

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL JUNE 10-13, 2010

THOMAS W. MORRIS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GEORGE BENJAMIN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Composer/Conductor George Benjamin debuts as Music Director of 64th Ojai Music Festival, June 10–13, 2010

Ensemble Modern makes first West Coast appearance with works by George Benjamin, Stravinsky, Messiaen, Boulez, and Frank Zappa

Into the Little Hill, George Benjamin's chamber opera, receives West Coast premiere

Additional Festival highlights include the U.S. premiere of Steve Potter's *Paradigms*, Indian Raga

with Aashish Khan, a three-part symposium with guest panelists, and free *Beyond the Bowl* events

"Ojai's tradition of inviting a different music director for each season guarantees variety and vitality across festivals. What this means for the 2010 Ojai Music Festival is music-making of the highest order; programming that enchants and challenges; and an encounter with one of the most intellectual and infectiously curious musical minds of our age, George Benjamin."— Artistic Director Thomas W. Morris

(Revised March 17, 2010) —Ojai, California -- Ojai Music Festival Artistic Director Thomas W. Morris and 2010 Music Director George Benjamin have announced final programming for the upcoming Festival. From June 10 to June 13, 2010, the Ojai Music Festival will explore the works and celebrate musical relationships of its music director, George Benjamin. Marking its West Coast premiere, the Ensemble Modern, a longtime artistic partner of Benjamin's and one of the world's preeminent new music ensembles, will perform four distinct programs during the 2010 Festival.

Each year, the Ojai Music Festival reflects the tastes and personality of its music director. George Benjamin, widely known as one of today's most inventive composers, is also a sought-after conductor, an imaginative programmer, and an innovative pianist. Though the upcoming Festival will mark George Benjamin's first collaboration with the Ojai Music Festival, he is steeped in the Ojai tradition through his close relationships with Ojai alumni including Pierre Boulez, Olivier Messiaen, and Oliver Knussen. Benjamin's 2010 Ojai Music Festival programs venerate these relationships.

The 2010 Ojai Music Festival explores the music of Benjamin's teachers and mentors, Pierre Boulez and Olivier Messiaen; of his students, Steve Potter (a California native, whose *Paradigms* will receive its U.S. premiere at the 2010 Festival) and Saed Haddad; by his colleague and friend, Oliver Knussen; and music he simply enjoys, from Ligeti to Stravinsky to Henry Purcell to Indian ragas. Highlights of the upcoming Festival include Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* and *Oiseaux Exotiques*, Ligeti's Chamber Concerto, and the West Coast premiere of Benjamin's chamber opera, *Into the Little Hill*. Hailed as "the opera of the decade" by London's *Telegraph*, *Into the Little Hill* will be performed by the Welsh contralto **Hilary Summers** and the Finnish soprano **Anu Koms**i, Benjamin's muses for whom he "designed" the work and with whom the opera was premiered in 2006 in Paris. The Frankfurt-based Ensemble Modern will perform four varied concerts—two conducted by Benjamin, one of chamber music and the other including works by Varèse and American icon Frank Zappa, with whom Ensemble Modern collaborated in 1992 and whose music they recorded in 2002..

The 2010 Ojai Music Festival welcomes the return of two 2008 Ojai artists, American composer and conductor **Brad Lubman**, and pianist **Eric Huebner**. With the upcoming Festival, Ojai's musical family is expanded with first-time appearances, including contralto Hilary Summers; soprano Anu Koms; the Bay area viol group, **Wildcats Viols** comprising **Joanna Blendulf**, **Julie Jeffrey** and **Elisabeth Reed**; California Institute of the Arts faculty member and internationally renowned North Indian Classical Music specialist **Aashish Khan**, sarode, and collaborator **Javad Ali Butah**, tabla; and soloists from the Ensemble Modern: **Hermann Kretzschmar**, a pianist since 1985; Megumi Kasakawa, viola; Patrick Judt who has worked with the ensemble since 2006; pianist **Ueli Wiget**, a member since 1986; and **Dietmar Wiesner**, flute and a founding member of the Ensemble Modern. Detailed concert program information is included below. Visit OjaiFestival.org for detailed programming information, multimedia video/audio clips, artist biographies, and more.

