



Future Visions in the Teatro Verde

Artificial Intelligence, 3D creation and modelling, sound design and fashion, interwoven with the Fondazione Cini heritage of collections and archives have given rise to a highly original work of art: *The Mask of Time*. On 29 September, it will be previewed as part of a major event on the Island of San Giorgio.

The **Teatro Verde of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini** is to play a leading role in contemporary innovation. Reopened for guided tours last spring following an initial restoration, the amphitheatre on the Island of San Giorgio is now the setting and protagonist of *The Mask of Time*, an art work created by **Mattia Casalegno** and **Martux_m**. This ground-breaking video installation will be premiered on Thursday 29 September at 6 pm in the Sala degli Arazzi in the Fondazione Giorgio Cini.

A combination of in-depth archival research in the Fondazione Giorgio Cini Institute of Theatre and Opera and **the innovative application of Artificial Intelligence, sound design** and the latest **3D animation**, the film has been constructed thanks to the visual power of new kinds of software blended into a single artistic meta-language.

In *The Mask of Time*, the architecture and history of the Teatro Verde have been brought back to life in a world inhabited by hyper-realistic avatars, made through the creative use of pioneering 3D animation and text processing software, combined with sound designed by **Maurizio Martuscello aka Martux_m**. The avatars will become actors performing the theatre's great historical productions. Photorealistic digital human beings are immersed **in real sets as well as dreamlike environments in a post-human sci-fi world**, somewhere between fiction and representation, in which Nature and Art breathe and flourish.

The narrative unfolds through intense imagery in four acts on the subject of the Teatro Verde: *History, Performances, Present and Future*. It thus explores themes such as *teatri di verzura* (garden theatres), the golden age of the amphitheatre, and its dialogue with Nature, both dominated and dominating and now a creative force cooperating in the theatre's new lease of life.

Fondazione Giorgio Cini Secretary General, **Renata Codello**, comments that *"the Fondazione Giorgio Cini is a heritage for the cultures of all disciplines. Today, thanks to new technologies and the research that we carry out by grafting advanced digital tools to the cult of tradition, we can illustrate and showcase the monumental complex on the Island of San Giorgio in an innovative way. This is a goal that the Foundation will continue to pursue with some of the most authoritative international players in the field."*

The two artists embarked on the complex production process by starting from the study of the Foundation's collections and archives, combined with research into the stage costumes to be worn by the digital human actors, based on archive images from the Institute of Theatre and Opera.

The costume designs of the 3D dresses worn by the characters are the result of research and collaboration with **TheBlackLab** digital studio and **Amin Farah**, an artist and digital fashion designer.



The 3D construction of the theatre was made possible thanks to the photogrammetric acquisition carried out with drones by **Factum Foundation, an institutional partner of ARCHiVe**. Factum Foundation made a complete survey of the Teatro Verde as part of the 3D digitisation project for the Island of San Giorgio.

Curated by Ennio Bianco, the art project was produced by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini through its ARCHiVe centre of excellence, created in 2018 and now an international reference point for the digitisation of cultural heritage. The event is also part of the **AOA | ARCHiVe Online Academy training programme**, since after the screening, there will be a discussion involving students on the course and the two artists on themes such as 3D techniques, the relationship between art and computer languages, and the digitisation of cultural heritage.

Commissioned by **Vittorio Cini** and inaugurated in 1954, the open-air amphitheatre designed by architect **Luigi Vietti** (1903-1998) has often been an important cultural venue in Venice and has hosted excellent productions of the performing arts. Described by actress Katharine Hepburn as “the most beautiful theatre in the world”, the Teatro Verde is so called because of the privet hedges on the backs of the stone seats. Located in the southern part of the woods on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, it is immersed in and merges with the natural landscape, including the Venice lagoon as a backdrop. In 2021 the theatre was the subject of a major restoration project that brought its architecture back to life and made the most of all the qualities of the building materials, the surrounding greenery, the fascinating spaces and the stunning landscape views. The Fondazione Cini thus took a first step towards recovering this remarkable piece of architecture through a restoration made possible thanks to a partnership with **Cartier**, a company that has always prized cultural excellence.

As an integral part of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini’s project to develop the Teatro Verde and the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, one of Italy’s most successful digital artists, New York-based **Mattia Casalegno**, was invited to create a work that would showcase the beauty of the theatre and give it a leading role in stimulating creativity. Casalegno worked with Maurizio Martusciello, a percussionist, composer and sound designer who, under the pseudonym **Martux_m**, has taken part in major international festivals as a sound artist and art performer.

Mattia Casalegno is a renowned Italian multimedia artist, based in Naples and New York. Since 1999 he has exhibited his work in several solo and group shows and in galleries and festivals, such as MACRO, the Museo di Bassano del Grappa, Netmage Festival, Santa’Arcangelo dei Teatri and the Romaeuropa Festival in Italy, the Mutek Festival in Canada, the Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts in Taiwan, the International Symposium of Electronic Arts (ISEA) in Gwangju, the Chronus Art Center in Shanghai, the Cimatics Festival, Nuit Blanche and Update Biennial in Belgium, Le Cube Contemporary Art Museum in France, OFFF in Spain, ARTES in Portugal, and LACMA and Untitled Art Fair in the USA. His works have been featured in several international books, such as *A Touch of Code* (Gestalten Books), *Deleuze and Audiovisual Art* (Manchester Metropolitan University), and *Imagine in tempo reale* (Mimesis/Eterotopie) and in magazines and newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Wall Street Magazine*, *Bloomberg*, *Art Tribune*, *Creative Applications* and *Digicult*.

Maurizio Martusciello, also known by his pseudonym **Martux_m**, is a leading composer and producer of electronic music in Italy. He has performed and collaborated with musicians and groups, such as Michiko Hrayama, Wolfgang Fuchs, Fernando Grillo, MEV (Musica Elettronica Viva), Dagmar Krause, Tim Hodgkinson, Chris Cutler, Yoshihide Otomo, Giorgio Battistelli, Danilo Rea and Markus Stockhausen. He has played at the Villettes Numérique, Paris (2004) and the Venice Music Biennale and has participated in the MUTEK Festival, the Sonar Festival, the



Romaeuropa Festival and the AltaRoma Festival. From 2003 to 2005, he was curator and artistic director of Sensoralia, an audiovisual electronic art exhibition staged at the Teatro Palladium, Rome, as part of the Romaeuropa Festival.

Press Information:

Fondazione Giorgio Cini onlus

Press Office

tel. +39 041 2710280

email: stampa@cini.it

www.cini.it/press-release