

Summery Season 2025-2026

It is with great pleasure that we look back on a fantastic season, featuring surprising and inspiring guest professors, whom we had never had before. First to arrive from the Netherlands were soprano Selma Harkink and pianist David Bollen. Two colleagues from the distant past, both of whom knew Udo Reinemann well. The participating duos found them to be a great team in terms of collaboration. They gave each other plenty of space and complemented one another. In other cases, when two teachers teach together, one often takes the lead, which also works very well, but it was a noticeably different way of working together. It also gave the students the peace of mind and space to learn alongside everyone else, even as observers. More colleagues, this time from the Hochschule für Musik Würzburg in November: Baritone Jochen Kupfer with pianist Gerold Huber. Both are highly experienced in the art song and impressive educators.

One of the highlights of last season was undoubtedly the visit of the renowned Anne Sofie von Otter, one of the world's most celebrated mezzo-sopranos. Despite being 70 years old, the energy in the room was electric and everyone seemed to be in awe at being able to witness someone with such knowledge and inexhaustible experience. She has a repertoire ranging from the depths of the Baroque to the very present day. And everything is of the highest quality. The art of pianist Bengt Forsberg lays precisely in the accompaniment and not so much in the words. As soon as he sat down at the piano himself, the room seemed enchanted by his personal musical interpretations. The duos found this experience unforgettable.

The final masterclass in March, which coincided with the final concert, was led by two leading figures from Germany: tenor Christoph Prégardien and soprano Anne Schwanewilms.

It was good that there was also a session this season with a single teacher such as Christoph Prégardien, as he taught in great detail, sharing many stories, including about the poets' backgrounds, which meant the students had a huge amount of knowledge to take in. Very fascinating.

Anne Schwanewilms taught with great verve, gesturing and humour. Her pianist Andrea Marie Baiocchi decided to find her own way by positioning herself right next to the pianists, with all the pianists around her. It was like two inspiring worlds side by side. Perhaps difficult for the audience to follow, but actually very enjoyable for the students.

So this too resulted in a colourful mix. The final concert on March 13 was well attended in the unique home of

Marie Claude Solanet. And as every year, a duo has been selected to perform soon in June, on June 19 in the church of Château-Renault. This time mezzosoprano Michelle Baum with pianist Alexander Breitenbach have won.

But one soprano, Margo Jacquart sang so exceptionally good, that we decided to include her as well to sing duets with Michelle. Normally only duo can be chosen, but this was an special situation and after consultation we could offer a special singer-prize.

*The Udo Reinemann Masterclass Team
Christianne Stotijn, artistic director.*







