

Lac Léman
MusicMasterclasses



2015

The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses 2015

Already in its fifth year the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses proved once again in 2015 to be one of the internationally most significant events of high-level musical education for young string players. The course, although comparatively small in terms of the numbers participating (in 2015 there were 24 students attending), again attracted some of the most promising violin, viola, and violoncello players from all over the globe.



It was both amazing and encouraging to see how much the word must have been spread around in the world of classical music about this rather unique event of musical learning and personal development. The attractiveness of the course is no doubt due mainly to the efforts and enthusiasm of the truly outstanding teachers the Association Lac Léman Music Masterclasses has continuously been able to engage in this endeavour. But the other elements which make this such a successful event of musical education are also not to be forgotten: Such master classes could not be

offered if they were not supported in each class of instrument by preeminent pianists familiar with a whole array of repertoire and who are capable of playing the pieces to be studied in concert-like quality. And of course the setting itself can hardly be ignored; this was – as in the past – the Hindemith Music Centre, located in Blonay near Lac Léman or Geneva Lake in one of the most beautiful regions of Switzerland.



It is gratifying for the Association Lac Léman Music Masterclasses to be able to find support from sponsors and many individuals in organizing events such as the 2015 masterclasses, together this time with two concerts open to the general public, one in Vevey and the other in Geneva, and to be able to provide this short report on this unique event.

The Teachers

The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses are proud to have had available as faculty for the course the same great teachers as in the previous years.

There were two violin classes, one directed by Professor Mihaela Martin, and the other by Professor Boris Kuschnir. Professor Nobuko Imai taught the viola class and Professor Frans Helmerson the violoncello class. Daniel Austrich, violonist and violist, provided additional coaching for the study of chamber music works that were presented in concert.



Boris Kuschnir (violin)



Mihaela Martin (violin)



Nobuko Imai (viola)

Mihaela Martin teaches violin at the Musikhochschule in Cologne, at the Haute École de Musique in Geneva, and at the Kronberg Academy, Boris Kuschnir at the University for Music in Vienna. Nobuko Imai has a professorship for viola at the Conservatory in Am-

sterdam, at the Reina Sofia School of Music in Madrid, and teaches at the Kronberg Academy, while Frans Helmerson is professor for violoncello at the Hanns Eisler Musikhochschule in Berlin, and teaches additionally at the Kronberg Academy.

The Teachers

All teachers are internationally highly acclaimed artists in addition to their teaching functions, and their advice to students during the course is therefore very much formed and fuelled by their concert practice. Mihaela Martin, Daniel Austrich, Nobuko Imai, and Frans Helmerson also perform in all major concert halls as the four members of the well-known Michelangelo String Quartet



Frans Helmerson (violoncello)



Daniel Austrich (chamber music)

The excellent teaching support provided by the pianists to students deserves special mention. In the course of fall 2015 the pianists who worked with the students not only in the masterclasses themselves but who also appeared as their partners in the concerts were Rusdan Alavidze from Geneva, Katsura Mizumoto from Brussels, and Ron Regev from Tel Aviv. All of them are internationally acclaimed artists and experienced teachers, both regarding their instrumental ability as well as for their performance of chamber music and were, therefore, able to make a major contribution to the success of the 2015 course.



The Students

The students who participated in the 2015 masterclasses came from a great diversity of countries of origin, including Armenia, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Greece, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Ukraine, United States, and Venezuela. Ranging in age from 14 to 27 years, as in the past, they were selected on the basis of their past achievements and their future promise. Some of those requiring financial support were provided with stipends to enable them to attend the course.



The students attending the masterclasses in fall 2015 were:

Violin

Wonhee Bae, South Korea
Maksym Filatov, Ukraine
Irina Friman, Russia
Jae Hyeong Lee, South Korea
Areg Navarsadyan, Armenia
Shuichi Okada, Japan
Maria José Oviedo, Venezuela
Olatz de Gordejuela, Spain
Aggelos Shoinas, Greece
Simon Wiener, Switzerland
Floris Willem, Belgium

Viola

Loic Abdelfettah, France
Clément Batrel-Genin, France
Hwayoon Lee, South Korea
Ching Han Lin, Taiwan
José Nunes, Portugal
Mathis Rochat, Switzerland
Ziyu Shen, China

Violoncello

Benjamin Lai, United States
Patrick Moriarty, Ireland
Selina Sayaka, Switzerland/Japan
Stéphane Tetreault, Canada
Frida Waervagen, Norway
Alexander Warenberg, Netherlands

All of the students, even the youngest amongst them, demonstrated a high level of professional instrument playing from the outset and were truly the young soloists of the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses as they were called in for the concerts. In the two concerts given, in Geneva and in Vevey, they demonstrated their astonishing ability to bring pieces of classical music to the highest level of performance achievement after a week of intensive studies with one of the teachers of the course.



