

## Media Release

### “In the Streets: City Stage” – Lucerne’s Street Music Festival Reinvents Itself

Lucerne, 15 April 2026. The “In the Streets” concerts have been a popular fixture of Lucerne Festival’s program since 2005. Now this “festival within the Festival” is reinventing itself. For six days each year at the end of August, it fills Lucerne’s city center with sound and is open to all – and now with a stronger focus on direct interaction with audiences. At the same time, “In the Streets: City Stage” forges musical connections with Lucerne Festival’s main program, which runs from 13 August to 13 September and presents more than 120 events, primarily in the venues of the KKL Luzern and on the Europaplatz. Sebastian Nordmann, the Festival’s new Executive and Artistic Director, has appointed cultural manager and former Contemporary director Felix Heri to lead the project; for three of the seven projects, Lucerne Festival is also collaborating with guerillaclassics from Zurich.

From 25 to 30 August 2026, the new “In the Streets: City Stage” will draw on a series of creative projects to forge artistic cross-connections exploring the summer theme “American Dreams.” This means that some of the artists performing at the KKL can also be experienced in Lucerne’s city center. In addition, musicians of the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO) will now also perform for audiences in public spaces on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt.

“We want this new street music festival to get even more people excited about our Festival concept – especially those who might not otherwise go to classical concerts,” explains Sebastian Nordmann. “Through formats such as pop-up concerts or our ‘Jukebox,’ we engage directly with the audience and create new, accessible ways into classical music.”

“**Rhythm ‘n’ Loops**” is the title of a project by a percussion quartet from the LFCO, which will perform a total of four times as part of “In the Streets: City Stage,” on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt. Four works by Steve Reich will be performed, including the iconic pieces *Clapping Music* and *Drumming* – American minimalist music featuring marimbas, vibraphones, claves, and bongos. The project will be prepared by João Carlos Pacheco, who as an alumnus and coach has been active for years at the Academy and the Forward Festival.

At the “**Symphonic Jukebox**,” the audience helps decide what is performed. The repertoire prepared by the musicians of the LFCO for the four interactive concerts on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt ranges from Vivaldi and Beethoven to Smetana’s *Vltava* and Dukas’s *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*. And, in keeping with the “American Dreams” Festival theme, music by George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, and John Adams is also featured. The young Lucerne-based conductor Joseph Sieber, who took part in the Festival’s Contemporary-Conducting Program in 2023, serves as host and musical director, guiding the audience through the program.

The project “**American Dream House**” will be realized in collaboration with guerillaclassics. Beginning on 25 August, an unusual yellow object will be set up in the city for two days, functioning both as a pop-up installation and a miniature concert hall. Visitors will be able to enter the “balloon” in small groups over a four-hour period in the late afternoon and experience a playful intervention in everyday urban life, inspired by the legendary Dream House, a light-and-sound installation by the American minimalist La Monte Young and his wife Marian Zazeela. Musicians of the LFCO will fill this temporary art space with the sounds of Young’s *Trio for Strings*. The project is being curated by Tracy September and Severin Kolb of guerillaclassics.

The renowned American clarinetist Doreen Ketchens, who will also appear on 30 August in the Academy concert in the KKL’s Lucerne Hall, will collaborate with young musicians of the LFCO on the project “**Reflecting the Streets of New Orleans**.” Through workshops and joint performances, they

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will immerse themselves in the musical heritage of Ketchens's hometown of New Orleans and develop a program over the course of a week that moves between tradition, improvisation, and modernity. The focus is on improvisation, on the simultaneity of playing and marching, and on the street as an urban space where people, musical traditions, and history intersect. The result is not a folkloristic homage to a bygone America but a multi-voiced "American Dream." Several performances by Doreen Ketchens in collaboration with musicians of the LFCO will take place on 26 and 27 August on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt; Simone Keller and Jessie Cox will contribute to the preparatory work. The project is being curated by Hiromi Gut of guerillaclassics.

The sound artist Andres Bosshard describes his approach as "active urban sound gardening," encouraging attentive listening: how many pockets of quiet can be found in Lucerne? How does the noise of highways cutting through the landscape blend with the flow of the postglacial Reuss River? A 60-minute "**Sound Walk**" with musicians of the LFCO and flutist Phoebe Bognár will take place on four evenings along Lucerne's Musegg Wall in the Old Town, a stretch of old fortifications with nine towers. The meeting point is the Schirmerturm on the Musegg Wall. This project is also being realized in collaboration with guerillaclassics.

"Fiveby5" is the name of a group of five young trumpeters from Great Britain, Sweden, and Ukraine, who have put together a program entitled "**Brass Spectacular**," which will be presented twice on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt. The ensemble, formed four years ago at London's Royal Academy of Music, will present a varied program ranging from J. S. Bach, Rameau, and Mozart to Aaron Copland's cowboy ballet *Rodeo*.

The Swiss quintet Dixie-Ramblers is also devoted to the sounds of the jazz metropolis of New Orleans, where it has previously performed. Four concerts of the "**Dixieland Marching Band**" will take place starting 28 August on Kapellplatz and Weinmarkt, but the quintet will also move through Lucerne's Old Town streets. New Orleans, where numerous brass bands sprang up in the late 19th century, is considered the birthplace of jazz. With trumpets and trombones, clarinets, saxophones, sousaphones, and banjos, they marched as "second line" ensembles in parades and funerals and shaped the city's sound: a distinctive blend of musical styles that combines European marches with African rhythms.

[All dates and further information on "In the Streets: City Stage"](#)

Photos may be downloaded at [lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos](http://lucernefestival.ch/en/press/photos)

Grants and Subsidies - Stadt Luzern

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