name and surname: Karmina Šilec

date and place of birth: 30.8.1967, Maribor

residence: Bezenškova 41, 2000, Maribor Slovenia

contact: [karmina.silec@gmail.com](mailto:karmina.silec@gmail.com) M: +386.41.695112

B.A. conducting at Music academy in Zagreb (CRO)

Recognition of important artistic works (correspondent to Ph.D.), University of Ljubljana (SLO)

associate professor (conducting)

current:

artistic director of New music theatre Choregie and Carmina Slovenica

[www.karminasilec.com](http://www.karminasilec.com)

Karmina Šilec has brought freshness and originality to the world of music and theatre. As a theatre director, conductor and composer she has projects with various companies, drama and opera houses, festivals and ensembles worldwide. Her projects were granted with major international awards in the fields, such as Music Theatre Now awards for Threnos (2021) and From Time Immemorial... (2008) and International Robert Edler Prize (2004).

Her ensembles and projects have been performed on stages and festivals of the highest esteem, such as the Festival d'Automne á Paris (FR), Ruhrtriennale (DE), Prototype Festival NYC (USA), Holland Festival (NL), Moscow Easter Festival (RU), Dresdner Musikfestspiele (DE), Golden Mask (RU), Melbourne Festival (AU), Operadagen (NL), Auditorium, Rome (IT), Steierischer Herbst (AT), Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space (JP), St. Petersburg Philharmonic Hall (RU), Polyfollia (FR), Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Teresa Carreño Theater (VE), Teatro Colon (AR), Esplanade (SG), etc.

As author - director she has developed unique artistic concept - Choregie. Choregie focuses on the creation process that brings the musical notion of composing to the theatrical aspects of performing and staging. In Choregie a ‘meta composition’ is created by positioning different materials (movement, music, words, visual) into a bigger composition. Choregie is a performance in the 'no-man's-world' – a world that is not a world of music, nor drama or dance; it is a scenic adventure.

Each new project signed by Karmina Šilec is an expedition into the field of the unknown and the unexplored. She created a whole range of conceptual, stylistically and thematically perfected projects, among them Threnos (for the Throat), Toxic Psalms, Evergreen, Fauvel, Placebo, Vampirabile, Scivias, Spixody, Who would think that the snow falls, Vertical thoughts, Stripsody, CS Light, From Time Immemorial..., Rusalki, Pleading for words, etc. The dimensions of these projects surface in multi-disciplinary stage performances which logically complement the musical tissue and permeate with the basic elements of musical theatre – the concept of Choregie. Her main aim is a continual search for new music and new fields of theatre expression: from early music with a special focus on medieval music to the avant-garde music - which is her major interest. She has collaborated on various international projects and has collaborated with many excellent artists from different eras: Heiner Goebbels, Krisztof Penderecki, Paola Prestini, Huang Rao, Young Yoo Lee, Sidra Bell, Jacob Cooper, Royce Vavrek, Hermut Haenchen, Bernhard Landauer, Karl Heinz Brandt, Japp Blonk, Istvan Horkay, Miguel Vallinas, Jernej Lorenci, Sebastjan Horvat, Marko Letonja and others.

As a conductor she has projects with various companies, opera houses and ensembles worldwide, among them Basel Opera, Slovenian National Opera and Ballet Maribor, Radio Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, Carmina Slovenica, Slovenian National Project Choir, ¡Kebataola! ensemble, Orchestra Chorus Instrumentalis, National chamber orchestra of Chile, Lithuanian chamber choir, Big Band and Wind Orchestra of the Slovenian Army, ansambel STOP, Musica Cubicularis, Mexican national choir and many others.

**DISTINCTIONS, RESIDENCIES, LECTURES, AWARDS, GRANTS (selected)**

* Music Theatre Now international award 2021
* STIAS Institute for advanced study artist in residence, Stellenbosch University, ZA, 2022
* Harvard University / Radcliffe Institute for advanced study Fellow, USA, 2018-2019
* Hewlett Foundation 50 Arts Commission, 2018 recipient for theatre, music theatre and spoken word, 2018 -2022
* National Endowment for the Arts, USA, 2019
* The Sterija Award for original theatre music, SRB 2018
* New music USA, 2019, 2020
* Nomination for the Europe Theatre Prize - Theatrical Realities (EPTR), 2017
* Golden Mask Theatre Award (together with Heiner Goebbels and Carmina Slovenica), RU 2016
* Con tempus - Platform for contemporary art award, AT 2012
* Music Theatre Now award in the category Music Beyond Opera (by the International Theatre Institute), 2008
* International Robert Edler Prize, for exceptional contribution to the world choir movement, DE 2004
* Teatarfest award for the most experimental theatre work, BA 2009
* Carpe Vitam − Open Mind Stockholm award, SE 2005
* The Prešeren Award; highest Slovenian award for achievements in art (for Vampirabile), SI 2000
* The main Ford Award for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage (for the project Slovenian Sounds), 2002
* Recognition of important artistic works (correspondent to D.M.A), University of Ljubljana (SL), SI 1998
* more than 20 highest international awards at international choir competitions:

Kathaumixw (CA) - two first and two second prizes; the choir is proclaimed "The most outstanding choir of Kathaumixw 94"; Golden Gate festival(USA) - three first prizes and the audience award; Tampere vocal music festival (FI) best conductor of the competition, two golden stamps; International competition Gallus Maribor (SL) - golden plaquette, first prize, five special awards; Des Moines (USA) - two first prizes and a gold medal, Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod (GB) - first prize; Montreux (CH) - Prix OTM, Prix de Jury ; Neerpelt (BE) - Summa cum laude;

Kalundborg (DN) - first prize with the maximum possible number of points awarded; etc.

