



Press Information

16th Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad 29 January to 6 February 2016

Featured instrument: the piano

Pianist Martha Argerich and the Kremerata Baltica to open the Festival

Three concert cycles in three exceptional venues

Gstaad: discovering young talent

Saanen: the stars of the Festival

Rougemont: the artistic director's personal favourites

GSTAAD, 10 NOVEMBER 2015 – The Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad present the musical programme of their sixteenth edition. From 29 January to 6 February 2015, music-lovers will gather in the churches of Gstaad, Saanen and Rougemont. In the spirit of the Festival's objectives, unchanged since its inception in 2001, audiences at the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad will be able to hear outstanding young talent as well as major international virtuosos over the course of nine days.

Ombretta Ravessoud, director of the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad, is particularly delighted to welcome Renaud Capuçon to his new role leading a devoted group of colleagues as the Festival's artistic director.

He succeeds Thierry Scherz, former artistic director and co-founder of the festival, who died in 2014.

This 16th edition of the festival will therefore present the first programme devised by Renaud Capuçon at the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad. He says: 'What a pleasure to join the Sommetts Musicaux and the whole team! I intend to pay tribute to Thierry Scherz, to whom I owe my first ever concert at the Festival. I wanted to stay true to his wish to present a different instrument every year, in a variety of forms. This year will be devoted to the piano.'

This year, the Kremerata Baltica and legendary pianist Martha Argerich will be opening the Festival on Friday 29 January 2016 in the church of Saanen, performing Beethoven's Second Concerto.

Concerts in the chapel of Gstaad

Joseph Moog, mentor to the rising stars

The pianist Joseph Moog knows the festival intimately and was chosen to be mentor at Gstaad. He himself received the award for most promising newcomer in 2006, and the numerous accolades he has received over the course of his career have confirmed him as one of the finest performers of his generation. He is sure to communicate his experience, talent and passion to his young protégés and will himself have the opportunity to delight the audience when he plays at Rougemont on 1 February.

Thierry Escaich, composer in residence

The piano will be centre stage every day from 4pm to 5pm in the chapel of Gstaad, featuring works by Mozart, Ravel, Rachmaninov, Brahms, Chopin, Schubert, Jianzhong, Liszt, Scarlatti, Debussy, Scriabin, Balakirev, Beethoven, Bach, Tchaikovsky, Ligeti and Escaich, all performed by the festival's young artists.

For the 2016 festival, this new generation of artists will be represented by French pianists Guillaume Bellom, Rémi Geniet and Nathanaël Gouin, Kevin Jansson from Ireland, Russians Nathalia Milstein and Olga Kirpicheva, Shizhe Shen from China, and Ryutaro Suzuki from Japan.

Renaud Capuçon's invitation of Thierry Escaich to the festival is a fitting tribute to an outstanding contemporary artist.

Thierry Escaich is a composer, organist and improviser. He began his musical studies at the music conservatory of Rosny-sous-Bois. He won the Grand Prix for improvisation at the Strasbourg International Competition in 1991 and in 1996 he became chief organist at the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont in Paris. He was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts at the Institut de France in 2013 and since 1992 has taught composition and improvisation at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique in Paris. Thierry Escaich enjoys an international career as an organist and improviser, playing in major capital cities across the world, and has been named 'composer of the year' on three occasions at the Victoires de la musique classique. Thierry Escaich's works will be performed every afternoon during the festival by young artists at the chapel in Gstaad.

Two prestigious awards: the Prix Thierry Scherz and the Prix André Hoffmann

The Thierry Scherz represents an opportunity to recognize one young virtuoso and offer them encouragement by giving them the chance to record a debut CD with orchestra for the Claves Records SA label.

The new CD by Anaïs Gaudemard, winner of the prize in 2015, will be released in November 2016 and advance copies will be made available to members of 'Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad' at the concert of 6 February 2016. The disc features works by Nikolaï von Wilm, Alberto Ginastera and Einojuhani Rautavaara, with the Orchestre de l'Opéra de Rouen Haute Normandie, conducted by Leo Hussain.

The Prix André Hoffmann, endowed with 5000 Swiss francs, will be awarded for the best interpretation of a work by Thierry Escaich. The Foundation's financial support also enables the Festival to invite the composer in residence for the duration of the event.

Concerts at the church of Saanen

The stars of the festival

The church of Saanen will thrill to the sound of works by Weinberg, Mendelssohn, Boccherini, Rodrigo, Rossini, Rimsky-Korsakov, Beethoven, Chopin and Bach.

