

## Guided Tours in Rachmaninoff's Villa Senar

Public (Saturday) guided tours for groups of up to 25 people

Report by Esther Braune, lawyer in the legal department of a cantonal bank and herself a passionate pianist, Rachmaninoff expert and Knowledge/Time/Passion donor of the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation

*"Oh, Rachmaninoff!"*

In the 1955 film "That darn 7th year", Marilyn Monroe breathes *"Oh, Rachmaninoff"* to Sergei Rachmaninoff's 2nd piano concerto, full of emotion, happy and animated, and sits down next to the pianist, who she begs never to stop playing.

The scene stays in my head and sums up my experience as a guide at the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation: "Since the opening of the beautiful park with the spacious grounds and the ochre-lit Villa Senar, I have had the honor of bringing Rachmaninoff's life and work, especially his music, closer to the visitors of Senar as a guide.

On the days when public tours are offered, most visitors are already standing in front of the entrance gate, eagerly awaiting their visit. Their faces are full of expectation, even awe. They seem happy that they were able to get a ticket and finally visit Senar. After kindly listening to our instructions

*"Please leave your jackets and bags in the lockers in the garage, where you will also find the toilets, and the tour starts at 10:15 in front of the white gardener's house - until then you are welcome to stroll around the park and enjoy the atmosphere."*

I talk to visitors who have made the 8-hour drive from the far north of Germany to be here. Visitors from Paris, Milan, Hungary and Poland have come to marvel at the estate and the villa. They photograph what feels like every corner of Senar and shyly ask me if they can take another photo of Sergei Rachmaninoff's Steinway & Sons grand piano. They are people from all (social) corners of the world. One thing unites them all: their admiration for Sergei Rachmaninoff. At the end of my guided tours, I always say: *"I hope you enjoyed it, come again, because I know that once you've been here, you'll always want to come back"*. At the exit, we say goodbye to the visitors and look into their smiling, animated faces and lo and behold: *"Thank you so much for the tour, it was really interesting and lovely here, we'll be back!"* And I think *"Oh, Rachmaninoff!"*

Ticket price 30 CHF

The Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation bears the remaining costs for the public tours in full: training the guides, building up a pool of experts from the region, communication, ticketing, marketing, correspondence, organization, expenses, on-site presence of a responsible person from the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation, usually Managing & Artistic Director Andrea Loetscher, at least 2 guides per tour, ticket control and security, infrastructure, further training, mediation.

*On [www.rachmaninoff.ch](http://www.rachmaninoff.ch) you will find coverage, an archive of the 2023 events, the link to social media as well as news and events for 2024.*