



Media Release

Kaija Saariaho, composer-in-residence

The creed of a woman composer: “I try to find a balance between intellect and feeling. I want to create this balance in order to reach greater depths. I like to communicate existential musical experiences. Our musical education begins when our mothers sing lullabies to us. As a composer, I want to proceed from this music, the first I heard in my life. I don’t want to be an elitist.” Born in Helsinki in 1952 and resident in Paris since 1982, Kaija Saariaho takes us into the realms of dreams and imagination. She draws inspiration from the wonders of nature, from the aurora borealis, water lilies, or crystals. She makes use of scientific phenomena and constantly crosses over to other art forms – to painting, which she initially studied after high school, and to literature, cinema, and video art. Her secret: “Music is my way of approaching the divine.”

As LUCERNE FESTIVAL’s composer-in-residence, Kaija Saariaho will present compositions of the last two-and-a-half decades, from her first successful piece, *Lichtbogen* (1986), which works with spectral analysis, to her most recent orchestral work, *Laterna Magica*, a tribute to the great film director Ingmar Bergman. The main emphasis will fall on her compositions with live electronics, in the focus of the LUCERNE FESTIVAL ACADEMY, which will take up her music in several concerts.

Like her fellow composer Jörg Widmann, Kaija Saariaho is an unconventional musician who sought and found her own distinctive path beyond schools and doctrines. She fears neither consonant sonorities nor bold emotions: “People often find my music too emotional” she points out, “but art always has an emotional background, and anyone who tries to hide emotions has in my opinion a big problem”.

Concert Dates with Kaija Saariaho:

Lucerne Museum of Art (12 August – 22 November): Kaija Saariaho and Jean-Baptiste Barrière, *Nox Borealis*, a musical and visual installation.

Modern 2 (23 August): Ensemble Intercontemporain with Susanna Mälkki, Barbara Hannigan, Raphaële Kennedy, Emmanuelle Ophèle, Eric-Maria Couturier, the IRCAM Production Team and Jean-Baptiste Barrière

Symphony Concert 7 (24 August): Philharmonia Orchestra, London, with Esa-Pekka Salonen

Film 6 (30 and 31 August): “Kaija Saariaho – Die Liebe aus der Ferne” (“Kaija Saariaho – Love from Afar”)

Introduction to Symphony Concert 15 (2 September): Kaija Saariaho and Gabriela Kaegi

Symphony Concert 15 (2 September): Berlin Philharmonic with Sir Simon Rattle

Meet the Artist 5 (6 September): Kaija Saariaho and Gabriela Kaegi

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Film 9 (7 September): "L'Amour de loin"

Introduction to Modern 6 (9 September): Kaija Saariaho and students from LUCERNE FESTIVAL ACADEMY with Florian Hauser

Modern 6 (9 September): LUCERNE FESTIVAL ACADEMY Ensemble and Jean Deroyer

Academy Forum 8 (11 September): Contemporary Music Studio of Lucerne Musikhochschule, with Kaija Saariaho, Gary Berger and Ludwig Wicki

Introduction to Modern 7 (12 September): Kaija Saariaho, Michael Jarrell and Gabriela Kaegi

Modern 7 (12 September): Ensemble Contrechamps with Stefan Asbury and Isabelle Faust

Film 11 (13-14 September): "Picture of Light"