



verbierfestival

## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **VERBIER FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES INITIAL CHANGES TO REFLECT ITS DISMAY AT AND CONDEMNATION OF THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE**

- **FESTIVAL HAS ASKED FOR AND ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATION OF VALERY GERGIEV AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE VERBIER FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA**
- **ALL DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS SANCTIONED BY WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO BE RETURNED**
- **ARTISTS PUBLICLY ALIGNED WITH THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS WILL NOT APPEAR AT THE FESTIVAL**

**February 28, 2022 – VERBIER (Switzerland)** – The Verbier Festival today announced the first in a series of responses to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Martin T:son Engstroem, Verbier Festival's Founder & Director, summarised the strength of feeling felt by everyone at the Festival when he commented:

*“The Verbier Festival, its staff, management and Board, strongly condemns Russia’s gruesome aggression against Ukraine. We follow with sadness and horror the violation the Russian regime is imposing on the people of Ukraine. We pray for them and the courage they show in refuting the aggressor. The Verbier Festival has always been an advocate of building bridges through music between young and old of all nationalities, backgrounds and beliefs.”*

The Verbier Festival has asked for and accepted the resignation of Valery Gergiev as Music Director of the Verbier Festival Orchestra.

Among the measures implemented by the Festival with immediate effect are the return of donations from any individual sanctioned by a western government and the exclusion from the Festival of all artists who have publicly aligned themselves with the Russian government's actions.

Further details will be announced in due course.

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The **Verbier Festival** is a classical music festival that encourages sharing between great musicians and young aspiring artists from around the world. It is committed to excellence in music performance and education through its highly respected artistic programme, Academy and community engagement programmes. The next edition of the Verbier Festival, with Principal Sponsorship of Bank Julius Baer and SICPA, will place July 15 to 31, 2022 in Verbier (Switzerland).

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## PHOTOS

Official photographs may be downloaded [VF PHOTOS PRESSE](#).

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