



Great comebacks and illustrious débuts at the 77th Settimane Musicali di Ascona

The 77th Settimane Musicali di Ascona will bring twelve major events to the beautiful churches of San Francesco in Locarno and Collegio Papio in Ascona from 2 September to 8 October 2022, providing audiences with some big names and an extensive and engrossing programme of music. Highlights include Maria-João Pires, Francesco Piemontesi with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Freiburger Barockorchester, the Budapest Festival Orchestra conducted by Iván Fischer, Beatrice Rana and Jordi Savall with Le Concert des Nations. By popular demand, the majority of the concerts will start at the new, earlier-than-usual time of 7.30 PM.

MAIN PROGRAMME

The **Kammerorchester Basel**, under the baton of British conductor **Trevor Pinnock**, and the legendary Portuguese pianist **Maria-João Pires** will open the 77th Settimane Musicali di Ascona on **Friday 2 September**. The calibre of the performers makes this a concert not to be missed. Pires, one of the world's most exciting and charismatic pianists, with unequalled lightness of touch, will perform the Mozart masterpiece: *Piano Concerto K 488*.

The second event on the programme is no less exciting. The **Chamber Orchestra of Europe**, urged on by the vital energy of conductor **Robert Ticciati** and combining a wide range of schools, styles and traditions, will imbue the evening concert on **Tuesday 6 September** with a vibrant Romantic spirit, with works by Weber and Brahms alongside Schumann's *Piano Concerto op.54* with **Francesco Piemontesi** at the keyboard.

This year the chamber music festival **Piemontesi & Friends** will be concentrated into a single evening of interplay between violin, cello and piano. Host **Francesco Piemontesi** will be joined by cellist **Daniel Müller-Schött**, a firm favourite with the Ascona audience, and the incredible violinist **Francesca DeGo**, making her festival début. The two concerts on **Friday 16 September** will be dedicated entirely to Brahms.

On **Thursday 22 September**, meanwhile, an orchestra that knows all the secrets of interpreting late Baroque music, the **Freiburger Barockorchester**, will take to the stage that evening to perform two superlative early cantatas by Handel. The ensemble will be conducted by **René Jacobs**, and the concert will feature Ukrainian soprano **Kateryna Kasper** and the young bass **Yannick Debus**.

On **Monday 26 September** the incredible **Budapest Festival Orchestra** – one of the world's top symphony orchestras, with cult figure **Iván Fischer** on the podium – will make its return to the festival. The programme will feature works by Louis Andriessen, a suite from György Ligeti's eccentric and grotesque masterpiece *Le Grand Macabre*, and Brahms's renowned *Symphony No. 3*.



On **Wednesday 28 September** the audience will have the chance to enjoy **Beatrice Rana's** first appearance at the Settimane. The former piano *enfant prodige* is increasingly admired (and ever more in demand) for the rigorous and disciplined way she revives the classics, together with her flamboyant, unpredictable and markedly Mediterranean personality. She will perform an irresistible programme of Chopin and Beethoven.

The evening of **Friday 30 September** will be dedicated to chamber music, in the hands of the **Modigliani Quartet**. The ensemble was founded in Paris in 2003, and focuses on the spiritual essence of making music together. They will perform Beethoven's *La Malinconia* quartet along with two absolute masterpieces by Schubert.

Finally, **Jordi Savall** will take to the stage on **Tuesday 4 October**. The exceptional Baroque violist and scholar of early music from Catalonia, with boundless curiosity, has gone back to delving into the fertile world of Danubian classicism. After a wonderful programme dedicated to ancient music in 2021, he returns to Ascona as the conductor of the young musicians of the highly acclaimed **Concert Des Nations**. He has chosen two thrilling milestone symphonies from Schubert's extensive oeuvre for the occasion: the *Unfinished* and *The Great*.

DÉBUT SERIES AND FAMILY CONCERTS

Following a two-year hiatus caused by the pandemic, the ever-popular **Series Début** will make a return with two Saturday morning concerts at the Palazzo Sopracenerina in Locarno featuring the young stars of tomorrow.

On **Saturday 24 September** the young and eclectic singer and pianist **Rachel Fenlon** will perform the same, hugely enjoyable programme of *Lieder* that legendary soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf sang way back in September 1953. This concert was originally planned to celebrate the festival's 75th anniversary, but was cancelled due to the pandemic.

The concert on **Saturday 8 October**, meanwhile, will feature the young Chinese-American pianist **Eric Lu**. This talented young man, a prizewinner at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw at the age of just seventeen, will tackle works by Schubert and Chopin, which purposely enter into dialogue with compositions by two undisputed masters of our own times: Helmut Lachenmann and Thomas Adès.

Another long-established Settimane tradition is the **free family concert** organised by the Friends of the Settimane Musicali in partnership with the Locarno Parents' Group. On **Saturday 24 September** ten **soloists from the G. Rossini Symphony Orchestra** from Pesaro will appear at the Gran Rex in Locarno to perform Camille Saint-Saëns's famous *Carnival of the Animals*, a miniature masterpiece from 1886 that depicts various animals, each represented by an appropriate instrument, in fourteen musical tableaux.



OPEN-AIR CONCERT with RENOWNED PERCUSSIONIST EVELYN GLENNIE

The open-air pre-festival concert on the Ascona lakeside – which, with the support of the Municipality of Ascona, has become a Settimane Musicali custom – is always a special moment. This year it will take place on the evening of **Saturday 27 August**, and will showcase a truly exceptional guest: Scottish percussionist and Grammy Award-winner **Evelyn Glennie**. During her brilliant solo career Glennie has worked with conductors and soloists like Georg Solti, Murray Perahia and Vladimir Ashkenazy and pop legends Sting, Björk, Bobby McFerrin and Elton John, to name but a few. Glennie lost her hearing at an early age, but follows the music through the vibrations. Her concerts are always truly spectacular!

EARLIER START TIME OF 7.30 PM

A new feature of this year's festival is the concerts' start time, which for the first time in the event's history will be 7.30 PM, and not 8.30 PM as in previous years. The earlier start time, which does not apply to the Piemontesi & Friends events or the Chamber Orchestra of Europe concert on 6 September (which will begin at 8 PM), is an experiment with a format not usually seen in Switzerland. The Foundation decided to implement this change based on the results of a survey carried out by the organisers last November: Two hundred music fans took part in the online consultation, with a comprehensive 80% of respondents voting in favour of the change.

PRE-SALE BEGINS ON JUNE 15

Advance tickets and season tickets will be available at the tourist offices in Ascona, Locarno and Brissago, online at ticketcorner.ch and at all Swiss Ticketcorner sales outlets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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