**PUBLICATIONS** (selected)

**BOOK:**

Nolite tacere - Translated in Music (2013)

# Colossal Balkan Fiction (2021)

# Endemic songs (2021)

# Catalog (2021)

# Soundbook:

# Colossal Balkan Fiction (2021)

# Endemic songs (2021)

# CD:

# DERT (2021), Landscapes – Winter (2020), VOGP – Songs for survival (2019), Gavin Bryars: Laude Cortonese (2017), Toxic Psalms (2015), When the Mountain Changed its clothing (2013), Pleading for Words (2011), Americas (2011), Balkanika (2010), Musica Inaudita ll. (2010), Na juris in the mood! (2009), Drum café (2009), Musica Inaudita l. (2008), Vampirabile (2007), CM1 (2006), Citira (2002), Times and Places (2001), Following the sun (1998), Drumlca (1997), Dream a dream (1996), Strunam (1995), More a tale than reality (1995)

**VINYL**: Na juris in the mood! (2009)

**DVD:**

Threnos (for Throat) (2020), Documentary film Placebo (2016), What do you have against Peasants, Lady? (2014), Placebo or Who would note Weep (2013)

**TAPE**: P. Cornelius: Masse in D Minor (1991)

**REVIEWS** (selected)

**Theater Mania**: … the grandiosity of the staging rivals what one might see at the Met … an overwhelming aural and visual experience … Šilec presents her arcana with a heavy dose of beauty and wonder …

**The New York Times**: … vibrantly theatrical, genre-blurring, unusual in its techniques, eclectic in its musical style and politically charged … Ms Šilec is savvy about maintaining dramatic momentum, and the performers execute every shift in tone with subtlety and agility ... striking new work by the rabidly talented [Carmina Slovenica](http://www.carmina-slovenica.si/en/) … the ensemble and its director, Karmina Šilec, have created haunting images … Toxic Psalms adds a savage yet polished theatricality to the mix as well as an ambiguity all too rare in American performance … all add up to an evening that’s bracing yet, perversely enough, enchanting …  
**Opera New Magazine**: … a constant stream of ideas, voice, movement, impressions and dosed emotion. In audience, you cannot do much more than almost breathless look and marvel at so much quality … Theater spectacle … a theater which aims for perfection in any discipline …  
**Opera World**: … Carmina Slovenica is the musical answer to Bausch's groundbreaking concept of Tantztheater …

**New York Music Daily**: … breath-taking and equally relevant multimedia suite ... Šilec’s direction toyed with crowd dynamics on both the conformist and nonconformist sides with a coldly sardonic humor that offered momentary respite from the lingering bleakness of the music … a sonically thrilling, disquieting premiere for Karmina Šilec’s Toxic Psalms …  
**The Wall Street Journal**: … power of the performers … haunting theatrical moments …

**Le Monde**: ... they radiate fantastic energy, composure and professionalism on stage ... they can do anything... with that marvellous energy, composure and professionalism...

**New York Observer**: … strikingly staged by Karmina Šilec… visually the show was elegantly spare … Carmina Slovenica are collectively and individually heroic, they sent their voices pealing out like a band of angels …

**Agence France Press**: … innovative theatre company Carmina Slovenica … intellectually challenging …

**The Telegraph**: … Carmina Slovenica gained a world-wide reputation for their powers of story-telling through choral songs … joyous moments of collective energy or anarchy that these astonishing performers shone, and the piece itself really came alive …

**Basellandshaftlische Zeitung**: … Karmina Šilec’s choral opera Fauvel is a really interesting, multi-layered and a very aesthetic work ... captivating beauty ... veritable Theaterspektakel with immense beautiful images ... like a bulky work of art in a museum that refreshes, encourages us to think, distresses and embraces at the same time. And that is the reason why it continuously invites the viewer to new observations – if one only allows it ...

**San Francisco Classical Voice**: …Carmina Slovenica are in your face, created by women, driven by women, not afraid to show their teeth or shout down injustice … pure talent and virtuosity is astounding … the languages, time periods, and cultures blurred into visceral emotion and

reaction ...

**Theatre review Melbourne** ... the world renowned ‘Vocal Theatre Carmina Slovenica’…  the theatrics and the beauty of music and glamour of vocals …

**Neue Musikzeitung**: ... professional precision that leaves one speechless. From choral singing, through crystal clear choral speaking, to simple stage movement – individual, in groups, as a whole, with or without props … and that is of course where the similarity to Heiner Goebbels’s understanding of theatre can be found …

**Paarol**: ... Vocal Theatre Carmina Slovenica like laser beams through the soul … You have to hear and see it to be able to believe it ...

**Opera News/Opera Guild**: … terpsichorean radicalism that were still often as physical as they were musical…wonderful cohesion… aural equivalent of Bausch’s Tanztheater...

# TEACHING / SPEAKING (selected)

Harvard University (USA), University for Music and Performing Arts Graz (AU), Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (SI), University of California (USA), Stockholm University (SE), University of Siauliai (LT), Music Academy in Zagreb (CR), Theatre Academy Saint Petersburg (RU), Music Academy Ljubljana (SI), University of Viña del Mar (CL), University of Maribor (SI), IFCM World Symposium for Choral Music (KR), International Symposium on Singing and Song (CA), Europa Cantat (ES, BE, HU), Sharing the Voices 500 (CA), Clasicall:Next Rotterdam (NL), International Symposium Donne in Musica (IT), Tenso (European professional chamber choirs association) (NL), Symposium Voice (CA), etc.

# JURY

As a jury member at conducting competitions and choir competitions she has judged more than 50 competitions worldwide, among them also the prestigious Eric Ericson competition for choral conductors, Grand Prix Europe, International competition Gallus, Tampere festival, Grand prix of nation, World choir games, etc.