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MEDIA RELEASE

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THE VERBIER FESTIVAL TAKES FURTHER STEPS TO REIMAGINE ITS 28TH EDITION

ACADEMY PROGRAMMES, INCLUDING THE VERBIER FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA, WILL BE MODIFIED AND IMAGINATIVE NEW PROGRAMMING WILL BE UNVEILED SOON

- Committed to presenting a summer of exceptional musical events, for which it is best known and loved, the Verbier Festival has reimagined its programme, whilst keeping the Festival spirit at its heart.
- Due to members of the Verbier Festival Orchestra (VFO) who are under quarantine, the Festival has made the decision to cancel all further VFO activities.
- The VFO was scheduled to perform on six evenings, including the Festival's opening concert and two evenings of opera, featuring *La fanciulla del West* and *Tristan & Isolde*. These evenings will now be reprogrammed. Programme details will be confirmed in the next week.
- The Verbier Festival will now launch on 16 July with the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra and Denis Matsuev, under the direction of VFO Music Director, Valery Gergiev.

July 14, 2021 – VERBIER (Switzerland) – The Verbier Festival is reimagining the programme for its 28th edition, bringing together exceptional artists for more unique encounters and unexpected collaborations. True to the spirit of the Festival, the necessary changes to the programming have paved the way for even more exciting opportunities for concerts and events, featuring artists who were already programmed to perform in the Swiss Alps this summer.

“Over the years, we've created a close family of musicians—a community of artists who come together to make each edition of our Festival truly special,” comments Martin Engstroem, Founder & Director of the Verbier Festival. “It's because of these close ties that we're able to quickly pivot to reshape our programme this summer under these exceptional circumstances. We're all so grateful to have this family by our side.”

Earlier this week, changes to the opening night programme for July 16 at the Festival's Salle des Combins were announced. The Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra (VFCO) will replace the

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Verbier Festival Orchestra (VFO). The VFO's Music Director, Valery Gergiev, will conduct the VFCO. Guest pianist Denis Matsuev remains on the programme and is joined by trumpeter Timur Martynov. The evening's first concert will feature Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto paired with Prokofiev's classical First Symphony. The second performance of the evening will start with Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto followed by the Prokofiev First Symphony.

The Festival has made the necessary decision that the Verbier Festival Orchestra musicians can no longer perform at the Festival this year and will instead return home. The positive cases were immediately identified and contained to the VFO, with a period of isolation and quarantine for orchestra musicians that does not accommodate for the ample training and rehearsal time needed for performances. In light of these developments, the productions of *La fanciulla del West* and *Tristan & Isolde* (Act II) will be reprogrammed, with solo recitals and exciting collaborations between the 2021 Festival artists.

Safety measures are being reinforced in the Verbier Festival Academy's other programmes, including the Verbier Festival Junior Orchestra, the Atelier Lyrique, and the Soloists & Ensembles Programme. Festivalgoers are subject to contact tracing and physical distancing measures at all events and must wear masks inside all venues.

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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