



**Press release**

## **The 22<sup>nd</sup> Festival of the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad from 28 January to 5 February 2022**

### **An ode to youth, and a reunion with audiences**

Renaud Capuçon will open the Festival in the church of Saanen, conducting the Orchestre de chambre de Lausanne

#### **Three concert cycles in three outstanding venues**

Chapel of Gstaad: discovering young talent across eight concerts

Church of Saanen: the stars of the Festival, with five concerts and one musical story for children

Church of Rougemont: five concerts featuring the artistic director's personal favourites

**GSTAAD, 22 October 2021 – The Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad and their artistic director Renaud Capuçon present the musical programme of their 22nd edition. From 28 January to 5 February 2022, music-lovers will gather in the chapel of Gstaad and the churches of Saanen and Rougemont. In the spirit of the Festival's aims, which it has promoted since its inception in 2001, audiences at the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad will be able to hear outstanding young talent as well as internationally renowned virtuosos over the course of nine days.**

In the face of the extreme difficulties posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad held firm and offered its fans a splendid edition of the festival, available for the first time to stream live online, which proved an international success. The festival's organizers are more thrilled than ever to be able to see their audience in the flesh again for their 2022 festival, which will as once again feature an outstanding, original and varied programme. This will include a number of concerts rescheduled after having to be cancelled last year, but the major concerts will involve new and hitherto unseen lineups, to delight the festival's devotees and new followers alike. This year is a very special one for the artistic director of the Sommetts Musicaux de Gstaad, as it also marks his appointment as chief conductor and artistic director of the Orchestre de chambre de Lausanne, a role he will assume from the 2021–2 season. It is entirely natural, therefore, that Renaud Capuçon should have chosen to open the festival with the OCL on 28 January at 7.30pm in the church of Saanen, with an unusual programme featuring two violin concertos by a composer whom history has almost forgotten: Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-George – as well as Mendelssohn's Symphony no.4 'Italian' in A major op.90.

The violin, and the promotion of young talent, will be a particular focus for the duration of the festival, with recitals every afternoon in the chapel of Gstaad, where the young violinists, all in contention for the Prix Thierry Scherz and the Prix André Hoffmann – which could not be

awarded in 2021 – look forward to welcoming audiences for their concerts, which will take place at 4pm. The same goes for the church of Rougemont, which will present a special concert at 11am on 30 January, featuring the violinist Guillaume Sutre in a programme of music by Bach. Sutre will also take on the role of mentor to the young violinists. Another violin highlight will take place in the concert of 1 February at the church of Saanen with Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer, rightly considered one of the finest violinists and musicians of his generation. Kremer was taught by his father and grandfather, both professional violinists, and studied under David Oistrakh. He will be accompanied by the Kremerata Lithuanica, a recently established orchestra made up of young talented musicians, and Latvian pianist Georgijs Osokins, in a striking programme largely comprising works by young Baltic composers.

Renaud Capuçon has once again devised his programme with the aim of building bridges between new generations and established musicians of renown. Wolfgang Rihm, who has become a major figure in the world of contemporary music thanks to the quality and richness of his catalogue of almost four hundred works, has done us the honour of being our composer in residence for the week of the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad. Rihm began his musical training – as well as studies in contemporary painting – at a very young age, studying with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne and with Klaus Huber and Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht in Freiburg. A composer of considerable international renown, Wolfgang Rihm has taught at Darmstadt since 1978 and since 1981 at Munich's University of Music and Performing Arts. From 1984 to 1989, he was also co-editor of the musical journal *Melos* and musical adviser to the Deutsche Oper in Berlin. He has received a number of prestigious awards throughout his career, including the Ernst von Siemens prize in 2003, the Golden Lion from the Venice Biennale in 2011 and the German Great Cross of Merit (Großes Bundesverdienstkreuz) in 2011.

*Épisode*, a piece for violin and piano composed by Rihm specially for the Festival, will be played every afternoon at 4pm by the young musicians specially invited to the festival.

### **Chapel of Gstaad**

#### **Guillaume Sutre, mentor to the rising stars**

Guillaume Sutre was only 18 when he won the Alberto Curci international violin competition in Naples and the ARD international piano trio competition in Munich. He soon went on to receive further awards, with first prize at the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition (USA), first prize in the Concours Lily Laskine, and the Georges Enescu prize from SACEM. In 1999, he was made Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Fired from an early age by a passion for chamber music, he founded the Trio Wanderer, and ten years later became the new first violinist of the Ysaÿe Quartet. In parallel to his activities as a chamber musician, Guillaume Sutre also appears as a soloist with some of the world's most distinguished orchestras. His recordings for Sony, Decca, Harmonia Mundi, Naïve, Ysaÿe Records and Sonarti have been recognized with some of the highest accolades, including the Grand Prix du Disque from the Académie Charles Cros in 2001. He was invited by the Faculty of Music at the University of Montreal to be professor of violin and chamber music. He has been a member of several prestigious international competitions, including the Long-Thibaud competition in Paris, the Fermo/Andrea Postacchini competition and the Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition.

