

**LEIF OVE ANDSNES
LAUNCHES NEW CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL IN WEST NORWAY:
ROSENDAL CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
11 - 14 AUGUST 2016**

Rosendal: After a one and a half hour journey from Bergen airport the "Hardangerfjord Express Boat" sails into harbour - a small village set in a green valley below the dramatic mountains that rise steeply behind it.

Here in 1661 Ludwig Rosenkrantz and his young wife Karen began to create a lavish manor house and garden which they called Rosendal and, in 1678, their estate was to be given the unique status of the only Barony in Norway by King Christian V of Denmark and Norway. Today the house and its beautifully kept gardens offer visitors a glimpse of Norwegian history in one of the country's most spectacular natural settings.



For pianist Leif Ove Andsnes, this is the perfect location for a new chamber music festival which he launches in August 2016 together with the inauguration of a new concert hall at Baroniet Rosendal Manor House and Gardens. Alongside performances in the manor house itself, the four day festival will feature concerts on the new stage - a concert hall with 400 seats, converted from an original barn on the estate. Additional evening concerts will take place in the white-washed 13th century Kvinnherad church whilst lectures and open discussions will be on offer during the day.

Leif Ove Andsnes has been a regular visitor and performer in Rosendal for over 20 years. His first concert was in 1992 and since 1995 he has performed at the manor house at least once every summer. "Baroniet Rosendal is a very special place" he commented "and music has been a part of its cultural life for generations. Its incredible to think that artists and musicians have been crossing the fjord for over three hundred years and amongst them were apparently both Edvard Grieg and Ole Bull - our Bergen musical legends."

"The idea for an intimate festival running over a long weekend grew from my love of Baroniet Rosendal and has been made possible by the addition of the new concert hall. We have also been extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to purchase two Steinway grand pianos which I happened to come across whilst they were being restored. One of them, dating from the 1980's, I actually played on for my first Schubert recording nearly 15 years ago (the Sonata in A major, D959) so it will be special to see it housed in the Manor House alongside the existing historical instruments collection which includes an 1860 Pleyel piano."

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For the first festival which runs from 11 - 16 August 2016, Leif Ove Andsnes is joined by both fellow Norwegian and international artists including **Bertrand Chamayou** and **Jie Zhang** (Piano), **Vilde Frang** and **Guro Kleven Hagen** (Violin), **Eivind Holtmark Ringstad** (Viola), **Frida Fredrikke Vaaler Wærvågen** and **Sol Gabetta** (Cello), **Marius Flatby** (Doublebass), the **Brentano String Quartet**, **Matthias Goerne** (Baritone), **Mari Eriksmoen** (Soprano), **Sharon Kam** (Clarinet), **Peter Whelan** (Bassoon) and **Ragnhild Lothe** (Horn).

For the first festival theme Andsnes has chosen the year "1828". Franz Schubert died on 19 November 1828 at just 31 years old, leaving behind him an extraordinary legacy of over 1500 works. Despite being severely ill throughout the last year of his life his creativity did not cease to flow and he produced some of his most remarkable works in the final months before his death. In each festival concert at least one of Schubert's last works from 1828 will be performed: *Schwanengesang*, Piano Trio Nos. 1 & 2, the String Quintet, Fugue in E Minor and Fantasie in F Minor for 4 hand piano and, last but not least, the touching and life-affirming *The Shepherd on a Rock*.

Other works will include John Harbison's haunting piano quartet *November 19, 1828* (1988) where he imagines the day Schubert dies and the journey the composer makes to "the other side" and Jörg Widmann's *Idyll and Abyss* (2009) - an intriguing contemporary piece, focusing on Schubert's style of piano writing and musical expression.

Parallel to the festival, and in cooperation with the KODE Art Museum and curator Professor Emeritus Gunnar Danbolt, Baroniet Rosendal will present an exhibition of pictures by the Swiss painter Paul Klee who was an active amateur musician and whose work had an enormous impact on numerous 20th century composers. In the opening concert we will hear Arne Nordheim's *Partita für Paul* (1985) comprising five pieces for solo violin inspired by particular Klee paintings. Throughout the weekend, the festival will host lectures on the last year of Schubert's life and the musical inspiration of Klee.

Rosendal Chamber Music Festival extends deep thanks to the Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation, whose meaningful financial support has made the festival's ambitious artistic goals attainable.