

TEATRO NICCOLINI

FIRENZE · STAGIONE 2026–2027 · FIRENZEONSTAGE

PRESS RELEASE · FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

An International Star-Driven Season!

Jim Belushi, Stefano Rapone, Peppe Barra, Broadway Superstars Christine Ebersole, Norm Lewis, Santino Fontana and Paulo Szot, Movie and TV Star Peter Strauss (*Soldier Blue*), Award-Winning Hershey Felder and Many More: Jazz, Theatre and Film Glamorize Teatro Niccolini for the 2026–2027 Season!

Florence's oldest theatre welcomes Italian superstars, Hollywood, comedy, Broadway and opera, with Lucia Poli, Aaron Diehl, the Amici della Musica di Firenze, the world premiere of Felder's new play LOVE NOTES on January 5, 2027, and the Festival Superstar di Broadway from April 15, hosted and accompanied by Billy Stritch and Jim Caruso, with Santino and Jessica Fontana, Gunhild Carling, Max von Essen, Christine Ebersole, Norm Lewis and New York's famous Cast Party

FLORENCE, September 2026 — Hollywood is coming to Florence's oldest theatre. **Jim Belushi**, star of the hit television series *According to Jim* (*La vita secondo Jim*) and many films, among them *Red Heat* opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger, headlines Teatro Niccolini's 2026–2027 season. He is joined by comedy superstar **Stefano Rapone**, who gives the season its very first performance; by Tony Award winner and opera star **Paulo Szot**; by Neapolitan legend **Peppe Barra**; and by international award winner **Hershey Felder** in **THE PIANO AND ME**. Also among the season's stars are Broadway superstars **Christine Ebersole**, **Norm Lewis** and **Santino Fontana**, and movie and TV star **Peter Strauss**, star of *Soldier Blue* and *Rich Man, Poor Man*, who takes the stage on **April 18** in **AN EVENING WITH PETER STRAUSS**.

Running from September 2026 to May 2027, the season has been assembled by Felder, the internationally celebrated pianist, actor and playwright, and brings nine months of comedy, jazz, rock, Broadway, prose theatre, operetta, ballet, magic and music to this historic stage, together with the Niccolini concerts of the **Amici della Musica di Firenze** and the launch of the new website www.FirenzeOnStage.com.

Felder has made an extraordinary personal commitment to the city: he is the **sole underwriter of both Teatro Niccolini and FirenzeOnStage**. That devotion has opened the doors of this historic house to a caliber of Italian and international artists rarely gathered under one roof: Hollywood and Chicago blues royalty, a Tony Award-winning Broadway baritone, legends of the Italian stage, world-class jazz, and the beloved Florentine companies who keep the city's own theatrical voice alive.

“Florence gave the world the Renaissance, and opera was born in this city,” says Felder. “Teatro Niccolini has been part of that story for nearly four centuries. My commitment is simple: to fill this beautiful house with the finest artists from Italy and from around the world, and to give back to the city that has given me so much.”

A DAZZLING OPENING

Comedy superstar **Stefano Rapone** raises the curtain on **September 25 and 26** with **COMICO DAI RUOLI MAI PRINCIPALI**. On **October 6**, **Hershey Felder** takes the stage in **THE PIANO AND ME**, a show with music from the artist whose award-winning performances have captivated audiences around the world. And on **October 12**, **Jim Belushi** arrives with his band, together with **Bill Rancic**, for **IL BLUES DI CHICAGO**, an evening of Chicago blues with one of America’s most beloved entertainers.

A WORLD PREMIERE: LOVE NOTES

On **January 5, 2027**, Florence will witness the birth of Felder’s newest work. **LOVE NOTES – A Musical Romance** tells the story of Johannes Brahms, Clara Schumann and Robert Schumann: three of the nineteenth century’s greatest musicians, bound together by genius, devotion and one of the most famous love stories in the history of music. Felder stars as Brahms, performing the music of all three composers live at the piano, with Sally George as Clara Schumann and Jonathan Silvestri as Robert Schumann. Following its world premiere in Florence, **LOVE NOTES** travels to the United States for its West Coast opening.

