

## Media Release

### **96% capacity and 47 sold-out concerts: Lucerne Festival's summer of music achieves highly favorable overall results**

Lucerne, 10 September 2021. The 2021 Summer Festival comes to an end this weekend with very favorable final results of 96% occupancy and 41,000 concertgoers; the KKL Luzern Concert Hall was limited to a maximum capacity of 1,000 people. With this year's "crazy" theme as the common denominator, Lucerne Festival offered 89 events between 10 August and 12 September for a wide variety of target audiences; 20 of these events were free. 47 concerts were sold out; the 29 symphony concerts attained an average capacity of 99%.

Tonight's concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert Blomstedt is sold out. Tickets are still available for the two performances of the "Hans and Greta" family concert tomorrow, Saturday. The Festival will conclude with concerts tomorrow and Sunday evening by the Budapest Festival Orchestra and Iván Fischer; the soloist on Saturday evening will once again be "artiste étoile" Yuja Wang.

The Festival programming offered music by such allegedly "crazy" composers as Robert Schumann, along with works touching thematically on madness, such as the opera *Partenope* by George Frideric Handel, and such unusual concert formats with Patricia Kopatchinskaja as "Bye Bye Beethoven" or "Out of the Box" by and with Reto Bieri, which was part of the "crazy" concert series. The audience was able to experience the Lucerne Festival Orchestra three times under chief conductor Riccardo Chailly and, following Yannick Nézet-Séguin's cancellation, with Jakub Hrůša, as well as in an unusual new constellation that delighted those who attended, when Yuja Wang and concertmaster Gregory Ahss took over the musical direction of the orchestra. As part of the Academy, the newly founded Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO) performed in a wide variety of instrumental formations. For the first time ever, the Festival launched by presenting concerts featuring youth orchestras before the official opening. Internationally renowned soloists, conductors, and symphony orchestras were guests this summer at Lake Lucerne, as well as such Swiss orchestras as the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, and the Festival Strings Lucerne. "Artiste étoile" Yuja Wang performed in four concerts and a 40min event. The Festival hosted 16 world premieres and 12 Swiss premieres, including one by composer-in-residence Rebecca Saunders. The groups of the world music festival "In the Streets" delighted passers-by and fans all over the city of Lucerne. And the "Musicians for Future" campaign created awareness around the topic of sustainability through two panel discussions, digital content, and its own website.

During the spring, Lucerne Festival had adapted the artistic program along with the overall performance conditions in order to protect the health of the audience and the artists in this time of coronavirus pandemic and to meet the requirements of the Swiss federal government and the canton. All of the concerts took place without an intermission and, in some cases, with smaller ensembles than those originally planned. Masks were mandatory throughout the concerts, and the capacity of the KKL Luzern Concert Hall was limited to a maximum of 1,000 people. A professional aerosol study had been carried out for the KKL Luzern Concert Hall in June, which further emphasized the high safety standard of this hygiene concept. During the Festival, the health protection plan and hygiene concept were very well received by the artists and the audience. Thanks to a precisely defined system for regular testing of all artists and staff, Lucerne Festival was able to react immediately to individual positive cases. Medical specialists were on hand to assist the Festival management before and during the Festival. In this way, the safety and health of artists, audience, and staff were guaranteed at all times.

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This summer, the Festival was once again the venue for numerous guest performances by international symphony orchestras and stars. Guests included the Berlin Philharmonic with Kirill Petrenko, the Royal Concertgebouworkest with Daniel Harding, the Vienna Philharmonic with Herbert Blomstedt, the Bamberg Symphony with Jakub Hrůša, the London Symphony Orchestra with Sir Simon Rattle, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra with Lahav Shani, the Staatskapelle Berlin with Daniel Barenboim, the Berlin Baroque Soloists with Reinhold Goebel, Les Arts Florissants with William Christie, the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg with Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra with Roberto González-Monjas, and the Mariinsky Orchestra with Valery Gergiev. The Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich performed at the Festival for the first time with Paavo Järvi, and Michael Sanderling gave his inaugural concert as the new Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra. The soloists included soprano Cecilia Bartoli, who performed with Les Musiciens du Prince-Monaco and Gianluca Capuano; Juliane Banse; Juan Diego Flórez; the violinists Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Ilya Gringolts, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Michael Barenboim, and Christian Tetzlaff; the cellists Steven Isserlis, and Kian Soltani; and Kit Armstrong, Daniel Barenboim, Yefim Bronfman, Nicolas Hodges, and Anna Vinnitskaya on piano, as well as Igor Levit, who completed his Beethoven sonata cycle over two evenings and performed as a soloist with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra.

