

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR THOMAS W. MORRIS ANNOUNCES FUTURE MUSIC DIRECTORS

Peter Sellars: 70th Festival June 9-12, 2016

Vijay Iyer: 71st Festival June 8-11, 2017

Esa-Pekka Salonen: 72nd Festival June 7-10, 2018

“Over almost seven decades, the Ojai Music Festival has had a reputation as a creative laboratory for both artists and audiences. Deeply committed to nurturing experiences that can only be rendered through innovation, creativity and risk-taking in its programming, Ojai is an intense, involving and immersive weekend of music, discussion, and community, all in the sublime setting of Ojai. Peter Sellars, Vijay Iyer and Esa-Pekka Salonen are the perfect musical visionaries to propel Ojai into its next 70 years.” - Thomas W. Morris, Artistic Director

(April 14, 2015, Ojai, California) — As the Ojai Music Festival anticipates the upcoming 69th Festival (June 10-14) with Music Director Steven Schick, Artistic Director Thomas W. Morris announced the artists who will serve as Music Directors in the coming years: Peter Sellars (June 9-12, 2016), Vijay Iyer (June 8-11, 2017), and Esa-Pekka Salonen (June 7-10, 2018). Since the late 1940's, the Ojai Music Festival's tradition has been to welcome a new Music Director each year to ensure vitality and diversity in programming across Festivals.

The Ojai Music Festival marks its 70th year in 2016, and to curate this milestone, Mr. Morris has invited opera and theater director Peter Sellars to serve as Music Director. Mr. Sellars' partnership with Ojai dates back to 1992 when he directed a daring version of Stravinsky's *Histoire du soldat* with Music Director Pierre Boulez. He returned to Ojai in 2011 to direct the critically acclaimed world premiere of the staged production of George Crumb's *The Winds of Destiny* with Music Director Dawn Upshaw.

For the 2016 Festival, Peter Sellars is shaping a program that is deeply rooted in the cultures of Ojai, starting some new traditions and setting out some fresh agendas for the 70 years to come. Mr. Sellars is one of the most innovative and powerful forces in the arts, both in America and abroad. A visionary, he is known for ground-breaking interpretations of classic works. Whether Mozart, Handel, Shakespeare, Sophocles, or the 16th-century Chinese playwright Tang Xianzu, he strikes a universal chord with audiences, engaging and illuminating contemporary social and political issues. Mr. Sellars has staged operas in major opera houses throughout the world and has established a reputation for bringing 20th-century and contemporary operas to the stage. He has also led several major arts festivals, including the 1990 and 1993 Los Angeles Festivals. Initial plans for the 2016 Festival will be announced in May 2015.

The 2017 Festival introduces composer-pianist **Vijay Iyer** (pronounced “VID-jay EYE-er”) as Music Director. Mr. Iyer, a Grammy nominated polymath whose career has spanned the arts, the humanities, and the sciences, was named *Downbeat* magazine's 2014 Pianist of the Year, a 2013 MacArthur Fellow, and a 2012 Doris Duke Performing Artist. As *The New York Times* observed, “There’s probably no frame wide enough to encompass the creative output of the pianist Vijay Iyer.” Mr. Iyer is the Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts in the Department of Music at Harvard University, and the director of the Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music. As a composer he has had works commissioned and premiered by Arturo O’Farrill’s Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Brentano Quartet, Brooklyn Rider, Imani Winds, International Contemporary Ensemble, violinist Jennifer Koh, and Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble. Publisher Schott Music has said, “Vijay Iyer is a polymath in the truest sense of the word. He is a leader across a wide range of disciplines, but his extraordinary talent as a pianist and composer has caught the world’s attention and led to an impressive array of creative collaborations with filmmakers, choreographers, orchestras, chamber and new music ensembles.”

