



STAUNTON MUSIC FESTIVAL

MEDIA CONTACT

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rethinkclassical

stauntonmusicfestival.org

AUGUST 14 - AUGUST 23, 2015

FACT SHEET

Overview

Each August, Staunton Music Festival (SMF) presents a week of twice daily chamber music concerts. SMF is committed to bringing audiences extraordinary performances from some of the world's most acclaimed chamber musicians. Selections range from the Middle Ages through new world premieres. SMF engages in numerous activities to help audiences "rethink classical" including concerts, workshops, education programs, and commissioning new work.

Artistic Director

SMF Artistic Director Carsten Schmidt enjoys a flourishing career with extensive performance and broadcast activities as soloist, chamber musician, and soloist with orchestras throughout Europe, North America, and Japan. He has been heard in such venues as Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Moscow Conservatory, as well as in broadcasts worldwide. His repertoire ranges from the early Baroque to new works, of which he has premiered more than 100. Since 1998 he has been Professor of Music at Sarah Lawrence College in New York.



Program

The Staunton Music Festival has received high praise for its dynamic musicality, daring programming, and signature blend of whimsy and virtuosity. SMF is also known for housing a stunning array of performance instruments, historic venues with first-rate acoustics, and a commitment to performing innovative works by the masters as well as living composers.

Artists/Performers

SMF attracts renowned vocalists and instrumental musicians from across Europe and the U.S. Approximately 60 musicians representing Germany, Russia, Netherlands, Canada, Finland, Austria, France, and the United States participate in the festival. Among the talented and celebrated artists for the 2015 season are Vladimir Mendelssohn (viola), Andrew Willis (fortepiano), Heini Kärkkäinen (piano), Minna Pensola (violinist of acclaimed Meta4 String Quartet), Nina Stern (recorder and period clarinet), Kyu-Young Kim (principal violinist with St. Paul Chamber Orchestra), and Carsten Schmidt (harpsichord).

Audience

With audience attendance now pushing past the 5,000 mark, the festival is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the most eclectic and mesmerizing musical events of the summer.

Rare Collection of Period Instruments

French, Flemish, Italian, and German harpsichords, and three fortepianos ranging from 1745 to 1840.



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2015 FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Selected concert highlights of the 2015 season include:

Shakespeare on Love (Sunday, August 16 at 7:30 pm) — All works based on Shakespeare, includes the Telaio: Desdemona by performer/composer Susan Botti but also songs by Purcell from the late 1600s, music from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a concert suite from the greatest modern *Romeo and Juliet* adaptation, Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Presented at Blackfriars Playhouse, the world's only recreation of Shakespeare's indoor theater.

Law and Desire (Monday, August 17 at 7:30 pm) — Featuring the works of four composers – Bach, Busoni, Mozart, and Wadsworth. Audiences will be introduced to a new world premiere by Zachary Wadsworth for two percussionists and two double basses alongside such recognized masterpieces as Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Bach's *Art of the Fugue*.

Time Machines (Wednesday, August 19 at 7:30 pm) — This program explores aspects of time in music, and includes everything from the curious (Beethoven's canon for voices and metronome) to the deeply poignant (Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, written in 1944 concentration camp as a celebration and challenge to the human spirit).

The Future (is not what it used to be) (Thursday, August 20 at 7:30 pm) — An incredible program, featuring works that were considered avantgarde in their time. Starts with the most advanced music being written in Paris in the year 1200 (Perotin's *Alleluia*, unlike anything you've heard in a concert before); plus works by Liszt, Stockhausen, and others, and two feature works are Beethoven's *7th Symphony* and his *Grosse Fuge* for string quartet, still considered one of the most incredible, complex, and strange musical pieces of all time.

Baroque Inside/Out (Friday, August 21 at 7:30 pm) — The complete period performance of Vivaldi's beloved *Four Seasons*; four different soloists offer their takes on the seasons, which range from tempestuous Winter to placid Spring. In between the concerts we cleanse the palate with madrigals by various Baroque masters, including Monteverdi, Gesualdo, de Wert, Lassus, and more.

Abandoned Queen, Mad King (Saturday, August 22 at 7:30 pm) — An incredible double bill of semistaged English operas, featuring one of the most beloved of all operas, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, paired with the powerful *Eight Songs for a Mad King* by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies from 1969.

St. John Passion (Sunday, August 23 at 3:30 pm) — Bach was deeply religious and was said to have composed five passions (settings of the life of Christ, primarily the events leading up to and surrounding his crucifixion.) Only two of these masterpieces survive, the *St. Matthew Passion* and the *St. John Passion*. Staunton Music Festival performed the full *St. Matthew Passion* last summer, and this season will follow up with the *St. John Passion*, an intensely dramatic work of epic proportions.



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