Press Release

«Spotlight on John Williams» –
debut album of the City Light Symphony Orchestra

The City Light Symphony Orchestra, founded in Lucerne in 2018, presents its debut album with the 100-minute program "Spotlight on John Williams". Producer Pirmin Zängerle succeeded in assigning acclaimed soloists such as Valentine Michaud, Reinhold Friedrich and Paul Meyer. Together with the 90-piece City Light Symphony Orchestra and the up-and-coming conductor Kevin Griffiths, they recorded a selection of film music masterpieces by Hollywood icon John Williams in the concert hall of the KKL Luzern in September 2020 – with a deliberate focus on his great stylistic diversity. On 9 April 2021, the album will be released digitally throughout Switzerland and as a 2-CD set on Prospero Classical, followed by the international release in May 2021.

Recording sessions in the concert hall of the KKL Luzern with its world-class acoustics

For conductor Kevin Griffiths, the recording sessions for this album marked "one of the most incisive events in the young history" of the City Light Symphony Orchestra. After a seven-month lockdown break, he spent ten days working more intensively with the reunited musicians than ever before. The result is the album "Spotlight on John Williams" – a dream project of the orchestra and its manager Pirmin Zängerle. He saw the opportunity to collaborate with several renowned soloists for this project during the time without concerts due to the pandemic. In addition, the concert hall of the KKL Luzern with its outstanding acoustics could be booked for recordings over the course of several days. Zängerle: "The fact that the musicians' were not fully booked certainly helped to engage so many renowned soloists such as Valentine Michaud, Reinhold Friedrich and Paul Meyer. No one wishes more fervently for a live audience back than these musicians, meanwhile recording music provided a welcome opportunity to create a production of the highest professional standard."

Success on Spotify – more than 140,000 streams

Since 5 February 2021, individual pieces from "Spotlight on John Williams" have been released on the streaming platform Spotify. The City Light Symphony Orchestra can already look forward to more than 142,700 streams. The album program was deliberately designed for stylistic diversity. Basil Böhni writes in the CD booklet: "Late-Romanticism in the style of Richard Wagner in STAR WARS, 1960s jazz in CATCH ME IF YOU CAN, Hungarian folklore in THE TERMINAL, 1920s Silly Symphony style whimsy in TINTIN, Americana in THE COWBOYS or Eastern colours in INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE of Doom – all these scores have the composer John Williams in common but could not be more divers."

In early summer, the City Light Symphony Orchestra will hopefully be able to perform in front of live audiences again – with the live world premiere of SUPERMAN (4 June 2021) and together with piano virtuoso Khatia Buniatishvili (13 June 2021).
City Light Symphony Orchestra

Soloists
Valentine Michaud · Alto Saxophone
Reinhold Friedrich · Trumpet
Paul Meyer · Clarinet

Co-Soloists
Fabian Ziegler · Vibraphone
Diego Caruso · Double Bass
Laurent Derache · Accordion

Conductor
Kevin Griffiths

Disc One – Film Music Masterpieces for Orchestra

- The Cowboys | Overture                      9:28
- Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom | End Credits        6:21
- Jurassic Park | Theme                          6:13
- Hook | The Flight to Neverland                4:40
- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets | The Chamber of Secrets 3:52
- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets | Fawkes the Phoenix 3:58
- Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban | Witches, Wands and Wizards 4:37
- The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn | The Duel 3:03
- Superman | Superman March                          4:27
- Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens | Suite for Orchestra 17:36

Disc Two – Film Music Masterpieces for Orchestra and Soloists

- JFK | Theme from J.F.K.                           5:18
  Reinhold Friedrich · Trumpet
- Catch Me If You Can | Escapades – For Alto Saxophone and Orchestra 13:55
  Valentine Michaud · Alto Saxophone
  Co-Soloists: Fabian Ziegler · Vibraphone; Diego Caruso · Double Bass
- Born on the Fourth of July | Main Theme                                  6:35
  Reinhold Friedrich · Trumpet
- The Terminal | Viktor’s Tale – For Solo Clarinet and Orchestra 4:07
  Paul Meyer · Clarinet | Co-Soloist: Laurent Derache · Accordion
- The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn | Opening Credits 3:00
- Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone | Nimbus 2000 – For Woodwind Choir          2:17

Link to Promo-Player: on demand (contact on page 6)

Recorded on 22–30 September 2020 at KKL Luzern, Concert Hall, Lucerne · Switzerland
Mixing & Mastering at Bauer Studios, Ludwigsburg · Germany
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Photos
Exclusive single track artwork by the creative agency K-wer-K

Biographies

About the City Light Symphony Orchestra
The City Light Symphony Orchestra has been treating audiences to film music from the very beginning. Its concert debut, which took place in the KKL Luzern's highly regarded concert hall in autumn 2018, featured the live-to-projection world premiere of THE HUNGER GAMES. The Lucerne-based orchestra is flexible in size, and can range from a large orchestral ensemble to chamber formations. It brings together students and professionals from all over Switzerland. The musical direction is provided by internationally renowned conductors with a wealth of experience in classical and film music, including Kevin Griffiths, Ernst van Tiel, Anthony Gabriele and Thiago Tiberio.

