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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE VERBIER FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES AN UNLIMITED PROGRAMME FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET, FROM THE HEIGHTS OF MONT-FORT TO THE HEART OF VAL DE BAGNES

UNLIMITED TAKES THE MUSICALLY CURIOUS ON AN EXPERIENTIAL ADVENTURE AROUND THE ALPS WHERE MUSIC REFLECTS THE SOARING LANDSCAPE

- A magical moment at an altitude of 3,300 meters, as musicians of the Verbier Festival perform at the peak of Mont-Fort during sunrise in an iconic pilgrimage
- Nature becomes the stage, with artistic soundwalks and installations, plus an abundance of outdoor concerts and panoramic views across Verbier
- Secret, intimate and eclectic concerts, a toy-box of events for VF Kids, plus conversations on the future of music and more
- Expanding programming into neighbouring community of Le Châble with a two-week residency at Espace Saint-Marc
- In the interest of public safety, all Unlimited events are accessible only by registration, either in advance or at the door

28 May, 2021 – VERBIER (Switzerland) – Stimulating curiosity for arts and culture, the Verbier Festival's Unlimited programme offers a musical smorgasbord as live performances return to the Alps this summer. With a programme bursting with new experiences, talks and plenty of free concerts, there is something for everyone from the musically inquisitive to the seasoned lovers of classical music.

This summer, open-air concerts are all the rage with Garden Parties on the green of Hôtel de la Poste and Panorama Concerts overlooking Verbier from the Terrace of Chalet d'Adrien. With this splendid outdoor selection, the stage is certainly set for audiences to delight in the musical treats from Unlimited whilst enjoying the Alpine air and unchallenged views of Verbier.

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Of course, nature has long been an inspiration and subject at the heart of classical music, and Unlimited makes the great outdoors the peak of the experience this year. Kiki Thompson, Director of the Verbier 3-D Foundation leads audiences on a stroll through the sound work of Philip Samartzis, the Foundation's artist in residence, set to stunning photographs exhibited along the way. Elsewhere, musicians and audiences ascend to the top of Mont-Fort—the highest summit north of the Col de Louvie—for an astonishing performance at sunrise.

Mother Nature is also a central theme in the Verbier Festival Philanthropy Forum, which is presented as part of Unlimited. In partnership with Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, the 2021 Forum explores “Harnessing the Power of Philanthropy for our Planet”. The power-line-up of speakers includes Lynda Mansson, Managing Director, MAVA Fondation pour la nature, Bertrand Piccard FRSGS Psychiatrist and Aeronaut, and Hansjörg Wyss Chairman, The Wyss Foundation. The panel is moderated by Etienne Eichenberger President, Swiss Philanthropy Foundation.

Descend 2,500 metres closer to sea-level from Mont-Fort to Espace Saint-Marc in neighbouring Le Châble, where a dazzling light installation created for Unlimited by the Scale collective will transform three Unlimited ‘Electrify’ concerts from the transcendent to the experiential. This eclectic series of amplified music is highlighted by the world premiere of a new work commissioned by the Verbier Festival Academy from composer and DJ Gabriel Prokofiev. Prokofiev's programme, *Pastoral 21*, features both the music of Beethoven and his own new work for string ensemble, electronics and field recordings, composed in response to the *Pastoral Symphony*. Then, navigating through electronic, classical and experimental music, duo Lost Heritage present an immersive experience in music, image and light with recent Victoires de la Musique Classique Finalist and Verbier Festival Academy alumna, soprano Jeanne Gérard, and double bassist Franck Cottet Dumoulin. This light world aspect of the Festival will also see jazz and radio man, composer and improviser, André Manoukian, navigating between musical styles in a solo jazz concert.

Over at the intimate Taratata, the Drôles d'oiseaux series presents Adèle Charvet, rising vocal star and winner of the Verbier Festival Academy's 2017 *Prix Yves Paternot*, who returns to the Festival to take on the role of revolutionary cook Julia Child in a delectable song programme with pianist James Baillieu. Then, a celebration of Cole Porter will whisk audiences back to the shining lights of Broadway, as singers and instrumentalists of the Academy unite for a cabaret performance of Porter and his contemporaries. Unlimited's popular Secret Concerts return too, featuring some of the Festival's biggest stars in an unlikely intimate performance for no more than 50 guests. Unlimited keeps the public guessing as the identity of each concert's performer(s) is kept top secret until the very first note is heard.

Unlimited remains a place for exploration, discussion, and imagination for the future of classical music and the performing arts. Stephen McHolm, Director of both the Verbier Festival

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Academy and Unlimited, moderates a conversation entitled 'Is Anyone Listening? Reflections on New Composition' with pianist and composer Fazil Say, who also performs on the Festival's Mainstage this summer, Pedja Muzijevic pianist and artistic programmer at the Baryshnikov Arts Center and Tippet Rise Art Center, and Dorothy Yeung, of the I&I foundation. Leaders in technology and the arts from École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and École de design et haute école d'art de Valais à Sierre (ÉDHÉA) explore innovations that are revolutionizing our approach to art and culture in a talk moderated by journalist Charlotte Gardner. Further talks include Daniel Hope presenting his extensive research around his Mainstage programme *Escape to Paradise* in discussion with Thomas Hampson, plus Stephen Johnson on Mahler and Martine Pernoud psychologist and music therapist on early childhood and musical awakening.

There's plenty to keep children creatively engaged thanks to Unlimited. The VF Kids Storytellers project is offered during the first week of the Festival, where children explore Beethoven's Fifth Symphony through the story of The Three Little Pigs. In a new workshop every day, they will discover the composer and musical instruments while making illustrations which will then be featured in a public performance featuring alumni of the Verbier Festival Academy. In its second week, Unlimited offers a fantastical look into the world of opera, where children from ages 4 to 12 create and workshop operas in the VF Kids Opera Dahu programme. Through singing and art workshops led by Geneva's Académie de l'Opéra association with illustrator and animator Marc Philippin, children prepare for their very own *Puccimini* concert.

This 28th edition of the Verbier Festival is made possible with the support of many philanthropic, corporate and public funders, notably Madame Aline Foriel-Destezet, The Friends of the Verbier Festival, the Festival's major donors, including its Chairman's Circle, the Commune de Val de Bagnes, Loterie Romande, Canton du Valais, and its loyal Principal Sponsors Bank Julius Baer and Neva Foundation.



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PHOTOS

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