Conductor and composer **Esa-Pekka Salonen** returns to Ojai in 2018 as Music Director. (This information has been updated from a previously announced plan that showed Mr. Salonen returning to Ojai in 2017.) One of today’s foremost artists, Mr. Salonen made his Ojai debut as Music Director in 1999 with composer-in-residence Magnus Lindberg in a program dedicated to Finnish music, and later returned in 2001 to serve again as music director. Mr. Salonen is currently the principal conductor and artistic advisor for London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, the conductor laureate for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he served as music director for 17 years, and the first-ever creative chair at the Tonhalle Orchestra in Zurich. Through his unwavering dedication to new music and technology, he is a revitalizing force, striving to bring the symphony orchestra into the 21st century. His compositions move freely between contemporary idioms, combining intricacy and technical virtuosity with playful rhythmic and melodic innovations. Mr. Salonen’s *Floof* and *LA Variations* have become modern classics, and his newest compositions are performed around the globe. It was recently announced that Mr. Salonen will serve as composer-in-residence of the New York Philharmonic for the next three seasons.

Thomas W. Morris, Artistic Director

Thomas W. Morris was appointed Artistic Director of the Ojai Music Festival starting with the 2004 Festival and will provide artistic direction through the 75th Festival in 2021. Mr. Morris is recognized as one of the most innovative leaders in the orchestra industry and served as the long-time chief executive of both The Cleveland Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is currently active nationally and internationally as a consultant, lecturer, teacher, and writer.

As Artistic Director of the 69-year-old Festival, Mr. Morris is responsible for artistic planning and each year appoints a music director with whom he collaborates on shaping the Festival’s programming. During his decade-long tenure, audiences have increased and the scope of the Festival has expanded, most recently to include a collaborative partnership, Ojai at Berkeley, with Cal Performances at UC Berkeley.

Mr. Morris was a founding director of Spring for Music and served as the project’s artistic director. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Curtis Institute of Music and as chair of its

Board of Overseers, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Interlochen Center for the Arts. He is also an accomplished percussionist.

Ojai Music Festival

From its founding in 1947, the Ojai Music Festival has created a place for groundbreaking musical experiences, bringing together innovative artists and curious audiences in an intimate, idyllic setting 80 miles northwest of Los Angeles. The Festival presents broad-ranging programs in unusual ways with an eclectic mix of rarely performed music, refreshing juxtapositions of musical styles, and music by today's composers. The four-day festival is a complete immersive experience with concerts, free community events, symposia, film screenings, and gatherings. Considered a highlight of the summer season, Ojai has remained a leader in the classical music landscape.

The Ojai Music Festival attracts the world's greatest musical artists. Through its unique structure of the Artistic Director appointing an annual Music Director, Ojai has presented a "who's who" of music including: Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen, Michael Tilson Thomas, Kent Nagano, Pierre Boulez, John Adams, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robert Spano, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, David Robertson, eighth blackbird, George Benjamin, Dawn Upshaw, Leif Ove Andsnes, Mark Morris, Jeremy Denk, and Steven Schick.

Participation in the 2015 Ojai Music Festival

The Ojai Music Festival continues to draw thousands of curious and engaged music enthusiasts from across the country and has had record sell-out concerts over the last three years. As tickets remain in high demand, Ojai now includes virtual opportunities to participate in the Festival experience through live video streaming of concerts. The Festival promotes year-round participation and deeper engagement through its free online courses, OjaiU, which launched in May 2013 and remains active via archives on the Festival website. OjaiU returns on May 11 with four online sessions led by 2015 Music Director Steven Schick. To register, visit OjaiU.org.

Single Tickets

2015 Ojai Music Festival single tickets are now on sale online at OjaiFestival.org or by calling (805) 646-2053. Tickets start at \$40 for reserved seating, lawn tickets at \$15, and \$45 for Ojai Talks.

Directions to Ojai and Libbey Bowl, as well as information about lodging, concierge services for visitors and other Ojai activities, are also available on the Festival website. Follow Festival updates at OjaiFestival.org, Facebook (Facebook.com/ojaifestival), and Twitter (@ojaifestivals).

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