



ACADEMY A-Z

Join a small and select group of exceptional young artists from all four corners of the world and exchange creative ideas. Take daily masterclasses and play chamber music. Relish the chance to perform in public. Take risks, inspire audiences, meet people and have fun. Become an integral part of a performing arts community of which many of the world's most important performers are also members.

We take pride in what we offer our participants so take time to read all of the information included in this document before you apply, so that you know what the Verbier Festival Academy is all about.

Christian Thompson
Academy Director

Access

Verbier is a small mountain village located in the Canton of Valais, Switzerland. It is most easily accessed by train, and there are direct trains to Martigny from either Geneva or Zurich airports, although Geneva is closer. From Martigny, take the mountain train to Le Châble and then the post bus or cable car from Le Châble to Verbier. For more information, visit www.sbb.ch.

Application

The application forms within our microsite at www.verbierfestival.com/academy details all the necessary information which you should send to us, as well as payments required.

Attendance

Those artists accepted into the 2012 Academy may not arrive later or leave earlier than specified, and must not be absent for any reason during the Academy without express permission from the Academy Director. Participants are also obliged to advise the Academy office of their travel plans four weeks in advance of the Academy, otherwise we reserve the right to substitute an alternative participant.

Badge

All Academy participants receive a Verbier Festival badge. This allows free access to most Festival concerts (for more information, see under "Tickets for Concerts"), the indoor and outdoor swimming pools and the ski-lifts of Téléverbier. The badge also gives discounts in some bars, restaurants and shops in Verbier.

Career Development

We arrange informal discussions for Academy participants relating to their potential future careers as musicians. These could involve experienced professionals in the music industry such as agents, record company executives, concert promoters and artists. These may focus on Career Development, Presentation, Leadership and Repertoire Choices.

Christian Thompson, Academy Director, was an agent in London for more than fifteen years before moving to Switzerland, and he is more than happy to give advice to present and past Academy participants.

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Foundations

We are grateful to the following foundations for their generous support of the Verbier Festival Academy:

- Blue Door Foundation
- International Music and Art Foundation
- Juchum Foundation
- Neva Foundation
- Porter Foundation
- Tabor Foundation
- George and Mary Vergottis Memorial Fund
- Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation

We also thank Mr and Mrs Edward Atkin, Mr and Mrs Anders Bergendahl, Mr and Mrs Steven Heinz and Mr Jim O'Neil for their special contributions to the Academy's activities.

Chamber Music

Gábor Takács-Nagy is responsible for the chamber music programme, although Academy professors and Festival artists are also involved in working with and encouraging the different groups of young artists. It is extremely important for instrumentalists to play chamber music together as it encourages all involved to discover even more about themselves, to learn about playing with colleagues and to listen to what is happening around them.

Groups and repertoire will be selected before arrival in Verbier so that participants have time to learn their parts.

Participants in the Academy, including singers, are also encouraged to form their own partnerships or groups outside the chamber music programme and the Academy has a library of repertoire which can be borrowed for a few days at a time (see under "Music").

Existing chamber groups (usually string quartets or piano trios) are also welcomed to participate in this programme.

Clothing

Each Academy participant will perform in concert several times during the summer and are asked to bring appropriate concert clothes – clean sober shirt, dark trousers and proper shoes. We believe presentation is important.

For day-to-day clothes, participants are advised to bring at least one pair of sturdy shoes as well as some warm clothing. The weather in the mountains is very unpredictable.

Coordinators / Pianists

Each Academy has its own coordinator or pianist. These are all very experienced in their fields and their role is to accompany musicians as needed, to organize the schedule of each masterclass and to ensure that classes run smoothly.

- Piano – Caroline Haffner
- Violin – Tobias Koch
- Viola – Hunju Sohnn
- Cello – Catherine Edwards
- Voice – Caroline Dowdle / Simon Lepper / Fabio Centanni

Discovery

Academy participants are encouraged to take part in Discovery, our programme of education for young people and adults. This may include playing live music or being involved in discussions about music.

Participants may also be like to attend our series of "Conversations", where they have the possibility to participate in discussions about music, literature and the arts in general. In 2011, these included Alfred Brendel, Daniel Harding, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Anne-Sophie Mutter and Vadim Repin.

