



Max Emanuel Cencic

CURRICULUM VITAE

Max Emanuel Cencic is one of the world's most fascinating and versatile artists who is committed to the rediscovery and performance of 18th century music.

He began his vocal training as a Viennese choirboy and began a solo career as a soprano in 1992, which he continued as a countertenor from 2001. With his virtuoso mezzo-soprano, Max Emanuel Cencic shows how technically brilliant and at the same time modern and sensitive baroque singing can be. He has been performing on stage for more than 40 years, appearing at major opera houses around the world such as the Vienna State Opera, the Musiktheater an der Wien, the Zurich Opera House, the Opéra Royal in Versailles, the Bavarian State Opera, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin, Barcelona's Gran Teatro del Liceu, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Paris Opera and the Brussels opera house La Monnaie. In 2023, Max Emanuel Cencic made his long-awaited La Scala di Milano debut as Lottario in the Porpora opera *Carlo il Calvo*, which he had discovered. The production was frenetically acclaimed by the Milan audience with standing ovations for a total of 20 minutes.

Max Emanuel Cencic celebrated his 40th stage anniversary on 10 September 2022 on the stage of the Margravia Opera House in Bayreuth, where he sang a gala dedicated to the castrato Senesino as part of the Bayreuth Baroque Festival, which he founded. Concerts have taken him to the Laiszhalle Hamburg, Carnegie Hall (New York), the Barbican Centre (London), Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, the Vienna Musikverein, the Konzerthaus and the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, among others. He has also performed at numerous festivals worldwide, including the Salzburg Festival, Enescu Festival Bucharest, Festival Lacoste, Schwetzingen Festival, Drottninghol Festival, Festival du Beaune, Handel Festival Halle, Festival La Chaise Dieu and Varazdin Barokne Veceri. He regularly works with conductors such as William Christie, René Jacobs, Ottavio Dantone, George Petrou, Christophe Rousset, Emmanuelle Haïm and Riccardo Muti.

Max Emanuel Cencic attracts great attention to his projects by bringing them to the public in opera productions, CD recordings and extensive tours. In addition, broadcasters such as Mezzo TV, Bayerischer Rundfunk and Arte Concert have documented many of his outstanding performances, such as the Handel operas *Alessandro* and *Arminio*, which he rediscovered. As artistic director of Parnassus Arts Productions, he is responsible for the conception, direction and performance of important works of the Italian Baroque, including the sensational rediscovery of Leonardo Vinci's last opera *Artaserse*. As originally performed in Rome in 1730, the new production with five countertenors was also performed by an all-male cast. The work not only thrilled audiences on stage, but was also

honoured with all relevant recording awards in its recording, including the *ECHO Klassik* 2013 and 2014, the *German Record Critics' Award* and the *Diapason d'Or*, as well as being nominated for a *Grammy*. Vinci's opera **Catone in Utica**, in which four countertenors took part, was also a resounding success as a CD and staged production. The CD production **Ottone** with Max Emanuel Cencic in the title role was nominated for a *Grammy*.

His solo recordings are equally impressive: On *Venezia*, he fascinated audiences and critics alike with masterpieces of Venetian opera. The CD *Rococo* compiles virtuoso arias from Johann Adolph Hasse's extensive oeuvre. Max Emanuel Cencic's critically acclaimed CD *Arie Napoletane* is dedicated to masterpieces of the Neapolitan school. His extensive discography, which includes various world premiere recordings, has received numerous awards, including the *Diapason d'Or*, the *German Record Critics' Award* and the Croatian *Porin Prize*. Another highlight is the European tour of his solo programme *Porpora* (on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Nicola Antonio Porpora's death) with solo concerts in Paris, Halle, Toulouse, etc., as well as his solo CD of the same name, which was awarded a *Diapason D'Or*. Several of his releases have been voted "Editor's Choice" by the *British Gramophone magazine*.

For his artistic work, he was honoured by the French Ministry of Culture as *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* and in 2021 received the *German Record Critics' Honour Award* in the "Classical" category for his life's work.

