



## **südtirol festival merano 2024**

### **Hope and Soul**

In its 39th edition, the südtirol festival merano aims to inspire joy, courage and confidence in the face of the tense situation in the world. In the opening concert on 22 August, tenor Rolando Villazón and the Lautten Compagny Berlin will embark on an exciting "journey of the soul" to the Italian 17th century in the Kursaal - and enter an era in which people with their actions and feelings enter the stage as "spiritual individuals" and Monteverdi and his contemporaries develop a completely new style with their solo madrigals and cantatas, which is still fascinatingly topical today.

Hope and soul: The Staatskapelle Dresden under the direction of Daniele Gatti and with soloist Rudolf Buchbinder celebrate an enlightenment with Beethoven's ballet music "The Creatures of Prometheus", which - like the bound god in Goethe and Aeschylus - frees people from bondage (12.09), Daniel Hope and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra dance exuberantly through musical history (17.09.) and in a performance in words and sound at Castle Tyrol, Tobias Moretti and the Ensemble Armonico Tributo combine "heavenly" worlds of faith with music from the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic songs or the Western European polyphony of Rameau, Couperin, Bach and Telemann (16.09).

From 22 August to 23 September, the international classical music elite will once again travel to the garden and spa town of Merano. The festival offers 26 concerts in eight concert formats at 14 venues in Merano and in the castles and churches of the Merano region - and the "symphonic" series "classic" is the centrepiece of this major European music festival. The Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Sebastian Knauer (piano) and Morten Friis (vibraphone) play music about Bach, in which you hear Bach without hearing Bach (27.08), the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Manfred Honeck - one of the most important US orchestras - presents Rachmaninov's piano concerto "for Elephants" and Mahler's symphonic debut with pianist Yefim Bronfman (29.08) and with gongs, crystal bells and shamanic drums, the Italian ensembles Lux Vivens and Polifonico Adiemus celebrate light in all its forms in the parish church (03.09).

The Philharmonia Orchestra London under Daniele Rustioni performs Beethoven's "Eroica" and Rachmaninov's romantic second piano concerto (05.09, soloist: Yulianna Avdeeva). The Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia under the direction of Gianandrea Noseda will be performing on 19 September with the two piano virtuosos Jan Lisiecki and Francesco Piemontesi: On this evening, Jörg Widmann's concert overture "Con brio" transposes Beethoven's furore into new worlds of sound, in Mozart's concerto for two pianos the pianists wrestle for supremacy and at the end is Beethoven's 5th Symphony, the first movement of which is to be played "con brio". On 23 September, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Petr Polpelka and pianist Anna Vinnitskaya will perform Bartók's "Concerto for Orchestra" - the humorous swan song of a man suffering from leukaemia whose music no one in the USA wants to hear - and Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto at the festival's closing concert.

"colours", "matinée classique", "vox humana", "barocco" or "mystica": the programmes of the other concert series of the südtirol festival merano include the musical freestyle of the Janoska Ensemble (26.08) as well as the songs of world star Ute Lemper (11.09) and the big birthday show of the brass music combo Mnozil Brass (18.09). The a cappella choir Ars Nova Copenhagen opens up a broad Nordic sound space in the Niederlana parish church, whose architects include the Swedish composers Karin Rehnqvist and Willhelm Stenhammar as well as the Dane Bent Sørensen, whose heavenly "angel music" ends with a French love song from the late Middle Ages (30.08). The Modigliani String Quartet will play string quartets by Brahms and Beethoven in the Pavillon des Fleurs (14.09) and flautist Stefan Temmingh and his ensemble will combine a focus on Handel operas with English baroque grooves in the Evangelical Church of Merano (20.09).

This year's festival once again presents ensembles and soloists from South Tyrol. The young flutist Chantal Ramona Veit plays a repertoire with Michael Cede (flute) and Michael Schöch (piano) in the Pavillon des Fleurs that begins historically with Telemann's baroque "Exercises" and does not shy away from symphonic "classics" (07.09). The Capella Lanensis interprets works from the 17th century in the Parish Church of Parcines by composers who made and wrote music in spiritual centres in South Tyrol, such as Leopold von Plawenn in the Marienberg monastery, the cathedral organist in Bressanone Johann Jacob Walther, the novice master in the Franciscan monastery in Bolzano Ingenuin Molitor or the "famous composer" Romanus Weichlein, director of the collegiate music in the Säben monastery (02.09). Singing from guilt and sin to encouragement and confidence in the world or hope: With timpani, jew's harps, body percussion and in the parish church in St. Leonhard, the South Tyrolean Youth Choir invites you on an optimistic journey into the world of contemporary music (15.09).

From works from Joseph Haydn's last quartet series and Schumann's A major quartet to Beethoven's Opus 131, which Wagner described as a "revelation from another world", the young French string quartet Quatuor Arod presents itself at Baslan Castle (24.08) and Schenna Castle (25.08) - and enters into dialogue with the audience.

The classical band Spark and Irish singer-songwriter Wallis Bird present compositions from five centuries written by women in an open concert in the Kursaal (04.09). A melody by Hildegard von Bingen merges with an indie song by Icelandic world star Björk. A Renaissance ground by Francesca Caccini meets hits by Kate Bush and Tori Amos. Timeless standards by soul, jazz and rock icons such as Joni Mitchell, Carole King and Janis Joplin are juxtaposed with the sound of French composer Germaine Tailleferre or the minimal structures of Australian composer Elena Kats-Chernin. This is also a sign of hope: on this evening, the festival thanks its audience and invites a younger generation to experience music live.