In addition to the Festival's core concerts, Ojai's eclectic *Beyond the Bowl* events include late-night and afternoon Raga performances by Aashish Khan and friends free to the general public. In addition, George Benjamin performs improvisational piano to the classic silent film "Vampyre" by Carl T. Dreyer. *Beyond the Bowl* events are free, with priority seating given to Festival subscribers and donors followed by a release of limited tickets for the general public. An Ojai tradition, the Festival Symposium allows audiences to become immersed in the Festival programming, moderated by former artistic director and Dean of the Juilliard School, **Ara Guzelimian**. The three-part symposium will take place at Matilija Auditorium and will include an

exploration of *The 21st Century Musician*, a *Conversation with George Benjamin*, and an introduction to *The World of Zappa*. Symposium panel guests will include 2010 Ojai musicians, along with special guests and Ojai alumni. One hour before each Libbey Bowl concert, musicologist and internationally recognized lecturer **Christopher Hailey** will offer *Concert Insights*, a discussion of the related concert with featured artists.

Concerts will take place outdoors at the Libbey Bowl under a canopy of live oaks and sycamore. Other Festival events will be held at Libbey Park, the Ojai Theatre, the Libbey Park Tennis Courts, and Matilija Auditorium, the site of the original Festival concerts in 1947. Audiences are invited and encouraged to participate in all Festival events and can find additional info at OjaiFestival.org, or contact (805) 646-2094 for more information and to make reservations.

64th OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL, June 10–13, 2010

Thomas W. Morris, Artistic Director
George Benjamin, Music Director

Thursday, June 10

3:30-5:00 pm Festival Symposium

Part I: The 21st Century Musician

Symposium Director, Ara Guzelimian, will lead a diverse panel of musicians through an exploration of the “21st Century Musician.” Where is the music industry heading? What are the changing roles of musicians? What are the opportunities? What are the challenges?

Panelists will include violinist and 2009 Ojai artist Carla Kihlstedt, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra concertmaster Margaret Batjer, and Roland Diry of the Ensemble Modern.

8:00 pm Concert

Members of the Ensemble Modern
George Benjamin, conductor
Hilary Summers, mezzo soprano
Hermann Kretzschmar, piano

SAED HADDAD: *Le Contrédesir*

STEVE POTTER: *Paradigms* (excerpts) U.S. PREMIERE

ELLIOTT CARTER: Oboe Quartet

SCHOENBERG: Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16 (chamber version arranged by Schoenberg)

STRAUSS/SCHOENBERG: *Emperor Waltzes*

10:30 pm ***Beyond the Bowl* event - FREE**
North Indian Classical Late-Night Ragas
Libbey Bowl
Aashish Khan, sarode; Javad Ali Butah, tabla; TBA, tanpura

Friday, June 11

11:00 am – 2:15 pm **Festival Symposium**
Part II: The Multifaceted George Benjamin

George Benjamin engages in a free-ranging conversation with Ara Guzelimian, discussing his life, his compositions, and his musical horizons.

Festival Symposium Part III: The World of Frank Zappa
Following a break for lunch, panelists connected with Frank Zappa will discuss his amazing genre-bending career. Members of the Ensemble Modern recount the group's tours and recordings with Zappa in the 1990's.

8:00 pm **Concert**
Ensemble Modern
Brad Lubman, conductor
Dietmar Wiesner, flute
Hermann Kretzschmar, speaker
ZAPPA: Music from *The Yellow Shark*
VARÈSE: *Density 21.5*
VARÈSE: *Octandre*
ZAPPA: Music from *Greggery Peccary & Other Persuasions*

11:00 pm ***Beyond the Bowl* event– FREE**
George Benjamin and the silent film “Vampyre”
Ojai Theatre
George Benjamin, piano

Saturday, June 12

11:00 am **Concert**
Eric Huebner, piano
MESSIAEN: *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus*
(played without pause)

4:00 pm ***Beyond the Bowl* event - FREE**
North Indian Classical Afternoon Ragas
Ojai Downtown Arcade
Aashish Khan, sarode; Javad Ali Butah, tabla; TBA, tanpura

8:00 pm **Concert**
Ensemble Modern
George Benjamin, conductor
Anu Komsi, soprano
Hilary Summers, contralto
STRAVINSKY: *L'Histoire du Soldat Suite*
GEORGE BENJAMIN: *Into the Little Hill* WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sunday, June 13

11:00 am **Concert**

Wildcat Viols
Aashish Khan, sarode; Javad Ali Butah, table; TBA, tanpura
PURCELL: *Fantazias for viols*
North Indian Classical Morning Ragas

5:30 pm **Concert**
Ensemble Modern
George Benjamin, conductor
Anu Komsi, soprano
Ueli Wiget, piano
Dietmar Wiesner, flute
Megumi Kasakawa, viola
Patrick Judt, viola
PIERRE BOULEZ: *Memoriale*
GEORGE BENJAMIN: *Viola, Viola*
OLIVER KNUSSSEN: *Songs for Sue*
BENJAMIN: *At First Light*
LIGETI: *Chamber Concerto*
MESSIAEN: *Oiseaux Exotiques*

All mainstage concerts are held at Libbey Bowl.

