



Press release

Two young pianists recognized at the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad

Jean-Paul Gasparian

Winner of the **Prix Thierry Scherz**
Sponsored by the **Fondation Pro Scientia et Arte**
and by
Les Amis des Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad

and

Aaron Pilsan

Winner of the **Prix André Hoffmann**

GSTAAD, 12 February 2020 – The 20th Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad has just come to a close, awarding the Prix Thierry Scherz to 25-year-old French pianist Jean-Paul Gasparian. This prize is sponsored by the **Fondation Pro Scientia et Arte and by the **Friends of the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad**.**

The Prix André Hoffmann has been awarded to 25-year-old Austrian pianist Aaron Pilsan.

Both prizewinners gave their concerts in the chapel of Gstaad on 4 and 7 February respectively, as part of the ‘Young Talent’ series.

The Prix Thierry Scherz, awarded to Jean-Paul Gasparian

The **Prix Thierry Scherz** is awarded for the best performance in the ‘Young Talent’ series, offering the winner the opportunity to record their first CD with an orchestra. This year, the jury, under the auspices of Renaud Capuçon, the festival’s artistic director, and comprising Nicholas Angelich, mentor of the ‘Young Talent’ concert series, Camille Pépin, composer in residence, and Patrick Peikert, manager of the Claves Records label, unanimously awarded the **Prix Thierry Scherz** to this gifted young pianist. He will record a CD with the Lausanne Symphony Orchestra and the Claves Records label in the course of the second half of 2020. Claves Records will also promote the recording.

The **Prix André Hoffmann** seeks to bring contemporary classical music to a wider audience. Every year, a contemporary composer writes a piece for the Sommetts Musicaux, which is then performed by the musicians in the ‘Young Talent’ series over the course of the festival. This year, composer in residence Camille Pépin composed the work *Number 1* for the event. **Aaron Pilsan** has been awarded the prize, endowed with 5000 Swiss francs, for the best performance of this new work.

Generosity – the theme of the Festival’s 20th anniversary

The 2020 festival took place from 31 January to 8 February and was a great hit with audiences. The concerts played to consistently packed, buzzing halls of knowledgeable music-lovers and relative newcomers alike.

To mark its 20th anniversary, the Festival offered two concerts free of charge.

The new Sunday concert, introduced to the festival by Renaud Capuçon, was dedicated to the music of Bach and played to a full house in the church of Rougemont on 2 February. This complimentary new event will be a fixture in festivals to come. Monday 3 February saw a free concert for children, narrated by Laurence Ferrari with *L’histoire de Ferdinand le petit taureau* (‘The Story of Ferdinand, the little bull’) and *L’Histoire de Babar* (‘The Story of Babar’) proved to be a great success with the pupils of local state schools in the Saanenland area, from the Institut Le Rosey institute and the John F. Kennedy School (Saanen/Gstaad). Over 350 delighted children, who had studied the French text at school in advance, filled the church of Saanen.

The Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, whose unique selling points include consistent excellence, support for young musicians and the intimate rapport between artists and audiences that emerges in the glorious surroundings of these magnificent church buildings, have once more comprehensively delivered in terms of quality, shared experiences and cultural communication.

A new generation of pianists has also been fortunate enough to perform in the chapel of Gstaad, at 4pm every day. They were accompanied by Camille Pépin and Nicholas Angelich, who were able to offer the young musicians the benefit of their considerable advice and encouragement.

The 21st Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad will take place from 29 January to 6 February 2021, with the violin taking centre stage.

HD illustrations and biographies of the prizewinners of the 2020 event can be downloaded here: www.sommets-musicaux.ch/presse [links for biographies, images and photos of the 2020 concerts]

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, +33 140 26 77 94