



## Innovation and nostalgia

### The Sound of Time: The südtirol festival merano . meran 2023

Classical highlights meet the sound of the present, outstanding musicians present unusual interpretations of legendary standards, and the unjustly forgotten is rediscovered and provides surprises. Under the motto "Innovation and Nostalgia", the südtirol festival merano . meran 2023 presents an exquisite and varied programme at attractive venues, where music knows no boundaries.

**Anne-Sophie Mutter** with her "Virtuosi" (05.09), for example, presents the "black Mozart" Joseph Bologne, spanning an arc of music history from the Baroque masters Bach and Vivaldi to a nonet for two string quartets composed by André Previn for this exceptional ensemble. Schumann's romantic piano concerto can be heard twice this year and yet sounds different on each of the two concert evenings, and **Daniel Hope & Friends** (15.09) juxtapose ballads and dances from Ireland with stylised folk music from the Renaissance and the great repertoire cabinet of the Baroque at Schloss Tirol.

The **Baltic Sea Philharmonic** (20.09), led by **Kristjan Järvi**, combines a "Cantus Arcticus" for bird calls and orchestra with Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite, and cellist **Anastasia Kobekina** (19. 09) follows the repertoire development of her instrument from Bach's cello suites to a "Fandango", with which Giovanni Sollima continues to write a quintet by Boccherini 218 years after it was written, to a "Pianissimo" from the "Cello" book by the Latvian contemporary composer Peteris Vasks. Piano entertainer **Joja Wendt** (30 August) takes a wild ride through the classical and pop archives with virtuosic, bold new interpretations from Beethoven to Michael Jackson, Prince and Ed Sheeran.

From 24 August to 20 September 2023, the südtirol festival merano . meran offers 26 top concerts. The festival calendar comprises seven "brands" assigned to different locations: the symphonic programme ("classic") in the Kursaal, chamber music in the Pavillon des Fleurs ("matinée classique"), jazz and cross-over projects in the Municipal Theatre and in the Kursaal ("colours"), baroque music in the Palais Mamming and in Merano churches ("barocco"), a cappella concerts ("vox humana"), the "mystica" series and the "young artists portrait" in the castles and churches of the Merano region. In addition, the new format "open theatre" is a free concert as a gift to the city of Merano, as a thank you to a loyal audience - above all - as an invitation to a younger generation to experience music live.

Symphonic music is the heart of the festival. On 24 August, the **Mahler Chamber Orchestra**, conducted by **Daniel Harding**, opens the 38th edition of the festival with **Daniil Trifonov**, praised as "the most incomprehensible piano talent of the past decades". The **Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra** under **Jukka-Pekka Saraste** travels with the young British pianist **Martin James Bartlett** (29.08) and the **Bavarian State Orchestra** led by General Music Director **Vladimir Jurowski** brings the piano virtuoso **Yefim Bronfman** (07.09). The **Royal Philharmonic London** performs with its music director **Vasily Petrenko** and violinist **Sergei Krylov** (12.09) and the **Japan National Orchestra** with conductor and

pianist **Kyohei Sorita** (18.09) plays a programme ranging from Dimitri Shostakovich's parodistic First Piano Concerto to Peter Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings.

The young artists portrait, vox humana, matinée classique, barocco, colours and mystica series also feature prominent performers: The British **Barbican Quartet**, which won first prize in the string quartet category at the 71st ARD International Music Competition in 2022, will give guest performances at Baslan Castle (26.08) and Schenna Castle (27.08), where they will engage in conversation with the audience. The Tyrolean **Musicbanda Franui** (13.09) follows the ballads, marches and dances that have been incorporated into "classical" art music, encountering tunes that have gone round in circles so objectionably fast that they have not made it into official songbooks. In the concert by **BachWerkVokal Salzburg** conducted by **Gordon Safari** (31.08), cantatas and motets by Bach meet sacred songs by Reger, who himself sat at the organ console during a stay at a health resort in the Meran parish church in 1914, and **Rafal Blechacz** (02.09) links variations by Beethoven and Szymanowski with a "Clavir Übung" by Bach and Chopin's famous third piano sonata.

**The Nagash Ensemble** (14.09) translates Armenian exile poems into a soundscape in which medieval vocal music, the minimalist string sound of the 20th century, irregular dance rhythms, duduk sounds and arpeggios on the kink-necked lute oud flow together as if in a melting pot, the **Norwegian Soloists Choir** conducted by **Grete Pedersen** (03. 09) interpret a cappella music by Strauss, Grieg and Bach, and the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** conducted by **Tõnu Kaljuste** (17.09) sings sacred music from Eastern Europe - from Tchaikovsky's "Nine Liturgical Choruses" to Rachmaninoff's "All-Night Vigil" to Arvo Pärt's spiritual minimalism. **Georg Gratzer** and **Klemens Bittmann** (11.09) combine Telemann's "Sonatas in Canon" with music from the 20th century such as Piazzolla's "Libertango" or the sound cloud "A Lotus on Irish Streams", in which John McLaughlin enriches a straightforward folk melody with jazz improvisations - this is also an interesting mixture of "old" and "new" or: innovation and nostalgia.

**Info & tickets:** [www.meranofestival.com](http://www.meranofestival.com) . phone: +39 0473 496030

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