

## Riga Jurmala Academy Launches New Season Combining Online and in-person Masterclasses

The Riga Jurmala Music Festival announces the 2020-2021 season of the Riga Jurmala Academy, organised in collaboration with the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music. Masterclasses in piano, strings, brass and wind instruments, conducting and singing will take place online beginning in December as well as face-to-face in Riga during the scheduled weekends of the 2021 Riga Jurmala Music Festival, to be led by the artists appearing in future or past concerts.

The online masterclasses will kick off in December 2020 and will continue through June 2021. The schedule and the artists leading them will be announced progressively, with the participation of the principal musicians of the **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** and the **Concertgebouworkest**, as well as the violinist **Renaud Capuçon**, the mezzo-soprano **Alice Coote** and the pianist **Yoav Levanon** already confirmed.

“We are beyond happy and excited to pursue our work this year, providing an opportunity for our younger talent to encounter and learn from the best musicians. Based on our experience so far, we know that the students value the masterclasses and, despite the fact that nothing will replace the in-person teaching experience, this online format allows us to engage with a wider group of students. The quality of online teaching has developed considerably in recent years and continues to improve,” says **Toms Ostrovskis**, Head of the Performing Arts Department, Associate Professor of the Piano Department at Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music and Head of the Riga Jurmala Academy.

Following this summer’s positive feedback, the Riga Jurmala Academy will resume its online activities in early December this year and will continue until the summer of 2021, when on-site lessons are expected to take place. The next scheduled online masterclasses include ones to be led by Omar Tomasoni (principal trumpet, Concertgebouworkest) on 2 December, Lionel Cottet (principal cellist, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra) on 8 December and renowned violinist Renaud Capuçon on 16 December 2020. All masterclasses can be followed online on the Academy’s Facebook: [facebook.com/rigajurmalaacademy](https://facebook.com/rigajurmalaacademy)

The in-person masterclasses are scheduled to take place at the Riga Jurmala Music Festival next summer and will include pianists **András Schiff** and **Leif Ove Andsnes** as professors. Each participant will receive one-on-one lessons with their professors in addition to having access to other masterclasses and workshops. All participants will be invited to the concerts of the Riga Jurmala Music Festival, where they will have the rare chance to contemporaneously watch their mentors perform. They will also be invited to meet-and-greet sessions with other artists and to special guest receptions.

The Riga Jurmala Academy will offer participants the chance to perform during the course, and it will invite selected young artists to perform in future editions of the Riga Jurmala Music Festival.

Applications will be open to advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students with performance experience. The application process will require submitting performance videos, photos and a biography. A certain number of merit-based scholarships will be available covering travel and subsistence costs.

In reaction to the pandemic, the 2020 Riga Jurmala Academy changed its initial in-person format to online masterclasses for students from the Baltic countries. Over 30 masterclasses were organised throughout the summer, led by top musicians from the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, including Natalie Schwaabe (piccolo), Lionel Cottet (cello), Julita Smoleń (violin), Tobias Steymans (violin), Jehye Lee (violin), Bettina Fais (clarinet), Ramón Ortega Quero (oboe), and Benedict Hames (viola), as well as world-class performers such as cellist Mischa Maisky, guitarist MILOŠ, and pianist Leif Ove Andsnes.

More information about the masterclass schedule, artists and other relevant information will be published at <https://riga-jurmala.com/academy>. The schedule of in-person masterclasses will be announced and the application procedure will open in Spring 2021.