Ensuing highlights of the fledgling orchestra have included the live-to-projection world premiere of HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON in the presence of its composer John Powell, the European premieres of CINEMA PARADISO and APOLLO 13, as well as performances of the Williams classics INDIANA JONES – RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK and HOME ALONE. The concert program DOWNTON ABBEY IN CONCERT presented at the KKL Luzern benefited from the presence alongside the orchestra of composer John Lunn and actor Jim Carter as Mr. Carson. The City Light Symphony Orchestra has thrilled audiences with live-to-projection performances of the Christmas comedy LOVE ACTUALLY, the Pixar masterpiece RATATOUILLE, the visually stunning live-action adaptation of BEAUTY AND THE BEAST as well as the two James Bond Concert Series entries CASINO ROYALE and SKYFALL.

About the soloists

Valentine Michaud grew up in Nantes. She enrolled at the Haute École de Musique in Lausanne in 2010 and later at the Zurich University of the Arts. In 2020 she won the coveted Credit Suisse Young Artist Award, which includes a concert performance with the Vienna Philharmonic at the Lucerne Festival. As a soloist and chamber musician, she has performed at the Wigmore Hall, London, the Wiener Konzerthaus and the KKL Luzern. Her Akmi Duo, founded with the pianist Akvile Sileikaite, was awarded first prize in the prestigious Orpheus Swiss Chamber Music Competition. Valentine Michaud also founded the collective SIBJA with her brother Emmanuel, dedicated to multidisciplinary performances exploring the reunion of music, dance and visual arts.

Reinhold Friedrich grew up in Weingarten (Baden), Germany and began his career as a solo trumpeter with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra. His success in the ARD competition in 1986 has been followed with appearances on all the world’s major concert stages. He has performed inter alia with the Berlin Baroque Soloists, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Bamberg and Vienna Symphony Orchestras and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Claudio Abbado appointed him solo trumpeter of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra in 2003. Reinhold Friedrich assumed the professorship for trumpet at the University of Music Karlsruhe in 1986. A ten-part CD edition entitled ‘The Trumpet Collection’ was released in 2018 to mark his 60th birthday.

Paul Meyer grew up in Mulhouse, France, and launched his career at the age of 17 by winning the prestigious Eurovision Young Musicians competition in 1982. He was appointed solo clarinettist of the Lyon Opera Orchestra in 1983, the Ensemble Intercontemporain in 1984 and the Opéra National in Paris in 1985. As a soloist Paul Meyer has performed with acclaimed orchestras in the music capitals of Berlin, London and New York, among others. He has also played alongside legendary musicians such as Benny Goodman, Isaac Stern and Yo-Yo Ma.

In addition to his work as a clarinettist, Paul Meyer is Principal Conductor of the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim.

Kevin Griffiths, conductor
Kevin Griffiths studied L.A. at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Since then, he has worked with numerous acclaimed orchestras, including the hr-Sinfonieorchester in Frankfurt am Main, the Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra. From 2011 to 2018 he was Principal Conductor of the City Light Symphony Orchestra.
Conductor and Artistic Director of the Collegium Musicum Basel. He is an annual guest at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival and the Vaduz Classic Festival and he has worked with soloists including Sir James Galway, Giuliano Carmignola, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Vesselina Kasarova and Fazıl Say.

With live performances of Chaplin films, Kevin Griffiths has established himself as a conductor of film music. He conducted the concert debut of the City Light Symphony Orchestra with the acclaimed live-to-projection world premiere of THE HUNGER GAMES at the KKL Luzern. Since then, he has regularly worked with this orchestra – i.a. for the live-to-projection performances of RATATOUILLE and the Bond films CASINO ROYALE and SKYFALL.

About Prospero Classical
Prospero Classical is an all-included classical music service provider that stands out for its expertise and innovative spirit. Founded in 2019 by classical, design and social media all-rounders Christine Schweitzer and Martin Korn, Prospero Classical offers comprehensive support from the first steps to the finished product to classical artists who wish to publish their recording. A classical music label is integrated, which ensures the worldwide physical and state-of-the-art digital distribution of the lavishly equipped products. Prospero's founder and CEO is Martin Korn. "Spotlight on John Williams" marks the label's film music debut and first collaboration with City Light Concerts.

About City Light Concerts
City Light Concerts organizes around 30 concerts per season (from October to May) in Switzerland and nearby countries, the majority of which take place in the renowned concert hall of the KKL Luzern. The focus of the concert agency is on the live performance of film music. The season's programme gains additional diversity with classical concerts and symphonic cross-over projects together with renowned artists. Previous collaborations include the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, the Basel Chamber Orchestra, the Basel Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, The Retro Festival, soprano Regula Mühlemann and pianist Khatia Buniatishvili.

For promo player link, photos, interview inquires, questions please contact

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