



LA MEGLIO GIOVENTÙ

2024/2025 SEASON

«I was twenty. I will let no one say it is the best time of life»
Paul Nizan, *Aden Arabie*, Rieder Editions, Paris, 1931

La meglio gioventù is the title of the new Teatro Regio Season, running from **1 October 2024** until **29 June 2025**. It promises fireworks of talent and beauty for long-time enthusiasts and an exciting journey into the world of opera for those new to the scene. The Teatro Regio has lined up **twelve titles**, including **seven brand new productions**. These include a sensational trilogy dedicated to *Manon Lescaut*, the young heroine whose story, originally told by the Abbé Prévost, inspired three great composers—Daniel Auber, Jules Massenet, and Giacomo Puccini, whose centenary we are celebrating this year. Finally, ballet finds space in the programme with two classical favourites and the Gala event featuring Roberto Bolle and Friends. The recent reorganisation of the seating plan of the auditorium and a new, more convenient pricing policy makes the theatre more accessible to all.

For the **Mayor of the City of Turin** and **Chairman of the Teatro Regio Foundation**, the new season is another good example of the theatre's leading cultural approach, featuring an innovative and quality line-up of artistic works linked by the theme of youth, a choice that reflects the great focus placed by the theatre on reaching out to new generations, with initiatives such as Under-30 Previews, aimed at encouraging younger audiences to discover all the magic of the opera.

General Manager **Mathieu Jouvin** says, «I am extremely pleased for the Abbiati Prize awarded to *La Juive* for Best Show of 2023. It is a major acknowledgement attesting to the artistic quality of the opera, but also spurring us to continue moving forward with the work that Artistic Director Cristiano Sandri and I have been doing. Moreover, it gives credit to our vision of presenting a variety of titles able to arouse curiosity and intrigue the greater public. The quote by Paul Nizan that I chose for the opening invites us to reflect critically on the conventional concept of youth as a unique time of carefree happiness, suggesting instead that it may be more intricate and more complex than is commonly thought. It is a powerful and provocative statement that conveys themes such as nostalgia, ambiguity, conflict, and challenge to the system and history. That is why I was so insistent in wanting the title for the season to be **La meglio gioventù** —a very “musical” expression that comes from one of the most heart-wrenching and moving songs of the Alpine corps and which Paolo Pasolini chose for a collection of poetry in the Friulian language. Inevitably the reference is also to the film by Marco Tullio Giordana, which I personally loved, like so many French people, and which was even awarded at the Cannes Film Festival. It is a motion picture that offers a compelling look at Italian history through the eyes of memorable and complex characters, with their ambitions, internal battles, and relationships; a true

“coming of age story” which skilfully addresses universal themes such as family, friendship, and love, as well as the search for meaning and identity—all themes typical of youth. All the works in the programme for the new season explore in their own ways the ambiguity of youth, conveying its emotions, exploring its conflicts, and celebrating its appeal, while inviting us to reflect on it. The photographs we have chosen to illustrate the season all evoke the beauty, the exuberance, the preciousness, and the fleeting nature of youth. It is an invitation to live now in the present, while at the same time looking forward to the future with confidence».

Artistic Director **Cristiano Sandri** adds, «The season we are presenting features a selection of titles that sweep from prominent operas of the central repertoire to works less commonly performed, including a true rarity like Ambroise Thomas’s *Hamlet*, marking another milestone in our ongoing commitment to promoting and supporting a broad range of artistic experiences. One of our objectives is precisely to offer audiences a variety of options, from celebrated operas to lesser-known works, engaging in that way both long-time enthusiasts and people new to the world of opera in a rich and stimulating dialogue, as part of our mission to constantly refresh the interest of audiences and arouse their curiosity. With an eye on the French repertoire, we will explore the works of Massenet, Auber, and Thomas, with a view to bringing back into the limelight what we believe are true musical gems of great beauty and charm. The theme of youth adds a great flourish as the leitmotif connecting all the titles proposed in the line-up. Youth is not just an age, but a universal concept we have chosen to explore. It is the prism through which we have approached the operas, offering audiences a lens through which to engage more intimately with the stories and characters that come to life on the stage. It will undoubtedly be a musical and theatrical experience that ventures into the depths of the human soul through the wonders of the opera—a journey rich in emotion and discovery. The stars of the season and the true pride of our theatre are the Teatro Regio **Orchestra, Chorus, and Treble Choir**, the latter led masterfully by **Ulisse Trabacchin** and **Claudio Fenoglio** respectively. Personal growth and challenge underpin the highly successful experience of the Regio Ensemble, whose work will continue with a completely new line-up of talented young musicians from all around the world».