Max Emanuel Cencic has also long since made a name for himself internationally as a director, for example with the live production of Hasse's **Siroe**, which toured Europe and was released on CD by Decca. He appeared in double roles at the Karlsruhe Handel Festival in 2016 and 2017 with **Arminio** (title role + director) and in 2019 and 2020 with **Xerxes** (role of Arsame + director): On the one hand, he sang the title role of Arminio and the role of Arsamene respectively, and on the other, he took on the direction of the rarely performed works. **Xerxes** proved to be a hit with audiences in Karlsruhe and the production was enthusiastically acclaimed by the press and public. Max Emanuel Cencic's production of Nicola Antonio Porpora's rarely performed opera **Polifemo** at the 2019 Salzburg Whitsun Festival in the world-famous Felsenreitschule, where the artist was responsible for the direction and sang the role of Ulisse, was an enormous success, with standing ovations from the audience and rave reviews. In 2018/19, Max Emanuel Cencic presented his interpretation of Rossini's **La Donna del Lago** at the Opera de Lausanne, Opera HNK Zagreb and Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden. Other directorial productions to follow in the coming years include Porpora's **Ifigenia in Aulis** and Handel's **Poro**.

Max Emanuel Cencic has been Artistic Director of the **Bayreuth Baroque Opera Festival** since September 2020. The first editions of the new, spectacular festival, which took place despite the coronavirus crisis, were a huge success with audiences and the press, with 1,000,000 visitors worldwide watching the broadcasts online each year and all Bayreuth performances sold out. Max Emanuel Cencic was responsible for directing the new productions of **Carlo il Calvo**, where he sang the role of Lottario, Leonardo Vinci's **Alessandro nell'Indie** and Handel's **Flavio, Rè de Longobardi**. The productions **Carlo il Calvo** and **Alessandro nell'Indie** were named *Opera Trophies of the Year* 2020 and 2022 respectively by the French trade journal *Forum Opera*. In his first four seasons, Max Emanuel Cencic invited world stars such as Joyce DiDonato, Franco Fagioli, Jakub Jozef Orłowski, Rolando Villazon and Jordi Savall to Bayreuth. In January 2024, Bayreuth Baroque was named Best Festival at the international *Oper! Awards* in Amsterdam.

The countertenor's outstanding projects in the 2022/2023 season included his house debut at Milan's La Scala in Porpora's **Carlo il Calvo**, which was also performed in concert at the Konzerthaus Dortmund and simultaneously released as a CD studio recording on the Parnassus Arts Productions label. At the Bayreuth Baroque Opera Festival 2022, the artist staged the Vinci opera **Alessandro nell'Indie**. His own appearances this season included his gala concert, the title role in the oratorio **San Giovanni Battista** and the role of Gualtiero in Bononcini's opera **Griselda**.

At the Bayreuth Baroque Opera Festival 2023, the artist restaged Handel's rarely performed opera satire **Flavio** and played the role of Guido. In the 22/23 season, Max Emanuel Cencic sang in Bononcini's **Griselda**, Vinci's **Alessandro nell'Indie** and the title role in Caldara's **Il Venceslao**, three operatic gems he discovered himself. The production **Polifemo**, directed by Max Emanuel Cencic, was performed at the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden with Max as Ulisse, in concert at the Musiktheater an der Wien and the Concertgebouw Amsterdam and was also released as a studio recording on the Parnassus Arts Productions label as a CD in September 2023. The CD **Polifemo** was honoured with the coveted *Diapason d'Or* and the *German Record Critics' Award*.

In the 2023/2024 season, Max Emanuel Cencic will appear as Tolomeo in Handel's **Giulio Cesare** alongside Cecilia Bartoli and under the musical direction of Gianluca Capuano in concert at the Philharmonie Luxembourg, Theatre de Champs Elysees, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Bozar Brussels, Kölner Philharmonie and Opera royal de Versailles. Max Emanuel Cencic will perform the role of Tolomeo at the Opera de Monte Carlo and the Vienna State Opera. The artist will also sing a gala at the Vienna State Opera, as well as solo concerts at the Baden State Theatre as part of the Handel Festival in Karlsruhe, at the Femas Festival in Seville and at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival. He sings in Handel's **Flavio** at the Musiktheater an der Wien and in Caldara's **Il Venceslao** at the Tage der Alten Musik in Herne.

At the Bayreuth Baroque Opera Festival 2024, the artist will restage Porpora's opera **Ifigenia in Aulis**, which has been unperformed and rediscovered for more than 300 years, and play the role of Agamemnon.

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