George Benjamin is one of the outstanding composers of his generation. Born in 1960, Benjamin started to play the piano at the age of 7, and began composing almost immediately. In 1976, he entered the Paris Conservatoire to study composition with Olivier Messiaen and piano with Yvonne Loriod, after which he worked with Alexander Goehr at King's College, Cambridge. Benjamin's first orchestral work, *Ringed by the Flat Horizon*, was performed at the BBC Proms when he was 20; since then his works have continued to be played across the world. The 2006 Festival d'Automne in Paris premiered his first operatic work, *Into the Little Hill*, a collaboration with playwright Martin Crimp, which has toured widely on both sides of the Atlantic and won a Royal Philharmonic Society Award in 2008. It received its London premiere in a new production at the Royal Opera House in February 2009. His most recent work, *Duet for piano and orchestra*, was the Roche commission for the 2008 Lucerne Festival, where he was composer-in-residence, and was premiered there by Pierre-Laurent Aimard and The Cleveland Orchestra under Franz Welser-Möst.

George Benjamin appears regularly as a conductor with the world's leading ensembles and orchestras, and he has conducted numerous world premieres, including works by Rihm, Chin, Grisey, and Ligeti. He was the founding curator of the South Bank's Meltdown Festival, and was artistic consultant to the BBC's retrospective of 20th century music, *Sounding the Century*. Since 2001 he has been the Henry Purcell Professor of Composition at King's College, London. He is a Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et Lettres, a member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts, and has been awarded honorary fellowships by the Guildhall School, the Royal Academy, and the Royal College of Music. In January 2010, extensive celebrations of Benjamin's music in San Francisco and London marked his 50th birthday.

Founded in 1980 and based in Frankfurt since 1985, the **Ensemble Modern** (EM) is one of the world's leading ensembles for the performance of new music. Currently, the EM is comprised of 18 soloists from Argentina, Bulgaria, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, Poland, and Switzerland, all of whom provide the ensemble with its rich cultural background.

The Ensemble Modern is recognized for its uniquely collaborative approach to programming and to performance, with all members sharing responsibility for the creation and implementation of projects, including musical theatre, dance and video projects, chamber music, ensemble and orchestral concerts. Touring extensively—with approximately 100 concerts each year—the EM strives to achieve the highest degree of authenticity by working closely with composers. The musicians rehearse an average of 70 new works each year, 20 of which are world premieres. In 2003, the German Federal Cultural Foundation nominated the Ensemble Modern as one of Germany's beacons of contemporary culture. The Ensemble Modern is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, the Deutsche Ensemble Akademie, the city of Frankfurt, the state of Hesse, the GEMA Foundation and the GVL.

Ojai Music Festival Artistic Director **Thomas W. Morris** is recognized as one of the most visionary leaders and innovative concert programmers in the music industry. His tenure with the Festival began in 2004, and extends through 2014. As Artistic Director, Morris is responsible for identifying and engaging each Festival music director and, in collaboration with each music director, for curating Festival programming in the fearless tradition for which Ojai has become renowned. In February 2004, Morris retired as executive director of The Cleveland Orchestra, a position he held since 1987. He served in a number of capacities, including general manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1969 to 1985, where he had overall responsibility for the Boston Symphony, Boston Pops, Tanglewood, and Symphony Hall. In addition to his Ojai post, Morris is artistic director of the new Spring for Music Festival at New York's Carnegie Hall to debut in May 2011, and is also active as a consultant, teacher, and writer.

