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|  | **PRESS RELEASE** |  |

**Baritone Jorge Chaminé, President of the Centre Européen de Musique, wins the Helena Vaz da Silva European Award 2023**

**Lisbon / The Hague / Bougival, 15 September 2023** – Jorge Chaminé, President of the Centre Européen de Musique, is the winner of the 2023 edition of the **Helena Vaz da Silva European Award for Raising Public Awareness on Cultural Heritage**. This European recognition pays tribute to Jorge Chaminé as one of the greatest artistic and intellectual ambassadors of European cultural heritage, both intangible and material. The Helena Vaz da Silva European Award was established in 2013 by the **Centro Nacional de Cultura** (Portugal), in collaboration with **Europa Nostra** and the **Portuguese Press Club,** and has the support of the Portuguese Ministry of Culture, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and Turismo de Portugal.

The **award ceremony** will take place in Lisbon, at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, on **23** **October 2023**.

Reacting to the announcement, **Jorge Chaminé** stated: “*It was with enormous surprise and honour that I received this moving news. Honestly, I think that this distinction is aimed above all at recognising the importance of music for our European cultural heritage: for its innumerable capacities to build links between human beings, for the universality of its language, for its talent in uniting diversity, for its ability to speak to each one of us and to speak to us collectively, through the “miracle” of being able to unite the mind, heart and body, triptych of the complete human being. I have dedicated my life to music! My deep gratitude, then, for such a prestigious Award, which bears the name of an exceptional personality of cultural and political life, national and European: Helena Vaz da Silva! Well done!”*

Following the selection meeting, the **Jury** stated: “*After a highly successful international career as a baritone, during which he presented and promoted the cultural heritage of Europe in many opera houses and concert halls, not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world, Jorge Chaminé decided to dedicate the last 20 years of his life to promoting the European spirit and identity through classical music, working mostly on a voluntary basis. He is the founder and president of the Centre Européen de Musique, based in Bougival, near Paris, a meeting point between arts, humanities, sciences and generations, which celebrates music as a universal language at the heart of European identity and its humanist values*.”

The Helena Vaz da Silva European Award [**Jury**](https://www.europanostra.org/our-work/partnerships/helena-vaz-silva-award/jury/), chaired by Maria Calado, President of the Centro Nacional de Cultura, is made up of independent specialists in the fields of culture, heritage and communication from several European countries: Francisco Pinto Balsemão (Portugal); President of the Board of Directors of the Impresa Group; Piet Jaspaert (Belgium), Vice-President of Europa Nostra; João David Nunes (Portugal), Vice-President of the Portuguese Press Club; Guilherme d'Oliveira Martins (Portugal), Administrator of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; Irina Subotić (Serbia), President of Europa Nostra Serbia; and Marianne Ytterdal (Norway), Member of the Council of Europa Nostra.

**Helena Vaz da Silva European Award 2023 for Jorge Chaminé**

*“The artist forges himself to the others, midway between the beauty he cannot do without and the community he cannot tear himself away from. That is why true artists scorn nothing: they are obliged to understand rather than to judge.”* Quoting Albert Camus rarely works as well as with Jorge Chaminé, a committed baritone and musician, outside the usual circuits, who refuses human, geographic or musical boundaries.

For several years, Jorge Chaminé has worked tirelessly around the importance of the European musical heritage, following the *motto* of the European Union: “Unity in diversity”. It is dedicated especially to safeguarding the memory and legacy of the famous Spanish-French mezzo-soprano Pauline Garcia-Viardot (1821-1910), who can be considered the most influential ‘founding mother’ of Europe of Culture, and to the preservation of important places of memory in Bougival, namely the **Villa Viardot** - which was restored and will be inaugurated this Saturday, 16 September, thanks to his inspiring leadership and tireless efforts, including that of Europa Nostra - and the **House** **of** **Georges Bizet** where the composer created his masterpiece, *Carmen*, which today has become the most performed opera in the world.

Jorge Chaminé is also the founder and president of the **Centre Européen de Musique**, based in Bougival, with antennas established in several European countries and partnerships in more than 50 countries on 5 continents. Under the adage “Let's empower Music!”, it counts among its projects, which seek to have a holistic vision around music and its multiple virtues, the large **Via Musica** network, to which the **Network of Houses and Museums of European Musicians** belongs (which covers 23 countries), the **Via Scarlatti** (which is developed in Spain, France, Italy and Portugal), and also the **“Music-Brain” Hub**.

