

Press release, 06 December, 2016

International stars up close at the Bergen International Festival

The classical programme of the 2017 Bergen International Festival is filled to the brim with Norwegian and international stars, ensembles and gifted young musicians.

‘Classical music is still the cornerstone of the diverse festival programme. I am proud to be able to present over forty concerts with so many fantastic names,’ says festival director Anders Beyer, who recently unveiled the [classical concert programme](#).

The 2017 [Bergen International Festival](#) takes place from 24 May until 7 June. Amongst names to make a note of are the celebrated Chinese pianist [Lang Lang](#), the German counter-tenor [Andreas Scholl](#) and the Belgian baroque orchestra [B’Rock](#) conducted by René Jacobs.

The first lady of Finnish contemporary music

[Kaija Saariaho](#) from Finland is the 2017 Festival Composer and Artist in Residence. Finnish music is a rich and important part of Nordic cultural heritage, and next year’s celebration of Finland’s centenary provides a golden opportunity for the Festival to highlight Saariaho’s artistry. Her music – including a [world premiere](#) – will be presented at a variety of venues and formats: chamber, operatic and orchestral. She will hold master classes and participate in debates, and her music features in the [Closing Concert](#).

‘The Bergen International Festival is a cornerstone in Nordic music life, celebrating art of the past, present and future. It is inspiring to be featured as Artist in Residence in 2017,’ says Kaija Saariaho.

Great music in intimate venues

Tradition and revitalisation go hand in hand at the numerous concerts in [Troldsalen](#) and the [composers’ homes](#) of Edvard Grieg, Ole Bull and Harald Sæverud. Dutch violinist [Janine Jansen](#) performs in Troldsalen alongside musicians from the mentoring programme Crescendo, as well as in [Håkonshallen](#). Other names to note are [Anne Sofie von Otter](#), [Kathryn Stott](#) and [Isabell van Keulen](#).

‘Stars like these in such intimate and historical settings will most certainly make for extraordinary concert experiences,’ says director Anders Beyer.

Cellist [Alisa Weilerstein](#) and pianist [Jonathan Biss](#), both from the USA, are new mentors in the Crescendo programme. They give concerts in a variety of constellations, both with each other and with the [young soloists](#) Guro Kleven Hagen, Eivind Holtsmark Ringstad and Kian Soltani.

In celebration of the Norwegian Society of Composers’ 100 year anniversary in 2017, the Bergen International Festival are showcasing a plethora of Norwegian composers, old and new, including world premieres and commissions by Olav Anton Thommessen, Eivind Buene and Rolf Wallin.

The remaining programme for the 2017 Festival will be launched on 15 February 2017.

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