Now in its sixth decade, the **Ojai Music Festival** continues its unmatched musical legacy and international reputation for artistic excellence, adventurous programs, and creative artistic camaraderie. Each year, the Festival welcomes a new music director who creates his/her own artistic programming with an emphasis on contemporary music. The 2010 Festival features British composer/conductor George Benjamin. All concerts take place at the outdoor Libbey Bowl, on a site held sacred by the Chumash Indians, where inspiration and creativity still flourish. From its founding in 1947, a healthy spirit of eclecticism and musical daring flourished, and the Ojai Music Festival remains a world champion of contemporary programming that is enchanting and challenging. With the 1954 appointment of Lawrence Morton as artistic director, Ojai embraced an enduring concept whereby the artistic director engages a different music director each year, around whose musical ideas that year's Festival is built. Among the Festival's diverse music directors have been such renowned musical personalities as John Adams, Pierre Boulez, Aaron Copland, Ingolf Dahl, Peter Maxwell Davies, Lukas Foss, John Harbison, Oliver Knussen, Kent Nagano, Igor Stravinsky, Michael Tilson Thomas, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mitsuko Uchida, Robert Spano, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, David Robertson, and eighth blackbird. Considered a highlight of the summer classical music season, the Ojai Music Festival is a four-day series of concerts, symposia, and auxiliary events set in the idyllic Ojai Valley, known as California's Shangri-la.

Tickets and Information

Ojai Music Festival single tickets range from \$35 to \$100 for reserved seating; lawn seats are

\$15. (tickets increase the week of the Festival.) Series tickets are also available and range from \$150 to \$309 for a full series and \$125 to \$255 for a mini series. Ojai concerts take place at the Libbey Bowl at East Ojai Avenue in downtown Ojai.

Tickets for the Festival Symposium on June 10 in Matilija Auditorium at Matilija Junior High School are \$15 in advance or \$20 the day of the event. The Symposium on June 12 is \$35 in advance and \$40 day of the event. Matilija Junior High School is located at 703 El Paseo Road.

Directions to Ojai, as well as information about lodging, concierge services for visitors, and other Ojai activities, are also available on the [Ojai Web site](#).

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[For photos, additional bios, and Ojai information visit the press page at OjaiFestival.org](#)

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

MUSIC DIRECTORS

1947	Thor Johnson	1978	Calvin Simmons
1948	Thor Johnson and Edward Rebner	1979	Lukas Foss
1949	Thor Johnson	1980	Lukas Foss
1950	Thor Johnson	1981	Daniel Lewis
1951	William Steinberg	1982	Robert Craft
1952	Thor Johnson	1983	Daniel Lewis
1953	Thor Johnson	1984	Pierre Boulez
1954	Robert Craft	1985	Kent Nagano
1955	Robert Craft, Igor Stravinsky	1986	Kent Nagano and Stephen Mosko
1956	Robert Craft, Igor Stravinsky	1987	Lukas Foss
1957	Aaron Copland, Ingolf Dahl	1988	Nicholas McGegan, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, and Diane Wittry
1958	Aaron Copland	1989	Pierre Boulez
1959	Robert Craft	1990	Stephen Mosko
1960	Henri Temianka	1991	John Harbison, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies
1961	Lukas Foss	1992	Pierre Boulez
1962	Lukas Foss	1993	John Adams
1963	Lukas Foss	1994	Michael Tilson Thomas
1964	Ingolf Dahl	1995	Kent Nagano
1965	Ingolf Dahl	1996	Pierre Boulez
1966	Ingolf Dahl	1997	Emanuel Ax, Daniel Harding
1967	Pierre Boulez	1998	Mitsuko Uchida, David Zinman
1968	Robert LaMarchina, Lawrence Foster, and Michael Tilson Thomas	1999	Esa-Pekka Salonen
1969	Michael Zearott, Stefan Minde, and Michael Tilson Thomas	2000	Sir Simon Rattle
1970	Pierre Boulez	2001	Esa-Pekka Salonen
1971	Gerhard Samuel	2002	Emerson String Quartet
1972	Michael Zearott	2003	Pierre Boulez
1973	Michael Tilson Thomas	2004	Kent Nagano
1974	Michael Tilson Thomas	2005	Oliver Knussen
1975	Michael Tilson Thomas	2006	Robert Spano
1976	Aaron Copland	2007	Pierre-Laurent Aimard
1977	Michael Tilson Thomas	2008	David Robertson
		2009	eighth blackbird
		2010	George Benjamin