The Kremerata Baltica, together with pianist Martha Argerich, will open the Festival on Friday 29 January at the church in Saanen. The week's concerts are sure to provide its loyal audience with a series of thrilling highlights featuring many distinguished artists, including ensembles such as the Camerata Bern, with Monenegrin guitarist Miloš Karadaglić on 30 January. For the concert on 5 February Renaud Capuçon has invited the brilliant young violinist Daniel Lozaković to play alongside him. They will play Bach's Double Concerto, accompanied by the Lucerne Festival Strings, as a tribute to the great Yehudi Menuhin, who would have turned 100 in 2016. This concert will take place in a spirit of communication and shared musical experience, a philosophy very dear to Renaud Capuçon's heart. He says: 'The Double Concerto is a marvellous work, perfect for reaching out to young people'. To round off the series, talented Russian soprano Olga Peretyatko will be accompanied by Italian pianist Giulio Zappa on 6 February.

Concerts in the church of Rougemont

The artistic director's 'coups de cœur'

The Romanesque church in Rougemont will play host to the 'coups de cœur', the personal favourites, of the festival's artistic director Renaud Capuçon: American violinist Gil Shaham, who will give a recital on Sunday 31 January featuring works by Bach, pianist Joseph Moog, who will play pieces by Beethoven, Liszt, Debussy and Godowsky on 1 February, and cellist Mischa Maisky with his daughter, pianist Lily Maisky. This outstanding musical duo can be heard on 2 February. The Hagen Quartet will entertain the audience with works by Schubert and Shostakovich on 3 February. On 4 February, the trio comprising pianist Michel Dalberto, violinist Alexandra Conunova and cellist Kian Soltani will round off the series with the final concert in Rougemont.

A true winter rendezvous

The festival will feature a total of 17 top-quality concerts from 29 January to 6 February 2016. The Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, it should be added, are one of the few festivals in Switzerland whose

concerts take place exclusively in churches – to the delight of music-lovers who particularly value the unique magic and intimate atmosphere of this event.

The Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, a true winter rendezvous in the region, will be organizing dinners after several of the concerts, thus creating a rare opportunity for a music-loving audience to meet the artists, thanks to the patronage of a variety of active partners – whether individuals, business ventures, foundations and associations – including Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, Madame Vera Michalski-Hoffmann, Madame Aline Foriel-Destezet and Sotheby's, to name only a few.

Programme, tickets and advance sales

www.sommets-musicaux.ch

Tickets will be on sale from 23 November 2015. Bookings can be made at the:

- Gstaad tourist office: +41 33 748 81 82 ticketing@gstaad.ch
- Rougemont tourist office: +41 26 925 11 66 info@rougemont.ch
- www.ticketcorner.ch 0900 800 800
- at the venues

Ticket prices per concert: between CHF 25 and CHF 150, depending on the category and the venue

Cost of dinner per head at the Gstaad Palace: CHF 190

Cost of dinner per head at the Café du Cerf or Le Roc Restaurant in Rougemont: CHF 60

Young persons' rate ('Jeunesse', for those aged between 5 and 25): 50% discount

Locals' rates ('Indigènes'): 10% discount

A brief look at the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad

From its inception in 2001, the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad festival has been hailed as the reference point in winter festivals, an event to delight all aficionados of classical music. Every year young talented musicians, internationally renowned artists and music-lovers from Switzerland and abroad gather in this enchanting snow-capped paradise to perform some of the finest works in the classical repertory.

The festival is structured in three categories: three concert cycles spread across three outstanding venues. In the afternoon, the Gstaad Chapel welcomes the pick of promising young artists. In the evening, the churches of Rougemont and Saanen are filled with the sounds of celebrated soloists and internationally renowned orchestras.

Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad

Founded following the initial series of concerts by a group of music-lovers and chaired by Denise Elfen, the friends' association Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad has grown steadily ever since. It offers invaluable support to the Festival, in particular financing one of the concerts in the church at Saanen. This year, the association is pleased and proud to sponsor the evening concert on 6 February.

The complete press kit including press release, biographies of the artists, the full programme of events, HD illustrations of the artists and of the various venues, along with the Sommets Musicaux logo and the accreditation form can be downloaded here: www.sommets-musicaux.ch.

For organisational reasons, we would be grateful if you could obtain your accreditation by 20 December 2015.

Media contact:

Switzerland

Christine Urfer, pur pr, christine@pur-pr.com, +41 78 619 05 00, +41 21 320 00 10

France

Valérie Samuel, Opus 64, v.samuel@opus64.com, +33 1 40 26 77 94