#### **The concerts**

The young violinists, alongside their partners on the piano, will be performing works by a wide range of composers: Bach, Rihm, Ysaÿe, Prokofiev, Maier-Röntgen, Fauré, Ravel, Bartók, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Kreisler, Schnittke, Sibelius and Lutosławski.

This is truly a repertoire that Renaud Capuçon has been at pains to make as varied and diverse as possible.

The series of young talents will open with a concert by Finnish-Dutch violinist **Rebecca Roozeman** (Sibelius Academy) on Saturday 29 January at the chapel of Gstaad, with her partner **Anton Mejias**. French violinist (and composer) **Élise Bertrand** and her fellow countryman, pianist **Gaspard Thomas** will continue the series on 30 January, and French violinist **Thomas Lefort** (semi-finalist in the International Long-Crespin Competition in 2018)

will be performing alongside his compatriot **Pierre-Yves Hodique** on 31 January, with Russian violinist **Dmitry Smirnov** (winner of the Tibor Varga competition in 2015) and Italian pianist **Marco Scilironi** giving the 1 February concert. French violinist **Shuichi Okada** (Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, under the auspices of Augustin Dumay) will be performing on 2 February, alongside his compatriot, pianist **Clément Lefebvre**. English violinist **Louisa-Rose Staples** and German pianist **Julius Asal** (from the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler) will appear on 3 February. Belgian-Polish violinist **Alexandra Cooreman** (Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, under the auspices of Augustin Dumay) and Russian pianist **Olga Kirpicheva** will be playing on the 4 February, while the whole series will be brought to a close by Danish violinist **Anna Egholm** (winner of the Ysaÿe International Violin Competition) and Russian pianist **Maria Baranova** on 5 February.

All these talented young musicians will be in contention for the festival's two awards, the Prix Thierry Scherz and the Prix André Hoffmann.

The transmission of knowledge is a key theme for Renaud Capuçon, and the young musicians – who are true guests in their own right, not simply contestants – will take part in all the activities organized during the festival. They will each arrive the day before their recital and will receive hour-long masterclasses with both Wolfgang Rihm and Guillaume Sutre before their concert in the afternoon.

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

The Prix Thierry Scherz is sponsored by the Fondation Pro Scientia et Arte and the association of Friends of the Festival ('les Amis du Festival'). It represents an opportunity to recognize one young violin virtuoso and offer them encouragement by giving them the chance to record a debut CD with orchestra for the Claves Records SA label.

The Prix André Hoffmann is designed to promote the performance of contemporary music. Endowed with 5000 Swiss francs, it will be awarded for the best interpretation of Wolfgang Rihm's work. It also provides the support enabling the Festival to host the composer in residence.

#### **Concerts at the church of Saanen**

##### **The stars of the festival**

The church of Saanen will be filled with the sounds of works by Chevalier Saint-Georges, Mendelssohn, Pärt, Serksnyte, Miliūnaitė-Bliūdžiuvienė, Žlabys, Kissin, Pelēcis, Piazzolla, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, Donizetti, Verdi, Puccini, Gounod, Massenet, Vivaldi, Handel, Marais and Rebel, performed by a host of star musicians. They will see to it that that the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad are a musical event not to be missed at the beginning of 2022.

As mentioned, on 28 January, the church of Saanen will be welcoming Renaud Capuçon and the Orchestre de chambre de Lausanne to open the festival, in an evening devoted to the music of Chevalier Saint-Georges and Mendelssohn. Capuçon will be taking on the roles of both soloist and conductor. On 1 February, Latvia violinist Gidon Kremer will take us on a journey to the shores of the Baltic Sea and even as far as Argentina (with a wink to Piazzolla, whose centenary we celebrate in 2021), with an adventurous programme consisting principally of works by young Baltic composers, including a Swiss premiere! On 3 February, the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad have the great pleasure of welcoming legendary Portuguese pianist Maria João Pires in a splendid programme of core repertoire comprising three sonatas for piano and violin by Mozart and Beethoven, in which she will be accompanied by Renaud Capuçon. Juan Diego Flórez, one of the greatest tenors on the contemporary operatic scene, and pianist Vincenzo Scalera will take centre stage on 4 February. Finally, a programme of opera arias by Vivaldi, Handel (his famous *Rinaldo*) and Marais, as well as a prologue by Jean-Féry Rebel, performed by the ensemble Matheus and Jean-Christophe Spinosi, conductor, violinist and founder of the ensemble, will bring the festival to a close on 5 February.

