

Media Release

Alice Belugou, Hana Hobiger, and Rahel Kohler are the winners of the 2017 Fritz Gerber Award

Lucerne, 19 April 2017. The harpist Alice Belugou, the violist Hana Hobiger, and the saxophonist Rahel Kohler are the winners of this year's Fritz Gerber Foundation Award. The award supports young, highly talented musicians in the field of contemporary classical music. Each of these three young musicians will receive a cash prize of CHF 10,000, as well as a scholarship that covers the cost of their participation in the Lucerne Festival Academy, which is worth an additional CHF 10,000.

Alice Belugou was born in 1991 in Rouen. She completed her studies in musicology and music education at the Sorbonne in Paris, the Basel Music Academy, and the Haute École de Musique Lausanne, where in 2015 she received the special price for outstanding master concerts. Hana Hobiger, who was born in 1989 and holds dual Swiss-Australian citizenship, is currently completing a Master's Degree at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. She has already performed with the Queensland Chamber Orchestra, the Salzburg Chamber Soloists, and the Hofkapelle München. Rahel Kohler was born in 1988 in Bern. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Music Education, studying with Christian Roellinger at the University of the Arts in Bern, and went on to obtain a Master of Arts in Music Performance in the class taught by Marcus Weiss at the Basel Music Academy.

The invitation to be considered a candidate for the Fritz Gerber Award was sent out for the third time by the Lucerne Festival Academy. Along with the applications by musicians who responded to the invitation to be considered, recommendations from music academies and universities and from well-known artists were also received. This year's jury once again consisted of Michael Haefliger, Executive and Artistic Director of Lucerne Festival; composer and conductor Heinz Holliger; and members of the Academy's teaching faculty. Those eligible to participate in the Award are young artists up to 28 years of age who have Swiss citizenship or who have lived for at least five years in Switzerland.

The **Fritz Gerber Foundation** has been active since 1999. It promotes talented young people in the fields of education (including technical colleges), skilled crafts and trades, culture, and athletics. This support is facilitated through awarding financial contributions to education, including continuing and advanced training, and is intended to make a difference where no public funding is available for the achievement of the Foundation's goals. Since 1999 the Foundation has supported some 2,000 talented young persons with a total of CHF 22 million.

The **Lucerne Festival Academy** was founded in 2003 by Pierre Boulez, together with Executive and Artistic Director Michael Haefliger. Since the summer of 2016, Wolfgang Rihm had been leading the Academy as Artistic Director, with support from Principal Conductor Matthias Pintscher. Highly talented young musicians from all around the world gather each summer to study contemporary scores and Modernist classics. Serving as their teachers are a selective group of international specialists, among them members of the Paris-based Ensemble intercontemporain, as well as members of other renowned new music ensembles. This year the composer and conductor Heinz Holliger will additionally play a central role in preparing concert programs with the Academy Orchestra. The two "artistes étoiles" of this year's Summer Festival, the violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja and the cellist Jay Campbell, will also be closely involved in the Academy's projects and will participate in their concerts.

[www.lucernefestival.ch/de/lucerne-festival-academy/Fritz Gerber Award](http://www.lucernefestival.ch/de/lucerne-festival-academy/Fritz%20Gerber%20Award)

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