



HERBSTGOLD – Festival 2023 in Eisenstadt Time of „Longing“, festive moments of musical fulfilment

From 9 to 24 September, Julian Rachlin will once more be inviting outstanding musicians and artists to Eisenstadt. Those taking to the stage will include the actor George Hamilton, Angelika Kirchschlager, John Eliot Gardiner, the soprano Kristīne Opolais, the pianist Kirill Gerstein and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the orchestra-in-residence at Esterházy Palace

Since 2021, Julian Rachlin has put his whole heart into being the artistic director of HERBSTGOLD. Now, the internationally acclaimed violinist, conductor and director is presenting the seventh edition of the festival. It is themed “Longing” and will have a wide variety of thrilling performances on offer from 9 to 24 September.



Julian Rachlin has the following to say about the festival's motto: "Music is the direct manifestation of human longing. So what could be more natural than to immerse oneself in the world of music, which is created only by movements of the emotions and yearning vibrations of the soul? Every life story finds the works that fit it, its favourite composers and interpreters. All of this is to be found again this year at HERBSTGOLD: moving concert experiences that stimulate the longing for

love, fulfilment and peace." Rachlin hopes that with the HERBSTGOLD festival, he can temporarily distract people a little from the crises and catastrophes of our time: "Particularly in difficult and uncertain periods, we are united by the longing for a better world. We find it in the beauty of timeless musical masterpieces, especially when they are performed by top-class artists and ensembles like Kristīne Opolais, John Eliot Gardiner and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. We hope that with the HERBSTGOLD festival, we can bring people together to share outstanding musical events with each other."

HERBSTGOLD gleaming again with big names

This year, too, first-rate artists from a wide range of fields will meet up in Eisenstadt. The soprano Kristīne Opolais can be experienced with a concert of arias and lieder, while the New York singer Samara Joy will breathe new life into jazz standards with her laid-back groove. Both are among the musicians making their HERBSTGOLD debut this year. The legendary Hollywood actor George Hamilton will also be in Eisenstadt for the first time, as speaker. The Isidore String Quartet made its Eisenstadt debut at the "quartetto plus" festival in spring. But the violinist Boris Brovtsyn, the Janoska Ensemble and the violist Sarah McElravy count among the true "festival regulars", having already presented themselves at HERBSTGOLD in previous years as first-class chamber musicians.

For the past few years, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe has been considered the heart of the festival. It is the orchestra-in-residence at Esterházy Palace and will give the opening concert of HERBSTGOLD 2023

on 13 September, with a programme that includes Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. HERBSTGOLD's guiding spirit, Julian Rachlin, will perform in it as soloist and conductor and later also take part in chamber music at the festival, among other things giving a duo concert with Kirill Gerstein on 17 September and playing in various string quartets and quintets.

Last year, a Mozart *singspiel*, "Bastien und Bastienne", was on the programme. This year, however, the festival is returning to Haydn's operatic works, with the early music theatre piece "Acide" being staged on 9 September as a prelude before the actual opening concert. This work, which the 30-year-old Haydn described as his "very first opera", is based on the Greek legend of Acis and Galatea. The plot tells how the Cyclops Polyphemus, in a fit of jealous longing, kills his rival Acis, who is then turned into a river at the request of the grieving Galatea and from then on flows into the sea in which she receives him lovingly as a nymph. After the great success scored last year by the directing duo Carolin Pienkos and Cornelius Obonya with its production of "Bastien und Bastienne", it was decided to re-engage the two for this year. Now, this pair of directors is working on Haydn's early work together with the conductor Heinz Ferlesch and the Barucco Consort and will present a brilliant staging with a young ensemble. In "Acide," the contralto **Cornelia Sonnleithner** will take on the role of Tetide: "I am delighted to be able to appear in Acide at the HERBSTGOLD festival this year. Haydn is still very underestimated as an operatic composer and it is wonderful that we have the chance at the festival to perform this piece, especially in a venue as splendid as the Haynsaal at Esterházy Palace."

What would HERBSTGOLD be without Esterházy Palace? In 2023, this magnificent baroque building will once more shed its radiance as a jewel among the concert venues of the international festival landscape. From the outset, Julian Rachlin saw the palace as a unique location where world stars could gather in exquisite surrounds to enchant their audience with top-flight artistry. At the same time, HERBSTGOLD aspires to be a festival with a very broad spectrum: performances of classical music ranging from opera and big orchestral concerts to lied recitals, chamber music and programmes combining literature and music, rounded out by unforgettable evenings with jazz, Balkan or world music, all imbedded in the culinary festival Pan O'Gusto.

Esterházy as a driving force behind cultural tourism

In 2022, thanks to internationally known artists such as John Malkovich, Juan Diego Flórez and the Quatuor Ébène, the festival drew a bigger attendance than ever before, welcoming some 6,500 visitors. There was such great demand at the concert by Juan Diego Flórez that additional seating was even put on the stage for the audience. The chairman of the Esterházy Foundations, **Dr. Stefan Ottrubay**, sees the HERBSTGOLD festival as an ongoing success story in the state of Burgenland: "The coronavirus pandemic lockdown made us realise afresh how very valuable concert events are. Among all the festivals in Burgenland, HERBSTGOLD is particularly popular with the public: the 2022 edition was the most successful in the festival's existence. We are sure that with the internationally recognised musician Julian Rachlin, the 2023 edition can continue this successful course and that HERBSTGOLD will contribute to establishing Burgenland even more firmly as a major location for art and culture within Austria."

**HERBST
GOLD** FESTIVAL IN
EISENSTADT

09 - 24 September 2023

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