Course Activities

The 2015 course, as in the previous years, followed the well-proven principle and concept behind the Lac Léman Music Masterclasses of intensive individual studies by the students in partnership with their teachers, combined with guided work in groups of chamber music as well as chamber orchestra.

The 2015 course proved to be particularly intensive as it provided for the first time for two concerts open to the general public outside of the Hindemith Music Centre: one in Vevey and the other in Geneva. This approach lent itself particularly well to providing even more students with the possibility to perform in well-established concert venues.



The first of these concerts was given on 22 October 2015 at the splendid hall of the Hôtel des Trois Couronnes in Vevey and offered a programme with chamber music works of various kinds. The well-attended concert was initiated by a wonderful performance of the Haydn Lark quartet by the Michelangelo String Quartet, followed by equally excellent young soloist presentations of a Dvořák string trio, a Hindemith string quartet, a Prokofiev sonata

for two violins, and a Brahms string quintet. The applause of the audience was long and enthusiastic, demonstrating how well received all the performances of the concert were. LLMM is grateful to the Hôtel des Trois Couronnes for providing its hall for a very successful concert without charges.



Course Activities

The second of the concerts, presented on 24 October 2015, was, as in the previous years, offered at the Grande Salle of the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva. Many thanks to the Conservatory for again providing this wonderful hall complementarily which is very well suited to the purposes of LLMM. The hall was packed with listeners and practically fully occupied. This second concert, too, was introduced by a most moving performance of the Haydn Lark Quartet, to be followed by again outstanding performances of individual pieces by the young LLMM soloists. The works played included the Ciaconne of Bartok's sonata for violin solo, the Allegro moderato of Schubert's Arpeggione sonata for violoncello and piano, Chausson's Poème for violin and piano, and the second and third movements of Hindemith's sonata for viola and piano.



The second part of the concert consisted of a dramatic rendering of Brahms' string quintet op. 111, but in an orchestral version played by all the young soloists, each string section led



by one of the teachers. The audience rose to its feet at the end of the concert, rewarding the players with frenetic applause that simply failed to wane.

In keeping with previous occasions, the course ended with a farewell party at the upper floor of the Geneva Conservatory. The faces of the students spoke volumes: why had the course come to an end so soon!



The Lac Léman Music Masterclasses Association

The LLMM Association is grateful to have received again for the course in 2015 the support of the following important and generous corporate sponsors: The international instruments auction house Tarisio, the private bank Lombard Odier, and the Geneva-based international law firm of Landolt & Koch. These sponsors recognize the importance of strengthening our cultural identity and values, in this case by supporting the work in classical music, and that Switzerland is the right place for such activities. Their endeavours and commitment deserve special praise.

Special thanks also go to the Hindemith Foundation which again supported our efforts by charging reduced rates for students below the age of 26 years.

Likewise we express our gratitude and remain deeply indebted in our efforts to all those individuals who either financially or by way of very practical, hands-on support such as providing overnight-stay to LLMM students in Geneva and surroundings, make it possible for courses such as the one of 2015 to take place. Without such helping hands we could not organize the

masterclasses at all.

In view of the increased activities of LLMM and to find adequate financial support for it the Association has increased the membership of its executive board which now is formed by the following persons: Professor Pierre Tercier, Fribourg, chairman; Benoît Chappuis, lawyer in Geneva; Fabian von Schlabrendorff, lawyer in Frankfurt am Main; Liana Georgana, lawyer in Geneva; Jean-David Pelot, lawyer in Lausanne; and Anne Reiser, lawyer in Geneva.

The board of the LLMM Association calls on everybody in a position to assist to join forces with all those who already support LLMM in order to ensure that the work so successfully begun can be continued. The fundamental purpose of LLMM will continue to provide exceptionally talented young musicians with an opportunity to intensively study works selected by themselves and to achieve an even higher level of mastery of their instrument and of mature interpretation of music with the help of some of the best teachers available.



*Chalet de Lacroix
Hindemith Music Center,
Blonay,
Switzerland*

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

Web: www.llmm.ch

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

Photos:
Fabian von Schlabrendorff