BROADWAY STARS TAKE FLORENCE

This spring, Broadway comes to the banks of the Arno. From **April 15 to 28**, the **FESTIVAL SUPERSTAR DI BROADWAY** takes over the Niccolini, hosted and accompanied by international jazz star **Billy Stritch** and **Jim Caruso**. It opens on **April 15** with Tony Award winner **Santino Fontana**, star of *Tootsie* on Broadway and the voice of Prince Hans in Disney’s *Frozen*, together with **Jessica Fontana**. International vaudeville star **Gunhild Carling** of Sweden dazzles on **April 17**; **Billy Stritch** presents **MY YEAR WITH TONY BENNETT** on **April 20**; Broadway star **Max von Essen**, Tony Award nominee for *An American in Paris*, takes the stage on **April 21**; Broadway diva and two-time Tony Award winner **Christine Ebersole** performs on **April 22**; Broadway superstar baritone **Norm Lewis**, the first African American to play the Phantom on Broadway, sings on **April 26**; and on **April 28** New York’s famous **CAST PARTY** comes to Florence with Jim Caruso and Billy Stritch.

A SEASON OF STARS

Felder returns to the Niccolini stage on December 19 with **SINGALONG**, an interactive concert that invites the entire audience into the music.

Tony Award winner and opera star **Paulo Szot**, celebrated on Broadway for *South Pacific* and joined here by conductor **Luke Frazier**, travels **DA BROADWAY A PUCCINI** (November 24). Acclaimed American pianist **Aaron Diehl** arrives with the **AARON DIEHL TRIO** (February 9), while **Amana Melomè** opens October with the jazz and soul of **RECALIBRATED** (October 3).

The great names of Italian theatre are here too. Neapolitan legend **Peppe Barra** presents **BUONASERA A TUTTI – dai miei disordinati appunti** (January 8–9). Stage icon **Lucia Poli** leads Dear Friends in Oscar Wilde’s **L’IMPORTANZA DI CHIAMARSI ERNESTO** (December 2–5). Florence’s own **Compagnia delle Seggiole** offers **SOTTO UNA GRAN PIOVA D’ACQUA** (November 4), **DIGITALE PURPUREA** by Caterina Baronti (November 20), and rings in the New Year with the beloved Florentine operetta **L’ACQUA CHETA** (December 31, January 3 and January 6). **Altrove Teatro** presents **LA GOVERNANTE DI CAVOUR** (April 24–25).

Comedy sparkles all season long: after Rapone’s opening, audiences can look forward to **Daniele Tinti**’s **PESCHE DURE** (December 10–11), **Francesco Fanucchi**’s **TUTTO SBAGLIATO** (March 5) and **Gabriele Piazza**’s **ETEROFOBIO 2.0** (March 12).

And the music never stops: **Jan Kalousek**’s **THE SONGS THAT MADE ME** (October 4); the Irish voices of **O’Connor, Nugent, Meehan and Lyons** in **NOTE D’IRLANDA** (October 5); pianist **Yuanfan**

Yang's interactive **OLTRE LO SPARTITO** (October 11); **Alteria's** **BELLE STORIE DI ROCK 'N' ROLL** (November 6); **Duo Baldo's** **CONdivertimentoCERTO** (December 20); and **Andrea Vanzo**, who closes the season with the **INTIMACY VOL.2 TOUR** (May 6).

For audiences in search of wonder, **Daniele Bartolini's** interactive **DANTE'S INFERNO** (October 8) brings Florence's greatest poet home; **Compagnia Opus Ballet** dances **LE QUATTRO STAGIONI** (January 29); illusionist **Mattia Boschi** presents **SOGNI** (January 23); and **Centrale dell'Arte** enchants young audiences aged five and up with **LA REGINA DELLA NEVE** (December 27).

