

Media Release

Mendelssohn Festival: 31 March to 2 April 2023

Three friends and an anniversary milestone at the 2023 Spring Festival: Lucerne Festival spotlights the composers Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, and Frédéric Chopin and will throw a birthday party to mark the 150th anniversary of Sergei Rachmaninoff's birth.

Lucerne, 11 November 2022. In the second edition of the three-day Mendelssohn Festival from 31 March to 2 April 2023, the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and Riccardo Chailly will present two concerts featuring works by three composer friends: Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, and Frédéric Chopin. In the middle of the concert weekend, on Saturday, the duo Igudesman & Joo will throw a party combining comedy with virtuosity in honor of Sergei Rachmaninoff's 150th birthday.

The first concert, on Friday, 31 March, is titled "Mendelssohn & Chopin" and will bring two youthful works by these composer friends to the stage: the First Symphony in C minor by Felix Mendelssohn, which he wrote when he was only 15, and the Second Piano Concerto in F minor by Frédéric Chopin, composed when the Frenchman was 19. The evening's soloist will be the Polish pianist Rafał Blechacz, who won the 2005 Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Between the two works, Music Director Riccardo Chailly will conduct Franz Schubert's *Overture in the Italian Style* in C major, D 591.

Saturday, 1 April, marks the 150th anniversary of Sergei Rachmaninoff's birth, and Lucerne Festival welcomes the duo Igudesman & Joo for a humor-filled birthday tribute. The program includes both their famous pianist skit inspired by Rachmaninoff, as well as new numbers like the song *They Call Me Sergei* and a fictional encounter with the Bee Gees. Rachmaninoff, who from 1932 to 1939 lived with his family at Villa Senar on Lake Lucerne, performed in 1939 at what was then known as the "Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern," which had been founded the previous year. It was his last concert in Europe: a few days later, he emigrated to the USA. Villa Senar is scheduled to open to the public in the spring of 2023.

The final concert of the Mendelssohn Festival will combine works by Felix Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann. Joined by the MDR Radio Choir, the Lucerne Festival Orchestra will perform Mendelssohn's Second Symphony, *Lobgesang* ("Song of Praise"), which was inspired by J.S. Bach. The singers will be Lucerne soprano Regula Mühlemann, soprano Simona Šaturová, and tenor Allan Clayton. The young Spanish cellist Pablo Ferrández will perform Robert Schumann's Cello Concerto in A minor.

Online ticket sales for the Spring Festival begin at 12:00 pm (Swiss time) on 22 November 2022.

Friday, 31 March 2023 | 19.30 | **Mendelssohn & Chopin** | KKL Luzern, Concert Hall
Lucerne Festival Orchestra | **Riccardo Chailly** conductor | **Rafał Blechacz** piano
Chopin Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21 | **Schubert** *Overture in the Italian Style* in C major, D 591 | **Mendelssohn** Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 11 (with the Scherzo from 1829)
Introduction to the concert with Susanne Stähr | 18.30 | KKL Luzern, Auditorium

Saturday, 1 April 2023 | 18.30 | **Duo Igudesman & Joo** | KKL Luzern, Concert Hall
"Happy Birthday, Sergei Rachmaninoff!"

A birthday show designed, composed, and performed by Aleksey Igudesman and Hyung-ki Joo

Sunday, 2 April 2023 | 18.30 | **Mendelssohn & Schumann** | KKL Luzern, Concert Hall
Lucerne Festival Orchestra | **MDR Radio Choir** | **Riccardo Chailly** conductor | **Regula Mühlemann**
soprano 1 | **Simona Šaturová** soprano 2 | **Allan Clayton** tenor | **Pablo Ferrández** cello
Schumann Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129 | **Mendelssohn** Symphony No. 2 in B-flat major, Op. 52
Lobgesang (“Song of Praise”)
Introduction to the concert with Susanne Stähr | 17.30 | KKL Luzern, Auditorium

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

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