



verbierfestival

## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **VERBIER FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND TO EASE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OF ACADEMY AND TECHNICAL CREW ALUMNI**

**April 15, 2020 — VERBIER (Switzerland)** — The Verbier Festival announced today the creation of a new fund to provide emergency relief to freelance, self-employed and newly unemployed Verbier Festival Academy alumni — solo, chamber and orchestral instrumentalists, singers, conductors — and alumni Festival production and technical crew facing lost income because of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Spearheaded by the Festival's Founder & Director Martin T:son Engstroem, the Verbier Festival Emergency Relief Fund has been formed by a group of generous patrons expressing concern for the well-being of these Academy musicians and those who work behind the scenes at the Festival.

The current global health crisis is having a severe impact on the world of arts and culture. Performances and productions have been cancelled for months, causing many artists and creative workers to lose economic and social stability. The Verbier Festival Emergency Relief Fund cannot hope to replace entire fees or lost work for everyone, but it aims to make a difference to help those Verbier Festival family members who are most at need. Assistance from CHF 1,000 to CHF 5,000 will be granted without expectation of repayment.

Applications are open to all freelance, self-employed and newly unemployed Verbier Festival Academy alumni musicians and alumni production and technical personnel, regardless of age and nationality. Funding amounts are determined by magnitude of income lost as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Applications will be accepted at [www.verbierfestival.com/en/emergency-relief](http://www.verbierfestival.com/en/emergency-relief).

The Verbier Festival Emergency Relief Fund is held and administered independently from the Verbier Festival Foundation by the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation based in Geneva whose mission is to create, host and manage philanthropic funds. As an independent entity, the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation will ensure compliance measures are met and will distribute grants directly to the selected artists in need. The Verbier Festival has been tasked with reviewing applications and identifying those who are in need of support.

Information about donating to the fund is available at [www.verbierfestival.com/en/emergency-relief-donations](http://www.verbierfestival.com/en/emergency-relief-donations).

On March 26, the Verbier Festival announced the cancellation of its 27<sup>th</sup> edition, which was to take place from July 17 to August 2, 2020. However, social distancing measures are not stopping the Festival's commitment to connect artists and audiences during this period of unprecedented challenge. The Festival also today launches 'VF at Home', a programme of online content at [www.verbierfestival.com](http://www.verbierfestival.com) where music-lovers may discover gems from the Verbier Festival concert archives, courtesy of medici.tv, curated IDAGIO playlists, activities for children, and rarely seen and newly produced feature programmes and interviews. Every Wednesday the Festival's website will feature the Verbier Festival Academy through broadcasts of past rehearsals, masterclasses and concerts, recently recorded performances from the homes of alumni and live 'Quarantine Concerts' in partnership with [www.quarantineconcerts.tv](http://www.quarantineconcerts.tv).

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## PRESS PHOTOS

Photographs taken by the official photographers of the Verbier Festival may be downloaded from the Festival's [press photo database](#). Please contact [presse@verbierfestival.com](mailto:presse@verbierfestival.com) for access credentials.

The Verbier Festival is a classical music festival that encourages sharing between great musicians and young aspiring artists from around the world. It is committed to excellence in music performance and education through its highly respected artistic programme, Academy and community engagement programmes. The next edition of the Verbier Festival, with Principal Sponsorship of Bank Julius Baer and Neva Foundation, will place 16 July to 1 August 2021 in Verbier (Switzerland).

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