AMICI DELLA MUSICA AT THE NICCOLINI

Teatro Niccolini is also a home for great classical music, hosting the Niccolini concerts of the 2026–2027 season of the **Amici della Musica di Firenze**, the city's historic concert society, under the artistic direction of **Andrea Lucchesini**. Stars of the classical world fill the calendar: the celebrated vocal ensemble **The Tallis Scholars** (October 25); soprano **Anna Prohaska** with violinist **Isabelle Faust** (December 1); the **Cuarteto Casals** (January 10) and the **Pavel Haas Quartet** (February 14); pianist **Benjamin Grosvenor** with **Hyeyoon Park**, **Timothy Ridout** and **Kian Soltani** (February 27); violinist **Sergey Khachatryan** and pianist **Lusine Khachatryan** (March 21); and violist **Tabea Zimmermann** with pianist **Javier Perianes** (April 11).

Cellist **Mario Brunello** leads a tribute to Franco Rossi of the legendary Quartetto Italiano (November 29). Cellist **Ettore Pagano**, the first Italian ever to win the Queen Elisabeth Competition, joins violinist **Marco Rizzi** and pianist **Gabriele Strata** (October 24), and Strata returns for a solo recital (March 7). The **Musica &...** series pairs music with other arts, from **Roberto Prosseda** at the rare pedal piano (October 18) to **Emanuele Arciuli** (December 6), **La Magnifica Comunità** with Francesco Micheli (February 7) and the **Quartetto Werther** with Sandro Cappelletto (April 4). The **Glocal Piano Festival** (November 8) is a twelve-pianist marathon hosted as part of the Ferruccio Busoni International Piano Competition, in which the audience chooses one young artist to advance to the 2027 finals. Families are welcome too, with the **Piccola, Grande Musica** concerts for children (November 1 and 22, January 24 and March 14).

INTRODUCING FIRENZEONSTAGE.COM

The season also marks the launch of **www.FirenzeOnStage.com**, the new online home of the Niccolini season. There audiences will find all the glorious details of every performance and can step behind the scenes to **meet the artists** who bring the season to life.

AL CENTRO DEL COCOMERO: THEATRE FOR SCHOOLS

FirenzeOnStage is part of **Le Chiavi della Città** with **Al centro del Cocomero**, its program for schools, created with the theatre association **Blanca Teatro**. The title recalls the Teatro del Cocomero, the Niccolini's historic name. Le Chiavi della Città is the City of Florence's educational initiative, bringing together the learning programs, workshops, visits and performances offered to Florentine schools of every level to complement classroom teaching.

2026–2027 SEASON CALENDAR

DATE	ARTIST	SHOW
25–26 September 2026	Stefano Rapone	COMICO DAI RUOLI MAI PRINCIPALI <i>Stand-up comedy</i>
3 October 2026	Amana Melomè	RECALIBRATED <i>Jazz / soul concert</i>
4 October 2026	Jan Kalousek	THE SONGS THAT MADE ME <i>Rock concert</i>
5 October 2026	O'Connor, Nugent, Meehan, Lyons	NOTE D'IRLANDA <i>Concert show</i>
6 October 2026	Hershey Felder	THE PIANO AND ME <i>Show with music</i>
8 October 2026	Daniele Bartolini	DANTE'S INFERNO <i>Interactive show</i>
11 October 2026	Yuanfan Yang	OLTRE LO SPARTITO <i>Interactive piano concert</i>