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

MILESTONES

- 1947 May 4 - First concert features French baritone Martial Singher with Paul Ulanowsky in a recital covering repertoire from Rameau to Ravel at Ojai's Nordhoff Auditorium.
- 1948 Lawrence Morton becomes first program annotator and begins his association with the Festival; Igor Stravinsky's *Histoire du soldat* (A Soldier's Tale) is billed as the premiere of the final version of his work.
- 1949 Ojai Festivals, Ltd. is officially launched as a non-profit organization.
- 1952 The Festival holds first outdoor concert at the Libbey Bowl.
- 1953 Lukas Foss makes his first Ojai appearance as conductor.
- 1954 Lawrence Morton becomes first Artistic Director.
- 1955 Igor Stravinsky conducts his own works at the Festival.
- 1956 Stravinsky conducts his own *Les Noces* for Ojai audiences; permanent benches are added to the Libbey Bowl doubling the seating capacity to 750.
- 1957 Aaron Copland makes Ojai debut.
- 1960 For the first time, *all* Festival concerts are held at the Libbey Bowl.
- 1962 Jazz flutist Eric Dolphy performs *Density 21.5* for solo flute by Edgard Varèse; the Festival includes a four-day prelude of discussions lectures/concerts with Luciano Berio, Milton Babbitt, Gunther Schuller and Lukas Foss.
- 1963 Foss experiments with music from *Don Giovanni* using three orchestras to create a kind of stereophonic surround sound at the Bowl; Mauricio Kagel is guest composer/conductor.
- 1964 Ingolf Dahl (USC faculty composer) is Music Director and Ojai becomes a northern "outpost" for the USC's music department.
- 1965 19-year-old pianist Michael Tilson Thomas is featured in concert; Harold Shapero's *Serenade in D* for String Orchestra and Ramiro Cortes' *Concerto for Violin and Strings* are premiered.
- 1966 Ojai celebrates its 20th anniversary; David Raskin, film composer and friend of Lawrence Morton, writes five special fanfares for the Festival.
- 1967 Lawrence Morton returns as Artistic Director; Pierre Boulez makes his Ojai debut in his fifth American appearance; Boulez delays the start time of a performance to allow the Santa Paula Railroad "Orange" train to pass.

- 1968 Pianist James Levine makes a guest appearance; Ingolf Dahl is Music Director once again and the Debut Orchestra of the Young Musicians Foundation is in residence.
- 1969 The trio of Michael Tilson Thomas, Michael Zearott and Stefan Minde lead the Festival as co-Music Directors.
- 1970 Boulez returns for his second visit to Ojai and includes the first American performance of his *Domaines*; the Los Angeles Philharmonic makes its Ojai debut.
- 1971 Ojai celebrates its 25th anniversary; Gerhard Samuel makes first appearance as conductor and Artistic Director; Lou Harrison's Chinese Classical Music Ensemble presents a morning concert of Chinese music.
- 1972 Ethnic music is highlighted under the baton of Michael Zearott including Mariachi music from Jalisco, Mexico, drum music from West Africa and the Balinese group, Gamelan Angklung.
- 1973 Michael Tilson Thomas is Music Director for the next three seasons; Tilson Thomas brings minimalism to Ojai with Steve Reich's *Four Organs with Percussion* plus John Cage's *Three Dances for Two Amplified Prepared Pianos*, both in their West Coast premieres; annual jazz concerts begin in Ojai.
- 1975 Charles Wuorinen's *A Reliquary for Igor Stravinsky*, a joint Ojai Festival/Buffalo Philharmonic commission, is given its world premiere.
- 1976 Copland returns to Ojai as does Lawrence Morton as Artistic Director.
- 1978 Young African-American conductor Calvin Simmons (assistant conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic) takes the baton as Music Director; Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* is performed.
- 1980 Sequoia Quartet, UC San Diego-based SONOR and the Los Angeles Ballet perform.
- 1981 USC Symphony's director Daniel Lewis is the Festival Music Director; the program includes the West Coast premiere of Benjamin Britten's *Our Hunting Fathers* with tenor Jonathan Mack and the U.S. premiere of Clementi's Symphony No. 4.
- 1982 The Festival presents a Stravinsky Centennial with Robert Craft as Music Director featuring all or part of nearly 40 compositions by the master in his honor.
- 1983 The Kronos Quartet and The Musicians of Swanee Alley make their Ojai debuts; Ravi Shankar returns.
- 1985 Under the recommendation of Pierre Boulez, young conductor Kent Nagano makes his first Ojai appearance as Music Director; The music of Olivier Messiaen is highlighted and attends his first Ojai Festival; Messiaen's wife Yvonne Loriod performs in a piano recital.
- 1986 Due to the success of his first Ojai Festival, Nagano is invited to return as Music Director; Composer-conductor-percussionist Stephen "Lucky" Mosko conducts Saturday