The Opera and Ballet Season gets underway on **1 October** with ***Manon Manon Manon* (1–29 October)**, a unique event that for the first time pays an original tribute to the figure of **Manon Lescaut**. The **three new stagings** are directed by Frenchman **Arnaud Bernard**, who for his debut at the Teatro Regio has chosen to develop the stage productions around three iconic periods of French cinema. A new challenge for the theatre that places the Teatro Regio firmly in the international spotlight. The trilogy of productions has been programmed so that audiences can enjoy a different show each day or over a single weekend, thus adding to the rich line-up of cultural attractions offered by the city for locals and tourists alike. And who better than Manon Lescaut to embody the essence of rebel and adventurous youth? A young woman with her contradictions, moral dilemmas, and powerful vitality, she is an icon of what it means to be young—passionate, impulsive, vulnerable, and in search of meaning. The three productions will bring to the podium **Renato Palumbo, Evelino Pidò, and Guillaume Tourniaire**, and star Erika Grimaldi, Ekaterina Bakanova, and Rocío Pérez in the three title roles. The Main Partner for the production is **Intesa Sanpaolo**, which has chosen once again to join with the Teatro Regio for the most thrilling challenges of the season.

Mathieu Jouvin emphasizes that, «*Manon Manon Manon* will be the **centre of attention in all of Europe**, as the Teatro Regio will be hosting, on 24–26 October 2024, the **Autumn Conference of Opera Europa**, the leading organisation for professional opera companies and opera festivals throughout Europe, currently serving over 233 members from 44 countries. The meeting will be an important occasion for all the members to come together and look at ways to develop new partnerships and innovative projects. It will be a major opportunity to focus the spotlight on the Teatro Regio and the city of Turin».

The 2024–2025 Opera and Ballet Season will officially open on **23 November** with **Le Nozze di Figaro**, the bubbliest and most humane of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s operas. In composing a music that perfectly captures all the nuances of how it feels to be in love, Mozart proved himself to be just as much a fine connoisseur of the human mind as a true genius of musical theatre. Here youth is depicted in the challenge to social conventions and the bold, rebel passion driving Figaro and Susanna, who long for freedom and independence, as does the young page Cherubino, whose naivety and impetuosity often lands him in funny and heart-warmingly embarrassing situations. This production—staged for the first time in Turin—is by Spanish director **Emilio Sagi**, whose classical and fine taste is a guarantee of a stylish and enjoyable show. Charismatic performers of acclaimed talent have been cast in the leading roles, with Vito Priante and Monica Conesa starring as the Count and Countess, Giorgio Caoduro as Figaro, Giulia Semenzato as Susanna, and Josè Maria Lo Monaco in the role of Cherubino. On the podium, **Leonardo Sini**, a young conductor from Sardinia, who has made a name for himself in the opera scene for his unfailingly solid and careful conducting. The opera will run until 1 December.