Around 80 young musicians from the USA, Spain, South Korea, China, Italy, and France, among other nations, took part in the two-week Lucerne Festival Academy. They joined forces with former participants of the Academy to form the Festival's newly founded orchestra, the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO). Heinz Holliger, Lin Liao, Johanna Malangré, and Enno Poppe rehearsed and presented works by composer-in-residence Rebecca Saunders, among others. One of the highlights was the world premiere of Saunders's new piano concerto *to an utterance*, which was written for Nicolas Hodges as part of the Roche Commissions series. The new works in the Roche Young Commissions series by Kirsten Milenko and Alex Vaughan were also premiered by the LFCO. The *räsonanz* - Donor Concert, the Festival's collaboration with the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation, featured Beat Furrer's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra with Ilya Gringolts and Miroslav Srnka's *move 01-04* for orchestra. Wolfgang Rihm, the Artistic Director of the Lucerne Festival Academy, also conducted a Composer Seminar this summer, where he was joined by Dieter Ammann. The LFCO gave a guest performance at the Musikfest Berlin on 9 September and will perform at the Donaueschinger Musiktage on 16 October.

Young artists kicked off the Summer Festival for the first time as part of the new "Music for Future" category. The Russian National Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Swiss Youth Symphony Orchestra, as well as prize-winners from the Swiss Youth Music Competition, primed the audience to get into the Festival mood before the official opening. The Debut series presented performances by eight young artists and ensembles throughout the Festival: the recorder player and winner of the "Prix Credit Suisse Jeunes Solistes" Lea Sobbe; the violinist Dmitry Smirnov; the pianists Daniel Ciobanu, Frank Dupree, and Zee Zee; the oboist Salomo Schweizer; the Connaught Brass ensemble; and the Marmen Quartet. Another offering for families and young audiences was presented by Die Schurken and Taschenoper Lübeck, while the violinist Eleonora Savini joined with the violist Federico Carraro to present the staged children's concert "Mona Violina." This summer, Lucerne Festival reached more than 1,800 children and young people with exclusive and free school performances; 700 pupils alone got to hear a school concert by the 12 Cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic in the KKL Luzern Concert Hall, which was hosted by Sarah Willis.

The co-production between Lucerne Festival and the Luzerner Theater, which marks the inauguration of Ina Karr as director at the latter, is presenting Maurizio Kagel's *Staatstheater*, an ensemble from the

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Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO) is taking part in the co-production. Performances run until 19 September.

The Festival's free offers, whose space had to be limited due to security measures, were also extremely popular this year: 500 classical music fans enjoyed the opening Lakeside Symphony concert in the finest weather at Lucerne's Inseli Park, and 2,700 visitors attended the nine events of the free 40min series. Six world music groups played on the Europaplatz and in Lucerne's Old City as part of "In the Streets." A total of 16 concerts were preceded by introductory talks.

SRF 1 and arte.tv broadcast a time-delay stream of the opening concert, which can also be seen on 12 September on arte TV. The time-delayed live broadcast of the opening concert by Radio SRF 2 Kultur was taken up by 20 other radio stations, and that of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and its new Chief Conductor Michael Sanderling by 12 other stations. SRF 2 Kultur also recorded nine other concerts. The *räsonanz* - Donor Concert with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and Jakub Hrůša was streamed live on the Lucerne Festival YouTube and Facebook channels. Naxos recorded the Mahler Chamber Orchestra concert with Yuja Wang; it will be streamed on the Deutsche Grammophon platform at a later date. During the Summer Festival, online, print, and radio journalists reported from Germany, France, Italy, Spain, England, Japan, and China, among other nations.

Relevant and recent video clips and photos of the concerts and artists can be found on the Festival's social media channels. Artist talks and background information are available all year round at Lucerne Festival Connected: [lucernefestival.ch/en/connected](http://lucernefestival.ch/en/connected)

Photos may be downloaded from: [lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos](http://lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos)

## Summer Festival

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