

Lucca Classica Music Festival, May 4/5/6/7

Lucca Classica, now in its third edition, is an overflowing of musical emotion and fabulous music-making. The Festival will take place in concert halls around Lucca as well as in the city's most beautiful locations: in the streets, on the Walls, in historical palazzos, museums and churches (notably the baroque jewel-box of Santa Caterina Church, recently restored with the help of the FAI). Over 300 musicians will be involved in 90 events, most of them free.

In fact, each day of the Festival will conclude with a major concert. On 4 May (9 pm) at the Church of San Francesco, music from cinema will be performed by the Orchestra and Chorus of the Istituto Superiore di Studi Musicali Luigi Boccherini directed by GianPaolo Mazzoli, with John Williams' theme music from *Star Wars*, *The Phantom Menace*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Harry Potter*. On 5 May (9.15 pm) at the Church of San Pietro Somaldi, Dutch organist/harpsichordist Liuwe Tamminga will perform 21 pieces composed by Puccini and rediscovered thanks to the research of the Centro Studi Giacomo Puccini (see insert). On 6



When Giacomo Puccini wrote organ music for his student ...

Before his departure for Milan in 1880, Puccini composed organ music. One of his organ students was a tailor from Porcari named Carlo Della Nina. Puccini wrote numerous pages of organ music for Della Nina – often cheerful and lively. These pages were kept in the Della Nina family for many years, but in the 1980's they were sold. Fortunately, copies had been made. The handwriting is certainly that of Puccini, and the style also. As a result of this discovery (and thanks to the complicated reconstruction work of the Centro Studi Giacomo Puccini, especially Gabriella Biagi Ravenni, Dieter Schickling and Virgilio Bernardoni), we can now enjoy the surprising music that Puccini created for organ. This includes waltz melodies and citations from various music (including a reference to Verdi's *Rigoletto*). Organist Liuwe Tamminga, one of the greatest experts on the repertoire of the 1500s and 1600s, will be performing Puccini's compositions on 5 May. He is the head organist of Bologna's Basilica of San Petronio and curator of the Tagliavini Collection at Bologna's San Colombano Museum.



May (9.15 pm) at Teatro del Giglio, Mario Brunello (cello) and Andrea Lucchesini (piano) will perform. Finally, on 7 May (9 pm), in one of the most exciting events of the festival, cellist/composer Giovanni Sollima will direct his orchestra of 100 Cellos (above) with the talented cellist Enrico Melozzi. Throughout the festival, the cellists will also be performing in Lucca's streets and squares.

Lucca Classica will be collaborating with the Anteprema Vini della Costa festival (held on 6/7 May) for the second year. At the Real Collegio di Lucca, along with the perfumes and flavors of the coastal Grand Cru wines, there will be concerts with Giovanni Bietti at the piano, violinist Alberto Bogni playing Paganini's *Capricci*, Jeff Bredetich and Thierry Barbè (bass players), and the trio of Elisabeth Lochman (violin), Lorenzo Giovannelli (viola) and Gabriele Micheli (spinet).

Children and families will be delighted by puppet performances telling the life of Luigi Boccherini and marionettes with stories from Puccini's operas. There are guided visits to the Giacomo Puccini Birthplace Museum, the Arturo Paoli Orchestral Laboratory inspired by the Abreu System, and the explosive Lucca Classica Street Band.

Tickets go on sale beginning in April at the Teatro del Giglio box office (10.30am to 1pm, 4pm to 7pm Wed. to Sat.).