In keeping with tradition, December will be a month of great dance. **On 12 December, until the 18th**, the curtains rise on the quintessential romantic ballet of all time, **Giselle**. With music by Adolphe-Charles Adam, this production features the choreography of Aleksej Fadeečev and the soloists of the ballet company of the **Tbilisi Opera and Ballet**. The exquisite scoring depicts the innocence, vulnerability, and fragility so typical of youth, embodied in the character of Giselle, while capturing its fleeting nature. **From 21 to 30 December**, the magic of Christmas transforms into music through the extraordinary talent of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, whose marvellous score for **The Nutcracker** has enchanted audiences since its premiere in 1891. In this production, the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet performs the delightful choreography by Nina Ananiashvili and Aleksej Fadeečev, with sets and costumes inspired by nineteenth-century books of fairytales. Innocence, wonder, adventure, and fantasy give us a magical vision of the world through the eyes of a young girl.

The new year in **2025** will open with three exceptional shows on **3–4–5 January**, bringing on stage dance at its best with **Roberto Bolle** and international stars for the world-famous **Roberto Bolle and Friends**, a production by ARTEDANZA^{SRL}.

A rich and engaging exploration of the theme of youth, through the characters and their experiences of love, ambition, naivety, and personal growth, is given by Gaetano Donizetti in his **L’Elisir d’Amore**. On stage from **28 January to 5 February**, it is an opera that continues to move audiences to both laughter and tears, ever since its debut in 1832. In this **new co-production** with the Teatro Regio of Parma, director **Daniele Menghini** transforms the love story into a magical fairytale, full of puppets and marionettes. As the hapless Nemorino, René Barbera lends the mellow elegance of his tenor voice to a role he considers one of his favourites; as Adina, soprano Federica Guida will have the chance to show all the versatility of her talent, both in the livelier numbers and the sentimental pieces. Alongside them appear two brilliant, expert performers—Paolo Bordogna as Dulcamara and Davide Luciano as Belcore. The opera will be conducted by maestro **Fabrizio Maria Carminati**, an expert in the Bel Canto repertoire.

From **28 February to 11 March** we present **Rigoletto**, a masterpiece by Giuseppe Verdi. With its memorable arias and music, this powerful opera tells the story of a hunchback jester, whose cruelty and cynicism lead him to lose his one true treasure, his beloved daughter Gilda, an incarnation of the innocence and vulnerability typical of youth. The passion that draws Gilda and the Duke is intense and overwhelming, but imperilled by social convention and the dark forces that surround the characters. Major themes of responsibility and the consequences of one’s actions underline the fragility and evanescence of youth. The title role will be performed by baritone George Petean, with tenor Piero Pretti as the Duke of Mantua, bringing him back on the Turin stage after the ovations he received for his performance as Riccardo in the recent *Un Ballo in Maschera*; Giuliana Gianfaldoni will perform as Gilda. The **new production** is directed by the award-winning **Leo Muscato**, who returns to the Teatro Regio

with the same creative team that produced the highly successful *Agnese* by Ferdinando Paer, winner of the Abbiati Prize in 2019. On the podium, maestro **Nicola Luisotti**, an internationally-acclaimed expert in Italian repertoire.

Ambition, passion, generational conflict, and madness make Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's ***The Queen of Spades* (3–16 April)** an insightful exploration of the theme of youth. Tchaikovsky considered the opera his best work ever. Composed in 1890 in a flurry of inspiration, the opera is set to the libretto written by his brother, based on a novella by the celebrated Russian poet Pushkin. The tragedy of Hermann, a man whose obsession with gambling leads him to lose all hope for happiness and love, inspired the composer to write his most moving and harrowing arias. In this production by **Richard Jones** for the Welsh National Opera, the story is brought forward to early twentieth-century Russia, where relics of the country's grand imperial past appear in the midst of the post-revolutionary chaos. In this setting, Hermann's maniacal hallucinations take on grotesque turns, rendered on stage in the most surprising way. The cast stars tenor Mikhail Pirogov as Hermann, Jennifer Larmore as the Countess, Zarina Abaeva as Liza, and Vladimir Stoyanov as Prince Yeletsky. After a brilliant debut at the Teatro Regio in 2023 with Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*, maestro **Valentin Urypin** returns to the Teatro Regio podium. Staged for the first time in Turin, the show is a co-production with the Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Oslo's Den Norske Opera di Oslo and the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto.

