

*Lac Léman*  
Music Masterclasses



**2013**

## *The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses 2013*

2013 saw the third series of the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses which provided another opportunity for some world-class violin, viola and cello teachers and almost 30 students from 18 countries to come to the Hindemith Music Centre in Blonay, Switzerland, to share a week of intensive studies in the solo performance of works of classical music.

As in previous years, these masterclasses were based on the idea of bringing together truly legendary and recognized masters of their instruments and some of the most promising young stringed instrument students, many of them with plans to start a career as soloists or preeminent orchestra players.

The students who participated in the 2013 course, whose ages ranged from 16 to 28, were selected on the basis of both their past achievements and their future promise and were composed of a diverse group of young musicians from Australia, Belgium, China, Colombia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.



Three experienced piano accompanists, Kane Joho, Megumi Hashiba and Rusudan Aladvize provided the necessary and important musical support to the students' solo performances.



## *The Teachers*

The faculty of 2013 again consisted of four great professors, all renowned for having produced some of the best players of the age: Mihaela Martin (violin), Boris Kuschnir (violin), Nobuko Imai (viola) and Frans Helmerson (violoncello).



*Mihaela Martin (violin)*



*Nobuko Imai (viola)*

As last year, they were joined by the violinist and violist Daniel Austrich (member of the Michelangelo String Quartet), who provided additional coaching for the study of chamber music works in the evenings.



*Boris Kuschnir (violin)*



*Frans Helmerson (violoncello)*



*Daniel Austrich (violin)*

## *The Concept behind the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses*

The purpose of this event is to provide a week of intensive practical study and learning for students who have already achieved a high degree of mastery of their instruments. The aim is to enable them to take another step forward in interpreting and performing classical music and prepare them for a career as soloists or orchestra players. This specifically involves individual tuition sessions in which the students submit themselves to the critical ears and questions of their chosen tutor, all this in the presence of the other students and visitors who provide a knowledgeable and attentive audience.



While such tuition sessions are no doubt highly demanding, even confronting students with potentially harsh truths, it is an important aspect of the teaching concept of LLMM that students get all the encouragement possible from their teachers and a spirit of stimulating motivation to overcome any difficulties and to move towards achieving their full potential in the mastery of their instruments. Both the admirable skills and extensive experience of the teachers and the serene setting of the course in the Hindemith Music Centre in Blonay, overlooking the beautiful Lac Léman, where everybody lives and works under one roof in a family-like atmosphere, ensure that this important objective is being achieved.

While the course also offers some possibilities for studying works of chamber music in the spare time left, the course primarily focuses on the solo performance of string instruments, with or without piano accompaniment.

## *The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses Students*

The 2013 course, which was fully booked out, again proved to be a demonstration of the passion for music shared by both teachers and students alike and resulted in some remarkable musical performances. The tuition sessions themselves were full of sparkling moments of music and musical prowess as students benefited directly from their teachers' advice and could put it into practice straight away.



The masterclasses were again open to the public and included an informal concert with an opportunity for each student to perform the compositions studied. In addition, two public concerts were held, one at the Roman-style church of Blonay on 26 September 2013, and the other on 28 September 2013 at the Grande Salle of the Geneva Conservatory of Music. The works performed by the students reflected the wide array of compositions studied, ranging from early works to pieces of contemporary music.



## *The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses Presentation of Concerts*

At the concert performed in the Blonay church, works by Paul Hindemith, Friedrich Herrmann, Luigi Boccherini, Johann Sebastian Bach, Igor Stravinsky, Eugène Ysaÿe and Johannes Brahms were presented.

The first part of the sold-out Geneva concert consisted of solo pieces chosen and individually presented by the course participants. This part of the programme included works by Camille Saint-Saëns, Piotr Tchaikovsky and César Franck, the interpretation which was greeted with great enthusiasm by the audience. The second part of the concert was dedicated to a performance of the Haydn string quartet opus 77 no. 1, interpreted by the Michelangelo String Quartet, and an interpretation of Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's „Souvenir de Florence“ in its orchestra version, performed by all course participants. Instead of a conductor, the orchestra was led in the first chairs by Mihaela Martin, Daniel Austrich, Nobuko Imai and Frans Helmerson. The concert ended with a standing ovation.



The Geneva concert was also recorded and LLMM is grateful to have obtained the funding to produce a CD of the main parts of the concert as a live document of the achievements of the 2013 LLMM course.

The spirit of the 2013 masterclasses is perhaps best reflected in the following student comments. Wenting Kang, violist, said: "It was a very inspiring time for me to work with the wonderful artist Nobuko in such a beautiful place. It took me away from a lot of distraction in life and let me concentrate on the music. Also, the chamber music reading and ensemble playing with all the colleagues was a great pleasure and learning experience. It's a place and time I'll always remember." Niklas Liepe, violinist, agreed: "The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses in Blonay are a great opportunity for young musicians to get away from the stresses of everyday life to focus on making music in a peaceful and beautiful place and to share great moments of making music together in a chamber music group and string orchestra."



## *The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses Association*

LLMM pursues its objectives of education in music without any profit motivations. This is why the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses Association was founded. The cost of its courses cannot be covered by the fees which students pay for the course. Some students need scholarships, which cannot always be obtained from other organisations. The 2013 course was no exception. LLMM is therefore particularly pleased to have again received generous financial support for organising the course, both from individual music lovers and from sponsors.

LLMM would like to express special thanks to everyone who supported it again in 2013. Specific mention goes to the following major sponsors of the 2013 event: Tarisio, Lombard Odier, JTI and Shiseido. Special thanks also go to the Hindemith Foundation, which again supported LLMM by offering space at the Hindemith Music Centre to students below the age of 26 at reduced rates.

LLMM also expresses its thanks to all the individuals supporting its work, financially or otherwise, including those who helped to organise the public concerts and offered the students the chance to stay at their homes for the night after the concert in Geneva. LLMM could not pursue its activities if it could not rely on this kind of support from individual music lovers as well.

In view of the support received in 2013, the board of the LLMM Association, consisting of Professor Pierre Tercier of Fribourg, chairman, Benoît Chappuis, lawyer in Geneva, Fabian



von Schlabrendorff, lawyer in Frankfurt/Main, Germany, Liana Georgana, lawyer in Geneva, and David Pelot, lawyer in Lausanne, hopes that the LLMM Association will be able to organise further masterclasses in the coming years as well. The board notes, however, that the cost of organising such events will increase and that therefore increased efforts will be required to find the necessary funds. The board of the LLMM Association therefore calls on everybody in a position to give to join forces with all those who support LLMM in order to ensure that the work so successfully started can be continued.

## *The Future of the Project*

The fundamental purpose of LLMM will continue to provide exceptionally talented young string players with an opportunity to intensively study works selected by themselves and to achieve an even higher level of mastery of their instrument and of interpretation with the help of some of the best teachers available. An important aspect of this concept is the carefully chosen location of the Hindemith Music Centre, which offers ideal conditions for focussed study in a private atmosphere, yet with windows open to the public. The unique Hindemith Music Centre offers a setting with all the facilities required, including a sufficient number of pianos and rooms for the masterclasses, as well as rooms for individual practice.



*Home of  
Paul Hindemith,  
Villa La Chance,  
Blonay,  
Switzerland*

Association  
Lac Léman  
Music Masterclasses  
c/o Pierre Tercier  
ch. Guillaume-Ritter 5  
1700 Fribourg  
Switzerland

Contact:  
Ryo Pittier  
Phone: +41 (0) 79 628 98 39  
pittier@geneva-link.ch

Photos:  
Fabian von Schlabrendorff