

Bravo! Vail Music Festival Announces Residency with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields for 2016 Season

Three-performance residency will add strong international element to the Festival's stellar lineup of American orchestras and feature the return of world-renowned violin virtuoso and Academy Music Director Joshua Bell to the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater

Vail, CO (July 13, 2015): Bravo! Vail Music Festival Executive Director John Giovando and Artistic Director Anne-Marie McDermott today announced a special three-performance residency with London's internationally acclaimed chamber orchestra Academy of St Martin in the Fields for its 2016 season. The performances, taking place June 23, 25, and 26, 2016, will include compelling and imaginative pairings of intimate concerti and chamber orchestra works selected in partnership with – and featuring performances by – Academy Music Director and violin virtuoso Joshua Bell, one of the most celebrated classical artists performing today.

Bell, returning to Vail after a sold-out 2014 Festival engagement with The Philadelphia Orchestra, is developing, in collaboration with McDermott, an engaging and lively series of concerts. Highlights include music by Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Prokofiev as well as Bell favorite *The Eight Seasons*--Vivaldi's legendary *Four Seasons* alongside Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*. Each program will feature Bell in a concerto and showcase the storied ensemble's unique sound and virtuosity.

The residency reflects the culmination of McDermott's longstanding desire to showcase the music of chamber orchestras at the same world-class level as resident orchestras the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. "Ever since I became Artistic Director I have imagined how wonderful it would be for the audiences to experience the finest chamber orchestras from around the world. Nothing can replace the visceral and direct impact of masterworks originally intended for smaller forces. The impact is that much greater when the ensemble is led by a great violinist. It is a dream come true to bring the storied Academy of St Martin in the Fields to the Festival, led by the incomparable Joshua Bell. The musical gods are smiling, as am I, from ear to ear," said McDermott.

For Giovando, the choice of the Academy and Bell as the artists to launch this signature residency and the 2016 season was obvious and immediate. "It is an honor and a privilege to announce this initiative and new residency with the acclaimed Academy of St Martin in the Fields and to welcome the return of Joshua Bell to lead his orchestra. We are thrilled to have them opening the 2016 season!"

The engagement also signals a growing recognition in the cultural community of Bravo as a festival where audiences come to experience peerless performances – and artists come to do

important work. “Having previously performed at Vail as a soloist, I am excited to be returning as music director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, bringing with me one of the world’s greatest chamber orchestras. We are immensely proud and honored to be the first orchestra from outside the US to be in residency at Vail, and I can’t wait to introduce the Vail audiences to this wonderful group of musicians. As always, it will be a pleasure to play in the stunning setting of the Vail mountains and a particular delight to be welcoming my regular chamber music collaborator, pianist and friend, Jeremy Denk, to perform alongside us in Mendelssohn’s Double Concerto. With Mozart, Vivaldi, Prokofiev, Piazzolla and more Mendelssohn in our three programs, I am looking forward to contributing to the Bravo! Vail Music Festival,” said Bell.

About Bravo! Vail Music Festival

Hailed as one of the Top 10 “Can’t Miss” Classical Music Festivals in the US by NPR, Bravo! Vail Music Festival brings world-renowned musicians to picturesque venues throughout Eagle County, Colorado for six weeks each year, drawing music lovers from around the world. The only festival in North America to host three of the world’s finest orchestras in a single season, Bravo! Vail celebrates its 28th season July 1 through August 6, 2015. The 2015 season features residencies by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic, with celebrated concerto artists plus a wide array of stellar chamber music performances. For more information about Bravo! Vail visit bravovail.org or call 970.827.5700.

About the Academy of St Martin in the Fields

The Academy of St Martin in the Fields is one of the world’s premier chamber orchestras, renowned for its fresh, brilliant interpretations of the world’s most-loved classical music. Formed by Sir Neville Marriner in 1958 from a group of leading London musicians, the Academy gave its first performance in its namesake church in November 1959. Through its live performances and vast recording output – highlights of which include the 1969 best-seller Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* and the soundtrack to 1985’s Oscar-winning film *Amadeus* – the Academy quickly gained an enviable international reputation for its distinctive, polished and refined sound. Today the Academy is led artistically by Music Director and virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell, retaining the collegiate spirit and flexibility of the original small, conductor-less ensemble which has become an Academy hallmark. Each year the Academy works with some of the most talented soloists and directors in the classical music scene, performing symphonic repertoire and ‘chamber music on a grand scale’ at prestigious venues throughout the world. For more information about the Academy, visit asmf.org.

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