



Fact Sheet on Lucerne Festival's History

- 1938 25 August: Establishment of the Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern (IMF, which will later be renamed Lucerne Festival) with the "Concert de Gala" in Tribtschen. Arturo Toscanini conducts an "elite orchestra" comprising the finest musicians of the era and thus lays the cornerstone for an in-house Festival orchestra.
- 1943 Establishment of the Swiss Festival Orchestra
- 1966 Establishment of the Foundation "Freunde der Internationalen Musikfestwochen Luzern" ("Friends of the Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern")
- 1970 Establishment der "Stiftung Internationale Musikfestwochen" ("Internationale Musikfestwochen Foundation")
Rudolf Baumgartner becomes Artistic Director
- 1980 Ulrich Meyer-Schoellkopf is named new Artistic Director (until 1991)
- 1988 50th anniversary of the IMF (Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern)
Establishment of the Easter Festival
- 1992 Matthias Bamert takes over leadership of the Internationale Musikfestwochen (until 1998). He establishes the Easter Festival as a second annual festival in addition to the Summer Festival.
- 1993 Breakup of the Swiss Festival Orchestra
The composer-in-residence position is introduced, which includes the commission of a new composition. The program begins with Alfred Schnittke, who is succeeded over the years by such figures as György Kurtág, Pierre Boulez, Heiner Goebbels, Harrison Birtwistle, Chaya Czernowin, Peter Eötvös, and Helmut Lachenmann
- 1998 The new KKL Concert Hall opens with a program featuring Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic and celebrating the 60th anniversary of the IMF (19 August)
Establishment of the Piano Festival
- 1999 Michael Haefliger takes on the position of Executive and Artistic Director of the Festival
An annual summer "artiste étoile" position is introduced, in which a particular performer is given an opportunity to showcase his or her art in a variety of contexts. Evelyn Glennie is the inaugural artist-in-residence and is later succeeded by such figures as Sabine Meyer, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Alfred Brendel, Maurizio Pollini, Mitsuko Uchida, and Patricia Kopatchinskaja
- 2001 The Internationale Musikfestwochen is renamed Lucerne Festival.
- 2002 Establishment of the American Friends of Lucerne Festival
- 2003 Claudio Abbado and Michael Haefliger found the Lucerne Festival Orchestra as an ensemble comprising internationally acclaimed principals, chamber musicians, music teachers, and members of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, thus establishing a link with Arturo Toscanini's storied "elite orchestra."



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- 2004 Pierre Boulez and Michael Haefliger found the Lucerne Festival Academy as an internationally unique educational institution devoted to music of the 20th and 21st centuries.
- 2005 The Lucerne Festival Orchestra goes on its first foreign tour under Claudio Abbado, traveling to Rome. Later destinations are Tokyo (2006), New York (2007 with Boulez and David Robertson in lieu of Abbado), Vienna (2008), the London Proms, Paris, Madrid, Hamburg, Baden-Baden, Ferrara, Moscow, and Beijing.
- 2007 The Lucerne Festival Academy tours abroad (also in 2008, 2011, 2012, and, as of 2014, every year)
- 2009 Dr. Hubert Achermann becomes Chairman of the Lucerne Festival Foundation.
- 2011 Michael Haefliger, together with Anish Kapoor and Arata Isozaki, launches the project Lucerne Festival Ark Nova in response to the catastrophic earthquake in Japan. This is a mobile concert hall intended to contribute to cultural rebuilding in the affected regions. The Lucerne Festival Ark Nova is constructed for the first time in 2013 in Matsushima, Japan (in Sendai in 2014, in Fukushima in 2016, and in Tokyo in 2017).
The program offerings for children and young audiences are given the name “Young.”
- 2013 75th anniversary of Lucerne Festival - special jubilee day
Establishment of the new concert series “40min”
- 2014 The Lucerne Festival Alumni, an international network of former Academy students, is introduced to the public through concerts in New York, Beijing, Zurich, and Lucerne.
- 2016 Riccardo Chailly begins his tenure as Music Director of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra (succeeding the late Claudio Abbado, who died in January 2014).
Wolfgang Rihm becomes Artistic Director of the Lucerne Festival Academy (succeeding Pierre Boulez, who died in January 2016).
The Lucerne Festival Alumni guest perform with their own concert series, “Ligeti Forward,” at the “NY Phil Biennial” in New York (additional concerts in New York follow in 2018).
- 2017 Riccardo Chailly undertakes his first tour with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, with stops in Japan, Korea, and China.
- 2018 Inaugural residency of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra under Riccardo Chailly in Shanghai, China

Additional details about the Festival's history can be found at lucernefestival.ch/en/about-us/history

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