

LUCERNE FESTIVAL ACADEMY

2021 Summer Festival

With Heinz Holliger, Lin Liao, Johanna Malangré, and Ilan Volkov

Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO): Academy participants and former students join to form a new Festival ensemble devoted to contemporary music

This year's Lucerne Festival Academy, which will be held from 20 August to 5 September, is the fifth edition under the artistic direction of Wolfgang Rihm, who has extended his contract until 2025. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the number of students has been limited to around 80 this summer and the program has been adapted for smaller ensembles; 70 young musicians as well as four conductors and eight composers will take part. The newly founded Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO) is an ensemble devoted to contemporary music that brings together current and former Academy students. As part of the Summer Festival, the ensemble will present the results of a two-week working period under the direction of Heinz Holliger, Lin Liao, Johanna Malangré, and Ilan Volkov.

Focus of the Lucerne Festival Academy for the Summer of 2021

Taiwanese conductor Lin Liao will prepare and rehearse the orchestra to perform Pierre Boulez's *Polyphony X*, which the composer withdrew during his lifetime. Two former Composer Seminar participants, Victor Colțea and Samir Amarouch, have been commissioned by Lucerne Festival to write new works for the same instrumentation. The Composer Seminar led by Academy director Wolfgang Rihm offers eight composers each year the opportunity to discuss and refine their works. The Lucerne Festival Contemporary Ensemble will participate in the seminar and then present the completed scores in a showcase at the end of August as well as in an edition of the 40min series.

A highlight of the 2021 Academy will be the world premiere of Rebecca Saunders's *to an utterance*, a concerto written for the pianist Nicolas Hodges as part of the 2020 Roche Commissions. The world premiere will be conducted by Ilan Volkov, who will pair *to an utterance* with Saunders's *void* for two percussionists and orchestra as well as works by Webern and Stravinsky. The program will also be presented in a guest appearance at Musikfest Berlin following the Festival performances. During the rehearsal phase, Ilan Volkov will additionally give a master class for the four conductors of the Conducting Fellowship and present *to an utterance* as one of the 40min programs.

The Roche Commissions and Roche Young Commissions projects are normally presented each year in alternation, but this year they coincide as a result of the postponements caused by the pandemic. Roche Young Commissions is a program that commissions two young composers to create an orchestral work within a two-year period. Kirsten Milenko and Alex Vaughan were selected to receive this award for the 2021 edition. They have been assisted by two conductors with whom they were able to consult during the creation process. Normally, parts of the two new works would have been rehearsed during the Academy last year. Since this was not possible in 2020, Wolfgang Rihm provided feedback on the scores via individual video conferences. Together with the Academy members, Lin Liao will prepare *Traho* by Kirsten Milenko while Johanna Malangré will focus on Alex Vaughan's *Logos*. The two world premieres will be performed on a program that also includes Mozart's *Masonic Funeral Music* and two pieces from Heinz Holliger's *Scardanelli* cycle: *Ostinato funebre* and *Turm-Musik* featuring the flutist Felix Renggli, which the composer himself will conduct. Joined by Patricia Kopatchinskaja, the LFCO will also perform the staged concert "Bye-Bye Beethoven." All dates and programs with the Lucerne Festival Academy can be found on pages 16-17 of in the Festival program.

The Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra

The Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO) was founded in 2021 as a counterpart to the Lucerne Festival Orchestra: an orchestra of excellence for the interpretation of contemporary music. It brings together former and current students of the Lucerne Festival Academy. The Academy's network, which has grown over 16 years, now numbers over 1300 instrumentalists, conductors and composers. It represents Lucerne Festival's long-standing commitment to new and contemporary music. The repertoire of the new orchestra ranges from the threshold of classical modernism to works of the present day. In both large and small formations, the LFCO performs concerts at the Academy during the Summer Festival, followed by guest appearances abroad. In Lucerne, it will also take on the leading role in the new autumn weekend Lucerne Festival Forward! which will take place for the first time in November 2021.

About the Lucerne Festival Academy

The Lucerne Festival Academy was founded in 2004 by Pierre Boulez and Festival Executive and Artistic Director Michael Haefliger. Each summer, Academy members are joined by leading internationally renowned composers and conductors to work on contemporary scores and modern classics. The composer Wolfgang Rihm has been Artistic Director of the Academy since 2016. Through daily rehearsals, workshops, and lessons, participants are taught the tools that are necessary to perform new music. A major priority is the passing on of knowledge within the Academy network: about 10 to 15 former participants take on a new role within the Academy in succeeding years, acting as mentors, sharing their knowledge, and coordinating or leading rehearsals for their instrumental sections. After a rotation of two years, this task is then handed on to other musicians who succeed them. Together with these mentors and other Alumni, Academy members form the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra and perform the works that they have rehearsed. The Fritz Gerber Award annually supports three young musicians who have lived in Switzerland for a minimum of three years by offering a scholarship to the Lucerne Festival Academy and a cash prize of CHF 10,000. In recent years, following each summer program, the Academy has given concerts at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg; in 2018, the students performed Karlheinz Stockhausen's *INOR* in Berlin and Paris to great international acclaim.

Photos may be downloaded at lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos

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