**About Jorge Chaminé**

Jorge Chaminé, born in Porto, Portugal, to a Spanish mother and a Portuguese father, occupies a prominent place in the world of international operatic singing. A disciple of Lola Rodríguez Aragón, Hans Hotter and Teresa Berganza, he has a vast repertoire that ranges from Bach to Xenakis (who wrote a piece for his voice), from Mozart's operas to contemporary operatic repertoire, from tango to Hebrew or Tibetan liturgies, and from Bossa Nova to Cole Porter or gypsy songs.

Humanist and polyglot - speaking French, German, Italian, Russian, English, Spanish and Portuguese - Jorge Chaminé attended the Law course at the University of Coimbra, in Portugal, and dedicated his entire life to promoting European ideals, using music as a privileged vehicle of identity and cultural awareness of a Europe open to the world.

He has performed as a soloist with orchestras such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Gulbenkian Orchestra or the Ensemble Intercontemporain, under the direction of conductors such as Yehudi Menuhin, Seiji Ozawa, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Michel Corboz or Plácido Domingo.

In 1993, he received the Human Rights Medal from UNESCO, in recognition of his work with children, and was named Goodwill Ambassador for the organisation Music in Me (Music in Middle East), having developed several teaching programmes and musical practice in Middle Eastern countries, particularly in the Palestinian camps. Many institutions have welcomed his action in the peace processes in this region.

In May 2005, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the creation of UNESCO, he held a tribute concert to Aristides de Sousa Mendes.

He was founding president and artistic director of the CIMA Festival in Tuscany and created the Georges Bizet association in 2000, of which he is vice-president.

Jorge Chaminé launched the “Sons Croisés” Ateliers with Marie-Françoise Bucquet,, bringing together singers, pianists, and chamber musicians in the Gulbenkian Foundation building in Paris, a pedagogical and musical interpretation laboratory that will continue at the Colegio de España de la Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris and which will bring together more than 200 musicians from 46 different nationalities throughout many years.

He was the founder of the Ibériades Festival in Paris, of which he is still artistic director, and is also director of the Bougival Festival. Thanks to his action, the Villa in Bougival, which belonged to the singer Pauline Viardot, has once again become the privileged musical venue it was in the 19th century and Chaminé gives numerous master classes and organises many concerts with his student singers, pianists and musicians of chamber.

In 2011 in Madrid, Jorge Chaminé was appointed 1st Musician for Peace of the Music for Peace organisation chaired by Federico Mayor, with members such as El Sistema, the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation, the West/Ost Diwan Orchestra of Daniel Barenboim and the Orquesta Simón Bolívar by Gustavo Dudamel, among others.

He has been a professor and tutor at Stanford University since 2012, a member of the Board of Directors of the Yehudi Menuhin International Foundation since 2015 and a member of the Europa Nostra Council since 2019.

With the support of the European Union and other organisations, he created the Music4Rom project, in recognition of the fundamental influence of Rom music on classical music.

In 2018 he was decorated as “Officier” of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture and in 2019 he received the Grand Vermeil Medal from the City of Paris. Jorge Chaminé was also appointed Ambassador for Peace and Justice of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals “Agenda 2030 NOW”.

**About the Helena Vaz da Silva European Award**

The Helena Vaz da Silva European Award for Raising Public Awareness on Cultural Heritage, promoted by the Centro Nacional de Cultura (Portugal) in collaboration with Europa Nostra and the Portuguese Press Club, is named after the Portuguese journalist, writer, cultural and political activist **Helena Vaz da Silva** (1939 -2002), in memory and recognition of her notable contribution to the dissemination of cultural heritage and European ideals. Since 2013, it is awarded annually to a European citizen whose career has been distinguished by activities of dissemination, defence and promotion of Europe's cultural heritage, in particular through literary or musical works, reports, articles, chronicles, photographs, cartoons, documentaries, films and radio and/or television programmes.

[Previous laureates](https://www.europanostra.org/tag/helena-vaz-da-silva-european-award/) of this award have been the Ukrainian conductor **Oksana Lyniv** (2022); the Belgian contemporary dance choreographer **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker** (2021); the Portuguese poet and librarian of the Vatican Library **José Tolentino Mendonça** (2020); the Italian physicist, **Fabiola Gianotti** (2019); the British historian and broadcaster **Bettany Hughes** (2018); the German filmmaker **Wim Wenders** (2017); the French editorial cartoonist **Jean Plantureux**, known as **Plantu**, and the Portuguese philosopher, **Eduardo Lourenço** (ex aequo, 2016); the musician and Spanish conductor **Jordi Savall** (2015); the Turkish writer and Nobel Prize winner **Orhan Pamuk** (2014); and the Italian writer **Claudio Magris** (2013). Their speeches at the ceremonies for this award can be heard [here](https://helenavazdasilva.pt/premio-helena-vaz-da-silva/).

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