- evening's concert, which includes the West Coast premiere of John Adams' *The Chairman Dances*.
- 1987 Lukas Foss comes back to Ojai; the Festival is dedicated to Lawrence Morton who passes away earlier in the year.
- 1988 Peter Maxwell-Davies is composer-in-residence; Nicholas McGegan is Music Director along with his Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, which was also in residence this season.
- 1989 The Festival highlights the work of composer György Ligeti; Boulez is Music Director.
- 1990 Stephen "Lucky" Mosko returns but this time as Music Director and Elliott Carter is the composer-in-residence; for the first time in Festival history there is no music from the past or music by any European composers.
- 1992 Boulez as Music Director brings famed director Peter Sellars to Ojai; Sellars stages Stravinsky's *Histoire du soldat* in its fifth incarnation in Ojai; however, he re-stages the work using inner-city actors in the cast and the back of a flatbed pick-up truck as part of the setting; Ara Guzelimian is named Artistic Director.
- 1993 John Adams makes his first Ojai appearance as Music Director highlighting the work of Cage, Reich and Gorecki.
- 1994 For his seventh Festival, Michael Tilson Thomas journeys back to Ojai as Music Director along with his New World Symphony.
- 1996 The 50th Anniversary of the Ojai Music Festival is led by Pierre Boulez; pianist Mitsuko Uchida makes her first appearance at the Festival.
- 1997 Pianist Emanuel Ax is Music Director; Daniel Harding is principal conductor; Artistic Director Ara Guzelimian bids farewell to Festival.
- 1998 Ernest Fleischmann begins his tenure as the Festival's third Artistic Director; Mitsuko Uchida is Music Director; David Zinman is principal conductor.
- 1999 Esa-Pekka Salonen makes his Ojai debut and creates a program dedicated to Finnish music. Composer-in-residence is Magnus Lindberg.
- 2000 Sir Simon Rattle makes his Ojai debut as Music Director; the Festival features the U.S. premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Kai* and the West Coast premiere of Thomas Ades' *Asyla*.
- 2002 Marking the first time for a group, the Emerson String Quartet is Music Director.
- 2004 Kent Nagano returns, this time with his Los Angeles Opera Orchestra, which makes its Ojai debut; Thomas W. Morris begins his tenure as the Festival's fourth Artistic Director; the Festival presents the world premiere of Korean composer Unsuk Chin's *SNAGS & SNARLS*.

- 2005 British composer-conductor Oliver Knussen is Festival Music Director; The Cleveland Orchestra with Music Director Franz Welser-Most; British composer Jonathan Cole's *Testament* is given its world premiere and is a joint commission by the Sue Knussen Commissioning Fund, London Sinfonietta and the Ojai Festival.
- 2006 The 60th Anniversary of the Ojai Music Festival is led by Robert Spano as Music Director in his Ojai debut; featured composer is Osvaldo Golijov; Golijov's revised concert version of *Ainadamar* is given its West Coast premiere; featured artists include Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Chorus and Dawn Upshaw.
- 2007 French pianist, Pierre Laurent Aimard, makes his Festival debut as music director along with Hungarian composer/conductor Peter Eotvos as featured composer. The Festival program includes two U.S. premieres by Eotvos – *Sonata per Sei* and *Chinese Opera*.
- 2008 American conductor David Robertson marks his first Festival as music director. American composer Steve Reich returns after a 35-year absence with his music at the centerpiece of the Festival. Dawn Upshaw returns for her third visit to Ojai. French composer Francois Narboni enjoys the U.S. premiere of his work entitled *El Gran Masturbador* and Michael Jarrell's *Cassandra* makes its west coast premiere.
- 2009 eighth blackbird becomes the second chamber ensemble to be named music director. The co-commissioned piece, *Slide*, makes its world premiere.

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OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“No arm’s-length tolerance of new music here. Upscale locals, Los Angeles intelligentsia and out-of-towners crowd Libbey Bowl’s near-primitive outdoor facilities for four days and devour music normal audiences might greet with bewilderment.”

The New York Times

“There is nothing dutiful about the approach of either the performers or the audience, but a truly festive spirit in the way they come together for this annual long weekend. Few other audiences are as open-minded or curious as those who gather on the benches or lawns of Libbey Bowl in Ojai’s park.

The Sunday Telegraph

“If the music wafting on this valley’s breezes tells us anything, it’s that history lives at Ojai.”

Wall Street Journal

“The Chicago-based new music sextet eighth blackbird took over this year’s Ojai Music Festival in Libbey Bowl for four days and packed it full with more and more varied music (and music theater) than ever before in the quirky, famous festival’s 63-year-history...With those blackbirds singing morning, noon and in the dead of night, horizons could not but expand.”