From 15 to 27 May we present a **new production** of Ambroise Thomas's *opéra romantique*, ***Hamlet***. While it adds new episodes to the Shakespearean tragedy (on which it is loosely based), making room for colourful dances and choruses, at the same time it preserves the original's darker and more violent scenes, taken to new heights by extraordinary music. The finale is anything but predictable. In a **world first** for modern times, we present a version of the opera featuring a tenor in the role of Hamlet, instead of the customary baritone (as traditionally chosen), performed by John Osborn. After delighting audiences in Turin in *Fille du Régiment*, he now returns to the Teatro Regio in the role of the tormented prince, singing the celebrated monologue "Être ou ne pas être." Sara Blanch will take the stage as Ophélie, whose pyrotechnic aria in the "mad scene" is a true challenge for coloratura sopranos. The production is directed by **Jacopo Spirei** (marking his debut at the Teatro Regio) and will be conducted by **Jérémie Rhorer** whose renowned sensitivity promises to exalt the contrasting atmospheres of the opera. The identity crisis and mental turmoil suffered by Hamlet in seeking out his place in the world bring to the stage the torment of youth in conflict with the adult world. His rebellion against the king, his step-father, plays out generational conflict and the struggle for independence.

The final show of the season will be ***Andrea Chénier*** by Umberto Giordano, in a production that sees the return of acclaimed performers of truly great vocal standing: Gregory Kunde, Maria Agresta, and Franco Vassallo. On stage from **18 to 29 June**, the opera offers stimulating insights on the theme of youth, starting from its setting in the French Revolution, a time of great tumult and social change. Against this backdrop, Andrea Chénier is a poet who sacrifices his life for his ideals; Maddalena the woman who chooses to share his fate on the gallows for love. Idealism and passion, along with growth and maturity through the experience of war and death, combine to give us a lesson in the value of life and human relationships. Giordano's opera has enjoyed enormous success ever since its premiere in 1896, thanks to its magnificent arias and duets and memorable melodies but also the strength of the libretto by Luigi Illica, who so skilfully transformed into an ardent tragedy the real-life story of a French poet who had fallen victim to the French Revolution. This staging of the opera will present the **spectacular new production** by **Giancarlo Del Monaco**, an experienced director of worldwide renown, who calls himself "an innovator in keeping with tradition." Maestro **Andrea Battistoni** returns to the Teatro Regio podium, after his brilliant work with *La Bohème* in 2022.

For the 2024–2025 Season, we have also lined up a series of *Conference–Concerts* to present the operas to the public, led by journalist Susanna Franchi, musicologist Liana Püschel, and journalist Elisa

Guzzo Vaccarino for the ballets. A chance to meet the stars of the shows and enjoy their most celebrated pieces of music, in some cases performed live by singers from the Regio Ensemble. The conference-concerts are held with free admission.

We will also be continuing with our Under-30 Previews for younger audiences, which last year gave some 20,000 young music lovers the chance to enjoy our opera shows.

Kids Playtime is another ongoing initiative, designed to help parents “reconcile” their passion for the opera with their parenting responsibilities. While they sit back and enjoy the show, kids are entertained with fun music and theatre workshops.

The Opera and Ballet Season is paired with a Concert Season and lots of activities for schools and families, which we will be presenting soon.

All the photos used are by Italian-born photographer **Gaia Bonanomi**. Based in Milan and Barcelona, her fascination with world cultures has led her live in Canada, Spain, and the Netherlands—experiences that have inspired her love and daily work in seeking out what makes us unique and have made her understand the importance of embracing it, protecting it, and celebrating it fearlessly. Her personal work explores the beauty that lies in the small, hidden details of every person and the deeper bond we all have with Mother Earth, celebrating life in all its different nuances through a very sensitive and female perspective. Directed once again by Turin-born **Aksinja Bellone**, the trailer for the season is in perfect harmony with the photographic images and the spirit that inspired the selection of artistic works.