DATE	ARTIST	SHOW
12 October 2026	Jim Belushi & Band, with Bill Rancie	IL BLUES DI CHICAGO <i>Concert show</i>
4 November 2026	Compagnia delle Seggiole	SOTTO UNA GRAN PIOVA D'ACQUA <i>Prose theatre</i>
6 November 2026	Alteria	BELLE STORIE DI ROCK 'N' ROLL <i>Rock concert</i>
20 November 2026	Compagnia delle Seggiole	DIGITALE PURPUREA <i>Prose theatre · by Caterina Baronti</i>
24 November 2026	Paulo Szot · conductor Luke Frazier	DA BROADWAY A PUCCINI <i>Concert</i>
2–5 December 2026	Dear Friends, with Lucia Poli	L'IMPORTANZA DI CHIAMARSI ERNESTO <i>Prose theatre</i>
10–11 December 2026	Daniele Tinti	PESCHE DURE <i>Stand-up comedy</i>
19 December 2026	Hershey Felder	SINGALONG <i>Interactive concert</i>
20 December 2026	Duo Baldo	CONdivertimentoCERTO <i>Concert show</i>
27 December 2026	Centrale dell'Arte	LA REGINA DELLA NEVE <i>Children's theatre, ages 5+</i>
31 December 2026; 3 & 6 January 2027	Compagnia delle Seggiole	L'ACQUA CHETA <i>Operetta</i>
5 January 2027	Hershey Felder	LOVE NOTES — WORLD PREMIERE <i>A Musical Romance · with Sally George and Jonathan Silvestri</i>
8–9 January 2027	Peppe Barra	BUONASERA A TUTTI – dai miei disordinati appunti <i>Recital / singer-songwriter</i>
23 January 2027	Mattia Boschi	SOGNI <i>Magic and illusion</i>
29 January 2027	Compagnia Opus Ballet	LE QUATTRO STAGIONI <i>Ballet</i>
9 February 2027	Aaron Diehl	AARON DIEHL TRIO <i>Jazz</i>
5 March 2027	Francesco Fanucchi	TUTTO SBAGLIATO <i>Stand-up comedy</i>
12 March 2027	Gabriele Piazza	ETEROFOBO 2.0 <i>Recital</i>
15–28 April 2027	Billy Stritch & Jim Caruso	FESTIVAL SUPERSTAR DI BROADWAY <i>Hosts and accompanists</i>
15 April 2027	Santino Fontana & Jessica Fontana	FESTIVAL SUPERSTAR DI BROADWAY <i>Tony Award winner (Tootsie) · Festival opening night</i>
17 April 2027	Gunhild Carling	INTERNATIONAL VAUDEVILLE STAR <i>Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
18 April 2027	Peter Strauss	AN EVENING WITH PETER STRAUSS <i>Film and TV star (Soldier Blue)</i>
20 April 2027	Billy Stritch	MY YEAR WITH TONY BENNETT <i>International jazz star · Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
21 April 2027	Max von Essen	BROADWAY STAR <i>Tony Award nominee (An American in Paris) · Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
22 April 2027	Christine Ebersole	BROADWAY DIVA <i>Two-time Tony Award winner · Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
24–25 April 2027	Altrove Teatro	LA GOVERNANTE DI CAVOUR <i>Prose theatre</i>
26 April 2027	Norm Lewis	BROADWAY SUPERSTAR BARITONE <i>Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
28 April 2027	Jim Caruso & Billy Stritch	CAST PARTY <i>New York's famous Cast Party · Festival Superstar di Broadway</i>
6 May 2027	Andrea Vanzo	INTIMACY VOL.2 TOUR <i>Concert</i>

