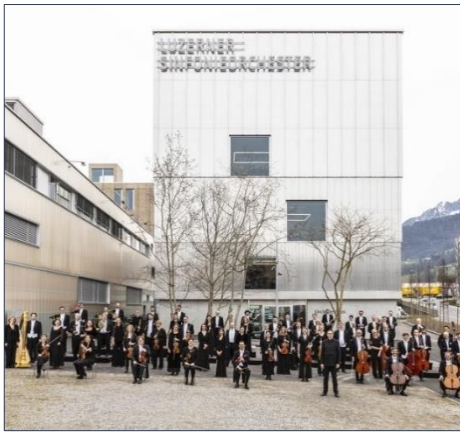




Ready for the Champions League of European orchestras

The Lucerne Symphony Orchestra is setting off into a new musical era with vision, enthusiasm and competence under its new principal conductor, Michael Sanderling,



At the start of the 2021/22 season, the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra is well on its way to becoming one of the very top addresses among the continental orchestras with its new principal conductor, **Michael Sanderling**. Innovative programming, a gradually enlarging group of musicians allowing the interpretation even of late Romantic works, a unique concert hall in the futuristic Lucerne Culture and Convention Centre (KKL) on the shores of Lake Lucerne and a far-sighted directorship – and all this coupled with the enthusiasm and verve of the new principal conductor: Lucerne, Switzerland, the whole of Europe can look forward to very special concert events and an exceptional season.

The **Lucerne Symphony Orchestra** has quite a history to look back on. Founded in the 1805/06 season, at the time when Beethoven was writing his Fourth Symphony, it has since then played its part in shaping the course of musical life in central Europe – in the last few decades not least by commissioning works from the likes of Sofia Gubaidulina, Rodion Shchedrin, Wolfgang Rihm (the composition cycle “Nähe Fern”) and Dieter Amman, whose orchestral work “Boost”, premiered in Lucerne in 2002, will be played again this season (11 + 12 May 2022). There will also be the **world premiere of a Herbert Grönemeyer suite** (26 + 28 November 2021) conducted by the German pop musician himself. Those are just two cornerstones of the enormous stylistic spectrum that the orchestra will now be performing under Michael Sanderling, who has commended his Lucerne musicians for their exceptional “*youthful dash and will to expression*”. The foundation for the thrilling joy in playing and virtuosity exhibited by this homogeneous ensemble, which has already paid musical visits to some 30 countries and 90 cities on four continents, was laid in the last two decades by conductors Jonathan Nott and James Gaffigan, respectively from the UK and the US. Under the baton of the latter, the orchestra and its multi-award-winning recordings received wide **international acclaim**, with praise coming from prestigious newspapers such as *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. And the impressive discography of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra is now to be enlarged further by Michael Sanderling, at first with a complete recording of the symphonies by Johannes Brahms, whose works also form one of the focuses of the 2021/22 season.

Michael Sanderling is by no means an unknown quantity for the Lucerne musicians. The first collaboration goes back to 2010; nine years later, he then went on a tour to South Korea with the orchestra after a two-week residency in Lucerne with concerts in the KKL. Sanderling, who was an internationally acclaimed cellist before succumbing to a – as he himself puts it – “*fateful desire to conduct*”, has now, after a recent stint as principal conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic, taken over the baton in Lucerne, a move that was immediately hailed by critics. Writing about his inaugural concert at the Lucerne Festival on August 23, the Swiss daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* said: “*Sanderling conducted with clear gestures and appealing body language, motivating the Lucerne*

