

Dieter Ammann & Composers as guests at Rachmaninoffs

9 world premieres, 9 perspectives, 11 sponsored talents

Report by Andrea Loetscher, Artistic and Managing Director of the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation

With the composition class of Dieter Ammann, Lucerne School of Music, albums Blätter, Miniatures have been commissioned. The basis was a song by Sergei Rachmaninoff. The musical and literary material of the original song had to be used, was distorted or used in fragments, thus creating a unique tonal language for each composition.

In this way, the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation places young composers at the center and provides new perspectives on the work of Sergei Rachmaninoff.

The commission to the composers
Instrumentation: song, soprano and piano
Duration of the commissions: approx. 2-4'

As a starting point, the composers were given the song Op.34, No.4 - Ветерперелётный *облакал меня* - Der wandernde Wind/ A Passing Breeze. This is deliberately not one of Rachmaninoff's most popular songs, but it has a lot of musical substance. Furthermore, the text can also be interpreted in terms of the current situation in our world. The song thus offers possible approaches for composers in many respects - be it the textual content, individual motifs, intervallic constellations, harmonic progressions, the instrumental texture or the general atmosphere it creates.

A cooperation with the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts - Music and the composer class of Dieter Ammann, the LIEDBasel Festival and the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation.

Brief chronology

The first meetings with Dieter Ammann's composition class took place in September 2023. 5 Online meetings, individual exchanges, personal exchanges, discussions, visits. The submission deadlines were fixed and the requirements communicated. The right LIEDDuo was selected, young people from different disciplines, careers and specializations were networked and new visions were developed together and in exchange.

In a joint process with the participating artists, the initiator, the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation and the cooperating institutions have created the common basis. All composers submitted the new works on time per

24.4.24. Afterwards, the LIEDDuo Felsberga/Mitrevis were able to start practicing the compositions. Each of the works offered special features, new requirements, clarifications and exchanges. In this way, works were created together with the performers. A real workshop and a great learning experience for everyone involved: an enrichment, a privilege in a benevolent yet challenging atmosphere. The young people felt looked after and greatly appreciated the individual exchange. Valuable for a young composer's career, because experiences like this establish their own musical language and give them self-confidence.

Katrina Felsberga (soprano) and Arturs Mitrevics (piano) arrived from Riga on May 30. Andrea Loetscher picked them up personally at Lucerne railroad station. A warm and joyful welcome. On arrival at Rachmaninoff's Villa Senar, Felsberga/Mitrevics felt the energy of Senar, the magical place, and met the magic with humility, respect, heartbeat and much anticipation of the days ahead. The following day was deliberately kept free for rehearsals.

On June 1 and 2, 2024, the time had come. The composers came "dressed up" for their special day - THE premiere. It was a great moment for everyone, as everyone in attendance felt and felt privileged to witness such a moment and be part of this creation story.

The program was perfectly curated with personal introductions by Arturs Mitrevics. Each work was particularly well presented and there was individual applause for each work and composer. Audio recordings for educational purposes and the Rachmaninoff archive were professionally recorded. A publication of the works is planned. This is the only way that world premieres can be passed on and live on, take their course into the here and now and find their way into concert programs.

Both concerts were sold out. The Young Friends of the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich took the opportunity to order 15 tickets on Sunday. Here, too, networking and exchange took place. Each composer was allowed to invite a special person to the concert. A good mix of fans, new Rachmaninoff fans and partners. The presence at both concerts of Dr. Prof. Dieter Ammann and Silke Gäng, artistic director of LIEDBasel and representatives of the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation, was a sign of appreciation for all those involved. Andrea Loetscher, Managing & Artistic Director of the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation, gave a welcoming address, introduced the project and expressed special thanks to the BAREVA FOUNDATION.

Costs September 2023 to June 2024 Artists' fees/expenses/hotel accommodation/travel
LIEDDuo: CHF 6000 Composers' fees/expenses: CHF 2500
Tuning piano, retuning, adjustments, set-up on site: 1500 CHF Rental fee Canton of
Lucerne: 500 CHF
Communication, marketing, PR: CHF 1500
Helping hands on site, expenses, concert support, ticketing: CHF 500
Organization, administration, insurance, coaching, editing texts, programs, personal support,
correspondence, expenses Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation: 7000 CHF

Other costs incurred as part of this project in 2024:

Laying of the compositions, recordings: 2500 CHF

Provision for the launch/continuation of this format in 2024/2025: CHF 3000

A look into the future 2025/26/27

The format is basically right. We are building on this and will open up the composition courses to two further composition classes in Switzerland or nearby countries (possibly the border triangle). A cooperation with 3 music academies in Germany,

Switzerland and, if possible, the USA in the future. In this way, Sergei Rachmaninoff, the composers, the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation and Rachmaninoff's Villa Senar will gain visibility, in particular for their commitment to new music. Due to the positive implementation, the resulting positive charisma and positioning with the format for contemporary music at Rachmaninoffs, the interfaces of new music, literature, prose, mediation, exchange of universities music and art, song genre, the accompaniment of the entire composition process with focal points are to be conceived and communicated.

Program and work comments under: [Program Archive - Sergei Rachmaninoff](#)