Our continuing efforts to render the Teatro Regio ever-more accessible have led to the introduction of a series of new initiatives. They include the reorganisation of the seating plan, with former sectors C and D joined in a new and more convenient single C sector, and a new pricing policy, which aligns tickets for opening nights with the price of other shows, making it easier for theatre lovers to enjoy new titles staged, and which makes purchasing or renewing a subscription ticket more affordable than ever, raising the discount to 30% off the price of the single tickets.

Opera has always been a mirror of life itself, reflecting the emotions, conflicts, and challenges of the human condition. A major form of art, it engages audiences in an emotional, intellectual, and aesthetic experience, enriching our understanding of the world and the nature of our humanity. The decision by UNESCO to add Italian opera singing to its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage is of extraordinary import, stressing opera’s cultural, artistic, and social value and promoting its preservation and spread across the world. It is both an acknowledgement of the importance of opera for world heritage and a duty to preserve and promote the art form for future generations.

Mathieu Jouvin concludes, «As General Manager, I feel a dual responsibility on my shoulders, to new generations and to our long-time audiences. Both are fundamental as the life-blood of our theatre. Accordingly, we have introduced new improvements to enrich the Regio experience. For our subscribers we have made purchasing a subscription ticket even more convenient and have chosen to expand direct communications with them, while also extending the pre-sale periods reserved to them. We want them to feel they are a part of our history, while also playing a leading role for our future. For young people we are investing like never before. Alongside the Under-30 Previews and the unbeatable concessions offered on tickets and card initiatives, we have developed a line up dedicated to them, featuring shows created specially for children to introduce them from a young age to the beauty and magic of opera. The title theme of the season is also a heartfelt acknowledgement of all the young people who show enthusiasm and curiosity in our theatre. They are the future of our art and we are here to nurture their passion and drive the growth of the wonderful world of opera. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for all the workers at the Teatro Regio. It is thanks to their tireless efforts and energy that this new season has taken shape».

The Teatro Regio warmly thanks the Italian Ministry for Culture, the City of Turin, and the Piedmont Region for their fundamental and ongoing support; the members of the Foundation for their indispensable contribution; the Friends of the Regio for their continuing and affectionate support; and all the companies that continue to believe in the Teatro Regio for their sponsorship. We additionally thank the members and chairman of the Guideline Council for the important work they do alongside us.

Here we provide an overview of the dates for renewing and purchasing subscription tickets, carnets, and show tickets. For all the details, please visit our website.

Manon Manon Manon

Show tickets, subscriptions and the 3Manon carnet **are on sale** at the Box Office and online.

Opera and Ballet Season

Wednesday, 15 May to Saturday 20 July: renewals of reserved-seat subscription tickets, exclusively at the Teatro Regio Box Office.

New subscription tickets with reserved seating can be purchased from the Box Office and online on the Teatro Regio website commencing from **Monday, 17 June**.

Monday, 15 July: tickets to all the shows and carnets of tickets to three or four shows go on sale.

To facilitate purchasing options, **part-payment solutions are available for subscription tickets and carnets**.

New **Regio Cards** and the **Regio Card Giovani 18-30** go on sale **commencing from Monday, 15 July**.

Teatro Regio Box Office

Piazza Castello 215, Turin | Tel. +39 011 8815241 / +39 011 8815242 | biglietteria@teatroregio.torino.it
Opening hours: Monday–Saturday, **11a.m. to 7p.m.**; Sunday, **10:30a.m. to 3:30p.m.**; one hour before show times.

For full information and updates: **www.teatroregio.torino.it**

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Turin, 15 May 2024

FONDAZIONE TEATRO REGIO DI TORINO



PRESS OFFICE

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