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Encounters

We encourage Festival artists to spend time meeting and working within the Academy. We want our participants to have the opportunity to meet and even play with their heroes. Artists who have participated as coaches in the past have included Joshua Bell, Yuri Bashmet, Renaud Capuçon, Claude Frank, Ivry Gitlis, Nelson Goerner, Frans Helmerson, Lynn Harrell, Leonidas Kavakos, Lawrence Power, Thomas Quasthoff, Julian Rachlin and Lars Vogt.

Housing

We have a loyal and kind group of supporters who offer rooms to Academy participants in their own chalets or apartments. The hosts do their utmost to make participants feel at home and some of these homes are luxurious. Some participants alternatively may be allocated hotel rooms which are donated by the hotels themselves but we do try as best as we can to house participants as near as possible to their masterclass venue. These rooms and houses should be treated with the utmost respect.

Internet access

Internet access is available at various places in the centre of Verbier.

Meals

Host families or hotels usually provide breakfast. Bank Julius Baer kindly covers the cost of a communal lunch in Verbier at which attendance is mandatory for all participants. Participants are responsible for paying for any other food.

Media Rights

Participants are asked to acknowledge that their masterclasses or concert performances may be filmed, recorded or photographed as and when required by the Verbier Festival Academy, and that they consent for such activities to take place on the understanding that they are not filmed, recorded or photographed for any commercial gain.

Music

Participants are responsible for bringing their own music scores to Verbier, as well as a copy of each score for the use of the professor in the masterclasses.

The Verbier Festival Academy does have a fairly sizeable music library, including a large stock of chamber repertoire and scores, which can be borrowed for a few days at a time during the summer.

Performing

All participants will have the opportunity to perform in front of the public, in masterclasses and also through the daily "Academy presents..." concerts. There may be additional opportunities to give concerts in the Val de Bagnes.

Each participant will perform in one of the final Academy concerts in the Church, either as soloist or in chamber music.

The Verbier Festival Academy is also developing collaborations with international promoting organisations, so that we can offer our participants opportunities to give concerts outside Verbier during the season. We were delighted to have again partnered Septembre Musical Montreux in the presentation of four such concerts at the end of this summer, and we will be announcing similar collaborations in due course.

Practice rooms

A limited number of practice rooms with pianos can be reserved for Academy participants through the Academy office. Some pianists will have access to a piano where they live.

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Prizes

The Verbier Festival Academy is in no way a competition; in fact, it is our hope that everyone who attends and participates will grow as artists and as individuals. But we are very fortunate to be able to help financially some deserving participants after their time with us in Verbier:

- **Prix Julius Baer** – Martin T:son Engstroem, Director of the Verbier Festival and Christian Thompson, Verbier Festival Academy Director, choose one Academy participant to return to Verbier in a future summer to perform within the Festival itself.
- **Prix Mania & Bernhard Hahnloser for violin** – CHF 10,000 CHF
- **Jean-Nicolas Firmenich Prize for cello** – CHF 12,000
- **Tabor Award for piano** – CHF 10,000
- **Prix Thierry Mermod for voice** – CHF 10,000
- **APCAV Prize** – CHF 3,000

Professors

Please visit www.verbierfestival.com/academy to see which professors and teachers will be in Verbier in 2012.

Recordings

All solo and chamber music masterclasses are recorded and recordings are given to the participating musicians so that they can continue to learn from the masterclasses long after the summer. This project is funded by Bank Julius Baer.

Scholarships

Scholarships to help cover tuition fees and travel expenses will be allocated once participants have been accepted although these are offered only in the cases of real financial need. We are extremely grateful to numerous foundations, companies and individuals for offering scholarships to the Verbier Festival Academy.

Staff

The Verbier Festival Academy has a dedicated staff during the summer led by Christian Thompson and administered by C line Yamakawa.

Tickets for Concerts

We aim to provide free tickets to Academy participants for all concerts. In most cases this is possible, although inevitably there will be a small number of exceptions in the case of sold-out concerts.

Voice

Singers who are selected to participate in the opera course must arrive in Verbier knowing their role off book (by heart).

Young participants

We welcome participants under the age of 18 and we aim to house them with responsible host families. Whilst these participants are not formally supervised, the Academy Director is willing to discuss individual cases to ensure as safe a stay in Verbier as possible. However, if parents wish to accompany their children to Verbier, they are responsible for covering the costs of their own housing.