged from 8 to 91 and over 50% of the audience for the opera performance was under 35, a large leap from 2017. On average, the percentage of 2018 audience members aged under 35 was just shy of 50%, 10% higher than the 2017 figure.

Full programme and details for 2019's festival : [www.newgenerationfestival.org](http://www.newgenerationfestival.org)

### Maximilian Fane

26 year old conductor and producer Maximilian Fane is Co-Founder and Musical Director of The New Generation Festival, Chief Executive of the Mascarade Opera Studio, Artistic Director of Andermatt Music, and former Artistic Director of the touring opera company Raucous Rossini.

In Summer 2017 Max conducted a tour of *L'occasione fa il ladro* across the UK and Italy as well as founding a new international opera festival in Florence. This festival saw performances of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Beethoven's *5th Symphony* and Bruch's *Violin Concerto* at the Palazzo Corsini al Prato Gardens. Engagements in 2018 included Gluck's *Orfeo e Euridice* in Florence, Piedmont and Milan, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in London, Mozart's *Violin Concerto No.2* and *Requiem* at the Maggio Musicale in Florence, Rossini's *La Scala di Seta* with Raucous Rossini on tour, and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* and *Symphony No.5* with The New Generation Festival. Engagements in 2019 include Schumann's *Symphony No.2*, a world premier chamber arrangement of Mahler's *Symphony No.10*, and Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No.4*.

As well as his work in Florence, Max is leading the opening of a brand new world class concert hall in the Swiss Alps, Andermatt, where he will produce three festivals and a young artist concert series every year. The Andermatt Concert Hall will open on the 16th of June 2019 with a performance from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and The Mascarade Opera Studio will open in September 2020 at a yet undisclosed location in Florence. Max is also Artistic Director of Westbourne Music in Glasgow, a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where he studied voice and piano, and holds a Distinction Msc in Business and Management from the University of Strathclyde where he was the European Visionary Scholar and achieved a prize for his dissertation on strategy in the classical music industry.

## Ralph Strehle

Ralph is Associate Head of Vocal Performance, project manager, lecturer and researcher at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. His main interests lie in quality assurance and educational management, in particular implementing and monitoring strategies and structures for the artistic and professional development of singers at conservatoire and post-conservatoire level. As project manager he had operational responsibility for RCS involvement in the European Championship 2018, designing and developing a suite of cultural and artistic activities, including an international collaboration between UdK Berlin, the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and RCS. More recently he was strategic project manager for RCS' Centre for Lifelong Learning with a focus on market research and analysis in the field of continuing professional development.

Ralph lectures in the Vocal Studies Department and in Creative and Contextual Studies within the field of music performance psychology and is in high demand as performance coach. His areas of expertise include effective practice techniques, performance profiling, audition and competition preparation, the design of individual psychological skills training programmes for musicians and peak performance workshops. He currently writes his second PhD in the field of music psychology measuring and comparing motivation of RCS music students in a variety of performance contexts. Ralph works closely with the National Opera Studio, London and is a guest lecturer at the Norwegian Academy of Music as well as Head of Summer School at The New Generation Festival, Florence.