Amici della Musica di Firenze at Teatro Niccolini

DATE	ARTIST	SHOW
18 October 2026	Roberto Prosseda	MUSICA &... SPERIMENTAZIONE <i>Pedal piano</i>
24 October 2026	Marco Rizzi, Ettore Pagano, Gabriele Strata	SCHULHOFF · JANÁČEK · SCHUBERT <i>Violin, cello and piano</i>
25 October 2026	The Tallis Scholars	L'ARTE DEL CANTO <i>Vocal ensemble</i>
1 November 2026	Piccola, Grande Musica	DUEL (THE BEST OF) <i>Musical comedy for families</i>
8 November 2026	Twelve pianists	GLOCAL PIANO FESTIVAL <i>Piano marathon · Busoni Competition</i>
15 November 2026	Quartetto Indaco	IL MONDO DEL QUARTETTO <i>String quartet</i>
21 November 2026	Anna Kravtchenko	SOLOPIANO <i>Piano recital</i>
22 November 2026	Piccola, Grande Musica	CONCERT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES <i>Family series</i>
29 November 2026	Mario Brunello and friends, Quartetto Indaco	TRIBUTE TO FRANCO ROSSI <i>Chamber music</i>
1 December 2026	Anna Prohaska, Isabelle Faust	SOPRANO & VIOLIN <i>Chamber music</i>
6 December 2026	Emanuele Arciuli	MUSICA &... FREDERIC RZEWSKI <i>Piano</i>
13 December 2026	Santiago Cañón-Valencia, Naoko Sonoda	CELLO & PIANO <i>Florence debut</i>
10 January 2027	Cuarteto Casals	STRING QUARTET <i>Chamber music</i>
17 January 2027	Kyoko Takezawa, Edoardo Maria Strabbioli	VIOLIN & PIANO <i>Florence debut</i>
24 January 2027	Piccola, Grande Musica	CONCERT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES <i>Family series</i>
31 January 2027	Kevin Spagnolo, Andrea Obiso, Massimo Spada	CLARINET, VIOLIN & PIANO <i>Chamber music</i>
7 February 2027	La Magnifica Comunità, Francesco Micheli	MUSICA &... VIAGGIO ALL'ORIENTE DELLA MUSICA E DELL'ANIMA <i>Baroque ensemble and narrator</i>
14 February 2027	Pavel Haas Quartet	STRING QUARTET <i>Chamber music</i>
21 February 2027	I Fiati di Venezia, Massimiliano Ferrati	WINDS & PIANO <i>Chamber music</i>
27 February 2027	Hyeyoon Park, Timothy Ridout, Kian Soltani, Benjamin Grosvenor	PIANO QUARTET <i>Chamber music</i>
28 February 2027	Chiaroscuro Quartet, Nicolas Baldeyrou	STRING QUARTET & CLARINET <i>Chamber music</i>
7 March 2027	Gabriele Strata	PIANO RECITAL <i>Artist in residence</i>
14 March 2027	Piccola, Grande Musica	CONCERT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES <i>Family series</i>
21 March 2027	Sergey & Lusine Khachatryan	VIOLIN & PIANO <i>Chamber music</i>
4 April 2027	Quartetto Werther, Sandro Cappelletto	MUSICA &... AFFINITÀ ELETTIVE <i>Quartet and narrator</i>
11 April 2027	Tabea Zimmermann, Javier Perianes	VIOLA & PIANO <i>Chamber music</i>

Complete Amici della Musica programme: www.amicimusicafirenze.it

ABOUT HERSHEY FELDER

Hershey Felder is an internationally acclaimed pianist, actor, playwright and producer, celebrated for his portraits of the great composers, among them George Gershwin, whom he brought to Broadway in *George Gershwin Alone*, as well as Frédéric Chopin, Ludwig van Beethoven, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Leonard Bernstein and Irving Berlin, performed for audiences across North America and around the world. The author of eighteen plays and films, most of them award-winning, Felder is the sole underwriter of Teatro

Niccolini and FirenzeOnStage, dedicating his artistry and resources to keeping one of Florence's great cultural treasures alive and thriving.

ABOUT TEATRO NICCOLINI

Founded in the seventeenth century as the Teatro del Cocomero and later renamed in honor of the Tuscan dramatist Giovanni Battista Niccolini, Teatro Niccolini is the oldest theatre in Florence. For nearly four centuries it has welcomed audiences in the heart of the city. Today, with the patronage of Hershey Felder, it opens a new chapter as a home for the finest Italian and international artists.

Season details & behind the scenes: www.FirenzeOnStage.com

Box office: www.FirenzeOnStage.com

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