

Media Release

Riccardo Chailly's term as Music Director of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra has been extended until the end of 2028.

Lucerne Festival today released the program for Lucerne Festival Spring, which will take place from 27 to 29 March 2026.

Lucerne, 1 December 2025. Riccardo Chailly will continue his collaboration as Music Director of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra through the end of 2028. The agreement reached between Chailly and Lucerne Festival, which had previously covered performances through the summer of 2026, now also includes international tour projects and future collaborations with the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO). Chailly will continue to lead concerts in the Spring and Summer Festivals, including the official opening.

The program for Lucerne Festival Spring, which will take place from 27 to 29 March 2026, was announced today. The concerts will be performed by the Lucerne Festival Orchestra. Franz Welser-Möst will conduct the Opening Concert on Friday, 27 March, while Music Director Riccardo Chailly will ascend the podium on Sunday, 29 March. The members of the Hagen Quartet, who were among the founding musicians of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, will bid farewell to Swiss concert stages with a chamber music evening on Saturday, 28 March. Among the featured soloists, Lucerne Festival will welcome pianist Leif Ove Andsnes for the Opening Concert, followed by pianist Kirill Gerstein and acclaimed young cellist Julia Hagen, winner of the 2024 UBS Young Artist Award, who captivated audiences last summer with her performance of Elgar's Cello Concerto. On Sunday evening, violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian will appear as the soloist.

Riccardo Chailly to remain at the helm of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra

Riccardo Chailly has served as Music Director of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra since 2016, when he succeeded Claudio Abbado. The Festival's Executive and Artistic Director Sebastian Nordmann remarks: "I am delighted that we have been able to extend Riccardo Chailly's tenure as Music Director of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra. This also reflects the express wish of the musicians themselves. In their acclaimed performances in recent years, it has become unmistakably clear how deeply he has grown together with the musicians and how impressively he has continued to shape the orchestra's artistic profile – with the Rachmaninoff cycle in recent years, as well as in works by Ravel, Strauss, and Wagner." Adds Riccardo Chailly: "With the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, after ten years of collaboration, we share not only a deep musical understanding but also a personal friendship. So it's a joy for me to think that our relationship will continue for the next three seasons. I really look forward to our continued work together with the new Director Sebastian Nordmann as we expand our repertoire, take some risks, and embark on new musical adventures. This orchestra loves challenges – and that is a great source of inspiration for me."

Highlights of Lucerne Festival's 2026 Spring Festival

Franz Welser-Möst will open the Festival on Friday evening with Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, the *Eroica*. On Sunday, Riccardo Chailly continues the Beethoven focus with a performance of the Symphony No. 4. Pianist Leif Ove Andsnes will appear on Friday as the soloist in Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor, K. 466, while violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian will perform Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto on Sunday. For more than four decades, the Hagen Quartet has ranked among the most sought-after ensembles in the world and was featured at Lucerne Festival in the summer of 2011 as quartet-in-residence. On Saturday evening, the Hagens will give their final concert in Switzerland. Joining them will be cellist Julia Hagen, representing the youngest generation of the Hagen family,

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along with pianist Kirill Gerstein. Their program will feature Brahms's Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, and Schubert's String Quintet in C major, D 956.

About the Lucerne Festival Orchestra

By founding the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, which gave its first public performance in August 2003, conductor Claudio Abbado and Executive and Artistic Director Michael Haefliger revived the spirit of the Lucerne Festival's origins in 1938 - when Arturo Toscanini brought together celebrated virtuosos of his time to form a unique elite orchestra for the legendary Concert de Gala. Riccardo Chailly has served as the orchestra's Music Director since 2016. In recent years, the podium has also been graced by such distinguished guest conductors as Herbert Blomstedt, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Bernard Haitink, Jakub Hrůša, Andris Nelsons, Sir Simon Rattle, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Since 2022, the orchestra has performed not only in the summer but also each spring in Lucerne. Beyond the festival season, its members appear as soloists, hold positions in leading international orchestras, and teach at major conservatories; many also come from the ranks of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and the Filarmonica della Scala. Claudio Abbado served as the orchestra's Artistic Director until his death in January 2014.

Tickets for Lucerne Festival Spring will go on sale beginning on 9 December 2025 at 10:00 am (Swiss time). Complete details of the programming can be found on the [Festival's website](#).

Photos may be downloaded at lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos

Video statement by Riccardo Chailly:



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