#### **This year, in the church of Saanen, the Festival will be offering a special concert for local children: 'Des malheurs de Sophie' on 31 January at 10am.**

*Des malheurs de Sophie* ('Sophie's Misfortunes'), a seminal work of children's literature, after the Countess of Ségur, with a text by Anais Vaugelade and set to music by Robert

Schumann, will be another highlight of the Festival, starring French actress, scriptwriter, director and singer Agnès Jaoui as narrator and a French pianist well versed in this genre, Claire-Marie Le Guay.

### **Concerts in the church of Rougemont**

#### **The artistic director's 'coups de cœur': five concerts in 2022**

The Romanesque church in Rougemont will play host to the 'coups de cœur', the personal favourites, of the festival's artistic director. There will be five spectacular concerts on 29, 30 (afternoon and evening) and 31 January and on 2 February 2022. The series will be opened on 29 February by the British pianist – and author – Stephen Hough, Commander of the Order of the British Empire and teacher at the Royal Academy of Music in London, who will present a programme of Bach-Busoni, Chopin and Schumann, with his magnificent cycle *Kreisleriana* op.16. French violinist Guillaume Sutre, who will also take on the role of mentor to the young violinists, will play Bach's Violin Sonata no.2 in A minor BWV 1003 and the Partita No.2 in D minor BWV 1004 on 30 January; this concert will be offered to the public free of charge. Formed by three friends, the Trio Zeliha is an ode to youth to delight even older generations, compelling in its sincerity; the trio will present a programme of music by Schumann and Shostakovich, including Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* op.88, on 30 January. A viola professor at the Paris Conservatoire and at Madrid's Reina Sofia School of Music, Gérard Caussé will be performing at the 31 January concert with Julia Hagen, daughter of Clemens Hagen of the famous Hagen Quartet, and Renaud Capuçon, in a concert devoted exclusively to works by Mozart. This series of the artistic director's personal favourites in the church of Rougemont will come to a close on 2 February with Emmanuel Pahud, principal flautist of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, co-founder of the ensemble Les Vents Français and founder of the International Chamber Music Festival of Salon-de-Provence: he will be playing a programme of music by Bach alongside the harpsichordist, organist and clavichordist Benjamin Alard, a world-renowned specialist in Bach's music. This same musical collaboration was awarded the first prize at Bruges' international harpsichord competition (the MA Festival) in 2004.

### **A true winter rendezvous**

The festival will feature a total of 19 concerts from 28 January to 5 February 2022. 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 bona fide winter rendezvous in the region and the first classical music festival of the year, have a tradition of organizing dinners in the Gstaad Palace after the concerts in Saanen, thus providing a rare opportunity for a music-loving audience to meet the artists. This is thanks to the patronage of a variety of active partners – whether individual sponsors, business ventures, foundations and associations – including Vera Michalski-Hoffmann, president of the Festival, Aline Foriel-Destezet, Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, the Fondation Hoffmann, the Fondation Pro Scientia et Arte, the municipality of Saanen and surrounding towns, the canton of Bern and the Loterie Romande, to name only a few. These special events will, at last, be able to take place once again in 2022.

### **Association of the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad**

**President:** Vera Michalski-Hoffmann  
**Director:** Ombretta Ravessoud  
**Artistic director:** Renaud Capuçon

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### **Programme, tickets and advance sales**

[www.sommets-musicaux.ch](http://www.sommets-musicaux.ch)

Tickets will be on sale at the Gstaad tourist office, at [ticketcorner.ch](http://ticketcorner.ch) and at the box office in the evening. Ticket sales will begin on 22 November 2020. Reservations can be made at:

- Gstaad tourist office: +41 33 748 81 82 [ticketing@gstaad.ch](mailto:ticketing@gstaad.ch)

Ticket prices per concert: between CHF 30 and CHF 150 (Swiss francs), depending on the category and the venue

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

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

The concert on 31 January at the church of Rougemont at 11am is free of charge

The concert for children on 3 February at the church of Saanen, 'Des malheurs de Sophie' at 10am is free of charge

### **A brief look at the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad**

From its inception in 2001, the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad has been hailed as the ultimate reference point in winter festivals, an event to delight all aficionados of classical music. Every year young talented musicians, internationally renowned artists and lovers of music gather in this enchanting snow-capped paradise to perform and enjoy 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 hosts a selection of the most promising young artists. In the evening, the churches of Rougemont and Saanen will delight their audiences with the sounds of celebrated soloists and internationally renowned orchestras.

### **Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad**

Founded following the initial series of concerts, the friends' association Les Amis des Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, under the leadership of its new chairman Pierre Dreyfus, offers invaluable support to the Festival.

**The complete press kit including press release, the full programme of events, biographies of the artists and HD images 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/presse](http://www.sommets-musicaux.ch/presse)**

For organizational reasons, we would be grateful if you could obtain your accreditation by Friday 17 December 2021: [www.sommets-musicaux.ch/accreditation-form/accreditation-form-in-french](http://www.sommets-musicaux.ch/accreditation-form/accreditation-form-in-french) (French version)

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