Symphony Orchestra to give a sparkling interpretation.” At the **seasonal opening concert** (20 + 21 October), the new principal conductor will now set the scene for a 21/22 season dominated by works of high Romanticism with Anton Bruckner's Seventh, which kicks off a Lucerne **Bruckner cycle** (the Third Symphony, aka the “Wagner Symphony”, will also be performed in the current season on 11 + 12 May 2022). A first **invitation to the Musikverein in Vienna** is a more than merely symbolic milestone marking the establishment of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra in the top European league. There, Sanderling and his musicians will make their *début* with a programme that includes Antonín Dvořák's symphony “From the New World” (3 December). In spring, regional roots and aspects will be explored under the title “Hindemith and Brahms in Switzerland”, with Brahms's Symphony No. 1 as one of the reference points – the starting signal for the planned complete recording (13 + 14 April 2022). At a guest performance in Muri Abbey (7 May) and the Mother's Day concert (8 May), the orchestra will then bid welcome to one of the great cellists of our age, Johannes Moser, and present an attractive Haydn/Raff/Mozart programme with him. In conjunction with the Lucerne School of Music, it will devote a special concert (31 May) to the Aarau-born Swiss composer **Dieter Ammann** for his 60th birthday under the motto “Glut”, which is also the title of one of his orchestral works to be performed on the occasion. Finally, there will be another big highlight to conclude the season: **Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10 combined with the first screening of a film by William Kentridge** commissioned by the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra (15 + 16 June). Michael Sanderling – who, as the son of the probably most respected Shostakovich interpreter, Kurt Sanderling, seems more than predestined for this project, unique in Europe – will conduct the symphony live during the projection of the work by the South African artist and director.



In his first Lucerne season, Michael Sanderling will also display his **lasting commitment to modern music education and youth development**. One central component in the coming years is to be **family concerts** where listeners of all ages sit up close to the performers and are given an entertaining commentary by the artistic director on the works played (next event 17 April). And **young instrumentalists** can also look forward to performing with Sanderling on the podium – whether the Junge Philharmonie Zentralschweiz (27 January) or graduates of the Lucerne School of Music (21 June), with which there is to be even greater cooperation in future.

The **prominent line-up of international guest conductors and soloists** in the 2021/22 season, who will perform in both symphonic and chamber-music capacities, bears witness to the fact that Lucerne, its symphony orchestra and its concert hall, designed by the architect Jean Nouvel and opened in 1998, are now among the top addresses in the European concert landscape. Visiting artists will include Martha Argerich, Julia Fischer, Fazıl Say, Anna Vinnitskaya, Martin Helmchen, Sol Gabetta and Steven Isserlis, with Pinchas Steinberg and Charles Dutoit at the conducting desk.

Chamber music is also given very high priority in Lucerne. In the 2021/22 season, this will be demonstrated by two exceptional events in particular. The already traditional “**Zaubersee Festival**” (18-22 May) will present programmes with the theme “Russian Music in Lucerne” and provide intimate musical experiences ranging from lunch concert, recitals and discussions with the artists to cinematic evenings, in historic venues such as the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern and the Villa St. Charles Hall in Meggen. In addition, this year will already see the launch of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra's **new festival “Le piano symphonique”**, which in the future will centre each year on the symphonic aspect of a great “piano composer”, supplemented by that composer's solo

and chamber music works. At the premiere in November (9-12), the focus in altogether nine concerts will be on the French Romantic **Camille Saint-Saëns**, the 100th anniversary of whose death is in 2021. And the second edition of the festival is due to take place shortly afterwards in early 2022 (9-13 February), when **Johannes Brahms** – in keeping with the orchestra's current recording project – will take centre stage in eight concerts.

„I very much enjoy the thinking outside the box that happens here“, Michael Sanderling said as he took up his new position. What is more, the new Orchestra House has just been opened for use as a competency centre that provides adequate rehearsal spaces for the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra along with facilities for educational projects and chamber music concerts. The mood in Lucerne is certainly one of optimism active steps are being taken here to ensure a great musical future. And this is clearly reflected in the programme for the 2021/22 season.

 Bettina Schimmer

Auf Rheinberg 2
50676 Köln

+49 (0)221 - 168 796 23
bettina.schimmer@schimmer-pr.de
www.schimmer-pr.de