



## **The Focus-Abengoa Foundation celebrates the 21st edition of the master concerts series in the chapel of the Hospital de los Venerables**

- The series entitled, “The organ: a source of culture among the peoples of Europe” will bring together three well known organists, Stefano Inocenti, Yuka Ishimaru and Wolfgang Zerer.
- These annual concerts, which feature the world's most respected organists, have made the Los Venerables organ one of the most important and prestigious platforms in the world.

Seville, 3 February 2012. On Tuesday 7 February, the Focus-Abengoa Foundation will open the 21st edition of the master concerts series, which has become an essential event in the diaries of the world's finest organists. The new series, entitled “The organ: a source of culture among the peoples of Europe” will feature Stefano Inocenti, Yuka Ishimaru and Wolfgang Zerer, three brilliant and well-known organists who have studied at some of the most important schools in the world.

The first concert will take place on Tuesday 7 February and will be given by the Italian Stefano Inocenti, resident organist of the Serassi organ (18th c.) of the Ducal Palace of Colorno (Italy) and a lecturer at the conservatories of Bologna and Parma. On Tuesday 14 February, Yuka Ishimaru from Japan, winner of the 22nd Grand Prix de Chartres International Organ Competition (France) and one of the new generation of Asian organists trained in Europe, will be performing. Lastly, on Tuesday 21 February, Wolfgang Zerer, a professor in Hamburg (Germany) and Groningen (Holland) and a respected specialist in the Baroque music of these two European schools, will bring the series to close.

The repertoire chosen by the organists will include works by A. Vivaldi, J. Guillou, D. Scarlatti, F. Mendelssohn, H. Scheidemann, J.S. Bach and J. K. Kerll, among others.

The master concerts series, which has been held for 21 years, coinciding with the building of the Grenzing organ for the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, has provided “Seville's music lovers with the finest repertoires from the countries that have the most important organ schools, as well as the most consistent performances by today's most outstanding and prestigious organists”, explains José Enrique Ayarra, resident organist of the Chapel of the Hospital de los Venerables and Seville Cathedral.



José Enrique Ayarra, who is also responsible for the musical activities of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, also says, “Organists find several incomparable characteristics in this organ. It is a unique instrument that has been cared for and is always in perfect condition. The acoustics are unbeatable in this unparalleled setting, with a knowledgeable audience and an exceptional reputation. We are aware that what we offer is unique and we expect the best”.

The concerts will begin at 8:30 pm and will be broadcast on Radio Clásica by Radio Nacional de España as usual.

### **Focus-Abengoa Foundation**

The Focus-Abengoa Foundation was created in 1982 as a result of the cultural work begun in 1972 by Abengoa with the publication of the works *Temas Sevillanos* (Themes of Seville) and *Iconografía de Sevilla* (Iconography of Seville). A collection of documents, books and engravings on the Kingdom of Seville and by Sevillian authors was created during the same period. This initial cultural work showed Abengoa's directors the importance of the company's involvement in activities that directly benefit society, beyond the firm's core technology work, which led to the creation of the Seville Cultural Fund Foundation. The Hospital de los Venerables, a 17th century monument and the headquarters of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in Seville, has housed the Diego Velázquez Research Centre, a leading institution for studying and disseminating the Baroque era and the Sevillian period of this universally renowned artist, since the acquisition of Velázquez's Santa Rufina by the Foundation in 2007.

### Additional Details

Series of master concerts: *The organ: a source of culture among the peoples of Europe*.  
**7, 14 and 21 February 2012.**

**Venue:** Church of the Hospital de los Venerables. C/ Jamerdana s/n. Seville.

**Time:** 8.30 pm.

**Price:** General: 12 Euros.

Concessions: 2.40 Euros (over 65s, pensioners and students with accreditation).  
2.40 Euros (cultural and educational groups, with reservations).



### Organists invited to the 21st master concerts series

**Stefano Inocenti** was born in Florence. He graduated in piano under the direction of Pietro Scarpini, as well as the organ and harpsichord, and attended courses by Heiller, Tagliavini, Gilbert and Marie-Claire Alain in Haarlem (Holland).

He has been the resident organist of the Serassi organ (18th c.) of the Ducal Palace of Colorno since 1985 and has given concerts across Europe, the USA, Canada, Brazil and Japan. He has performed to celebrate the inauguration of numerous historical organs that have been restored, such as both organs of the Basilica of San Petronio in Bologna and the Gabler in Weingarten.

Stefano Inocenti has recorded various CDs, including music by Andrea Gabrieli, the solo concertos by Haydn (for organ and harpsichord), Italian music from the 19th century, music by Haendel and Bach, concertos for organ and orchestra by Paër and Salieri, and recent works by Riccardo Castagnetti, as well as all the sonatas by Giovanni Benedetto Platti on the harpsichord.

He has taught the organ and organ composition at the conservatories of Bologna and Parma, giving organ lessons at the academies in Pistoia, Romainmôtier (Switzerland) and Toulouse, and he has been a member of the jury at various international competitions for playing, composition and improvisation.

He currently lives between Parma and Arcola (La Spezia).

**Yuka Ishimaru** won the Grand Prix and the Dane and Polly Bales Prize at the 22nd Grand Prix de Chartres International Organ Competition 2010. She later embarked on a concert tour in 2011 of Europe and the USA and played at various important festivals and events.

She was born in Niigata, Japan. In 2003 she completed her first organ course in Ryutopia, the Interpretative Arts Centre in Niigata. She graduated from Tokyo's University of Fine Arts and Music in 2007, where she received the Ataka Prize, going on to win the Acanthus and Doseikai music prizes. She studied the organ with Tsuguo Hirono and Rie Hiroe, and the harpsichord with Naoya Otsuka and Masaaki Suzuki.

In 2007 she studied under Hatsumi Miura and completed the Organist Internship Program at the Minato Mirai Hall in Yokohama.

In 2008 Yuka Ishimaru continued her studies at the Royal Danish Academy of Music and studied the harpsichord with Joel Speerstra at Gothenburg University. During this period she was awarded scholarships from the Sasakawa Foundation for Scandinavia and Japan and from the Carl Nielsen Foundation.



She continues to study the organ with Ludger Lohmann at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Stuttgart (State University of Music and the Performing Arts of Stuttgart) as a member of the Foreign Studies Program for Artists from the government of Japan (Cultural Affairs Agency).

She is currently a member of the Japan Association of Organists and the Japan Organ Society.

**Wolfgang Zerer** was born in Passau (Germany) in 1961. He received his first organ lessons from the organist of Passau Cathedral, Walther Schuster. In 1980 he began his studies at the College of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna; organ with Michael Radulescu, conducting with Karl Österreicher, and later harpsichord with Gordon Murray, as well as religious music.

He studied the harpsichord for two years with Ton Koopman in Amsterdam and religious music in Stuttgart (organ with Ludger Lohmann). Wolfgang Zerer has won awards at various competitions, including Bruges in 1982 and Innsbruck in 1983.

After teaching at the music conservatories in Stuttgart and Vienna, in 1989 he was appointed as Professor of Organ at Hamburg's College of Music and Theatre. He also gives classes at the Music Conservatory in Groningen (Holland) and at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. He has given concerts and master classes throughout Europe, Israel, north and South America, Japan and South Korea. His growing list of recordings includes organ music by Matthias Weckmann, J. S. Bach and Max Reger, among others.

#### **For more information and for interviews:**

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