Los Angeles Times

“No walls, no floor, no ceiling, no acoustic paneling. Just grass, trees, birds, bees, and earnest music making ... Ojai isn’t quite a fantasy island in the South Pacific, but its surreal, atmospheric beauty isn’t far removed ... Who would have thought that this quiet unassuming city ... would, for one weekend a year, become a mecca for today’s contemporary music intelligentsia and maintain a loyal following in the process?”

Symphony Magazine

“Then there are the birds and the frogs that provide their own ambient accompaniment, the sun dappling through the sycamores that overhang the Libbey Bowl, the moon rising and the glimmer of stars, wandering the arcade and art fair, and the camaraderie of sharing four days of music that make up the Ojai festival experience.”

Los Angeles Daily News

“Ojai is an anomaly: small but internationally influential, primitive yet sophisticated.”

The New York Times

“At last weekend’s 63rd season it was possible to sit on those hard benches and imagine history being made: this is the festival that once featured Stravinsky, that convinced Copland to make his conducting debut and that gave Boulez his first US concert dates.”

The Sunday Telegraph

“Barricades come down in striking songs of love and sorrow, heaven and earth, conquerors and the conquered, the sacred and the profane, and the inexplicable ways of men.”

Los Angeles Times

“Count festival No. 63 as a rousing, refreshingly different kind of success story.”

Santa Barbara News Press

“Bottom line: the 63rd Ojai Festival was an enormous success, highly stimulating, occasionally puzzling, in at least one performance absolutely maddening, in many others lots of fun, and in a select few awesomely magisterial. It was an essential dose of music for those curious to hear, feel and think in the differing worlds of organized sound.”

LA Opus

“2009’s Ojai Festival should go down as one of the finer and funner programs yet—meaner, leaner, and more audience-friendly while still clinging fiercely to the mandate of keeping the serious music torch burning.”

Santa Barbara Independent

“It’s [The Festival] the rubbing-together of the primitive and the sophisticated that lends Ojai its charm. The outdoor setting removes the preciousness from serious musical endeavour without compromising standards, while its intimacy seals the performer-audience relationship...”

Financial Times

“L.A.’s best kept musical secret... legendary in new-music circles. Here in the foothills 85 miles north of Los Angeles, Stravinsky, Copland, Boulez, Messiaen, Lukas Foss, Tilson Thomas, John Adams, Salonen, Mitsuko Uchida, Emanuel Ax, and the Emerson String Quartet have all found a brief musical haven.”

Gramophone

“...it’s the interaction of extraordinary composers, conductors and performers that gives Ojai its symbiotic essence and makes it a small but mighty festival.”

Ventura County Star

“Along some 15 kilometers of the Pacific Ocean, Ojai is a dream corner of Ventura County. An hour and a quarter by car from Los Angeles...this small, calm, and fashionable city is located in one of the most wooded areas of Southern California. There are only fields of strawberries, citrus fruit, sycamores, eucalyptus, and oaks, which intersect the pleasant blue of a sky papered by mountains. With the coming evening, the sun fades to a color that surrenders to the drunken ecstasy of seeing Olivier Messiaen. Those familiar with Ojai call this the *pink moment*.”

Le Monde

"...compact but wide-ranging... [one of] the summer's best performing arts festivals."

Travel & Leisure Magazine

"This was the best. I may have written that of others, but never with more assurance. ...this extraordinary weekend, its triumphant proclamation of the mingled roles of music and the human spirit."

LA Weekly

"The programme asks you to look beyond yourself and try something new."

Financial Times

"With the real wind swirling in the performance space and driving the music, Nature contributed a third dimension."

Die Welt

"At 60, the Ojai Music Festival is looking and sounding mighty fit, and seems more vital than ever. No doubt, the milestone anniversary warranted some extra attention and musical wattage from visiting artists, which it got from the rightfully beloved Osvaldo Golijov's composer-in-residence visit, star soprano Dawn Upshaw, and conductor/music director Robert Spano, leading his charges in the impressive Atlanta Symphony Orchestra."

Santa Barbara News Press

"Ojai and its Music Festival, which celebrated its 60th birthday over the weekend, are places apart. The intrusion of chain stores into the little town of 8,000, tucked in a gorgeously fertile valley in Ventura County, is strictly forbidden. So, too, does the festival go its own way. Held in Libbey Bowl, a rustic city park with an aged band shell, it emphasizes the new, the unusual and the difficult, and everyone who comes learns to relish the unlikelihood of it."

Orange County Register

"Since its founding, Ojai has won admirers for its adventurous programming that takes seriously the music of our time. Stravinsky, Copland, Messiaen and Pierre Boulez all journeyed here with their own works in hand. Audiences come expecting the unusual, the modern. They even welcome it."

