

Media Release

With about 1,200 more visitors than last year, the final edition of the Piano Festival attracts an outstanding total figure of 18,000 concertgoers

Final weekend to feature Víkingur Ólafsson and Igor Levit in recital, as well as Children's Workshops and Piano Lectures

Lucerne, 23 November 2019. Lucerne Festival reports the following results of the final edition of the Piano Festival. The 11 concerts that took place in the KKL Luzern and in the Lukaskirche attracted 12,500 concertgoers, who filled these venues at an overall capacity of 89% – compared to 11,300 concertgoers attending 14 concerts last year. This fall's Piano Festival, which began last Saturday, 16 November, and lasts until tomorrow, Sunday, 24 November, has focused on the upcoming Beethoven anniversary of 2020. Throughout this nine-day span of the Festival, six piano recitals and two orchestral concerts featuring the piano took place in the KKL Luzern's Salle Blanche. There were additionally three Debut recitals in the Lukaskirche and a master class in piano given in cooperation with the Hochschule Luzern – Musik. Piano Off-Stage drew some 5,500 jazz lovers to the KKL Luzern as well as to various bars in Lucerne.

The schedule for today, Saturday, 23 November, includes two afternoon Piano Lectures with Martin Meyer as well as an evening solo recital by the Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson. Igor Levit will conclude the Festival tomorrow evening. During the daytime today and tomorrow, in cooperation with Pro Juventute's "Kultissimo" initiative, three workshops for children ages 7 and up will also take place. These will be led by the jazz pianists Chris Conz and Bernd Lhotzky as well as Igor Levit.

Rudolf Buchbinder and the Festival Strings Lucerne opened the Festival last weekend with performances of all five piano concertos by Ludwig van Beethoven. Solo recitals given by Mitsuko Uchida, Evgeny Kissin, and Arcadi Volodos followed. The highly touted Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson will make his Lucerne debut this evening, and Igor Levit will continue performing his complete sonata cycle at Lucerne Festival following last night's Beethoven recital. In the Debut series, three gifted young artists – Claire Huangci, Danae Dörken, and Alexander Ullman – were introduced in recitals at the Lukaskirche. Peter Hill led talented young musicians in a four-day master class at St. Charles Hall in Meggen.

This fall's Piano Festival marks the final edition. Founded in 1998, the Piano Festival has presented recitals featuring the most acclaimed pianists of our time. In 2004, it was expanded to include Piano Off-Stage, the jazz festival within the festival, and since 2007 it has been supplemented by three Debut concerts each year, which have introduced young international stars. Starting in 2020, Lucerne Festival will present two extended musical weekends, one each in spring and autumn, devoted to a new event concept that breaks away from traditional concert formats and focuses on unusual juxtapositions of repertoire. Piano music will continue to be an important component in the future.

Tickets are already on sale for the inaugural spring weekend, which takes place from 1 to 4 April and is focused on the conductor Teodor Currentzis. The program for the second special weekend, slated for November 2020, will be announced in mid-February. The 2020 Summer Festival, whose theme is "Joy," starts on 14 August 2020.

Concert Sponsor – Julius Bär

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