New York Times

"In this case, it was not Vienna, nor Berlin, but the small festival of Ojai that – as far as the interpretation of great symphonic works is concerned – could be seen as the hub of the musical world."

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

"Like the magical clefs that seem to flutter with a bouncy verve and hand in the eucalyptus and oak trees that surround its home base of Libbey Bowl, the Ojai Music Festival retains a special, unique vibe in classical music circles as it nears the ripe age of 60."

Ventura County Star

"This brief festival continues to uphold a stellar reputation."

New York Times

"In the first half of the concert, the L.A. Opera Orchestra played this accompaniment as an orchestral solo, and sounded as if all aglow. To end the afternoon, a small chorus sang the vocal work urgently, just as Ojai turned its momentary sunset pink. The combination of setting and sentiment was spine-tingling."

Los Angeles Times

"Ojai seduces creative purpose. Soft hills rise up from the town. Huge eucalyptus trees surround Libbey Bowl. Jasmine is in the air. An old oak bends over the stage. Man-made objects have much to compete with; the Ojai Festival bends with nature in order to survive. A musical avant-garde that largely ignores its general audience might learn from that."

New York Times

"...enchanted Ojai — the scenic valley and the charmed festival setting in the rickety Libbey Park Bowl — still seduces. The best musicians continue to come and return. Exceptional composers are, as always, expected and feted."

Los Angeles Times

"It was quite the opening salvo for the little festival that, now in its 57th year, always seems a step up from the regular season. The best musicians come here and are asked to play adventurous programs, many of them chock full of new music. The performances generally are better rehearsed than during the season, too. A listener who arrives here Friday evening can feast on six top-notch concerts in Libbey Bowl before the sun goes down on Sunday."

Orange County Register

"In the end it dies away very slowly: Boulez, with the gentlest of hand movements, coaxed one last instrumental breath after another out of the players, until nothing was left but a hush. Neither the orchestra nor the crowd—which demanded five curtain calls—wanted to see him go."

Ventura County Reporter

"The annual Ojai Festival is a miniature, less expensive California version of Salzburg — an out-of-the-way place where passionate musicians, critics and fans can gather, schmooze and pontificate, and in between listen to some world-class music."

Andante

"Just as our ears were warming up, just as our backside was settling in, just as we were beginning to know the people sitting next to us... the Ojai Music Festival is over. See you next year. That's the beauty of the place, that's its magic. On Monday morning, you're still digesting the long weekend cram session of new music, unusual music, seldom-heard music – six concerts in less than 48 hours, for these ears – all held in the unlikely location of a public park in downtown Ojai. Who was it that said, 'Always leave them wanting more?' Ojai does."

Orange County Register

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OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

ABOUT OJAI

Ojai, which takes its name from the Chumash Indian word *A'hwai*, meaning "nest" or "moon," is a special place with a long history of reverence and appreciation for agriculture, the arts, education and the human spirit. The city is nestled within the Ojai Valley, a tiny sun-drenched, east-to-west laying valley 10 miles long and three miles wide that closely resembles the look and climate of either Tuscany or the south of France. In addition to the city of Ojai, the valley encompasses the unincorporated towns of Casitas Springs, Oak View, Mira Monte, and Meiners Oaks.

With its richness in physical beauty and cultural history, the valley attracts artists, entrepreneurs, activists and actors. Ojai is a lovely land of coastal oaks and lush groves of citrus, olive and avocados. The views are legendary. The sight from the top of Dennison Grade is so extraordinary that it was portrayed as Shangri-La in the legendary movie "Lost Horizon". If you're there at the end of the day, you would be privileged to witness Ojai's "pink moment", when the Topa Topa Mountains display an otherworldly pink hue.

Horseback riding, mountain biking and hiking are popular outdoor pastimes in this area of graceful oaks and friendly mountains. The architecture of Ojai owes much to its Spanish influence. The downtown arcade has a Spanish-style facade, and there is a mission-style arch and pergola at the downtown park bearing the name of Edward D. Libbey, a wealthy glass manufacturer who set out to make Ojai into "a dream city of soft harmonies, smooth flowing line and warm colors." Dream city or not, Ojai does have a wide choice of housing styles to suit almost any taste.

The Valley's magnificent climate and natural beauty, along with the area's many mineral hot springs, fostered Ojai's reputation as a place to restore and rejuvenate health. That heritage thrives today at Ojai's world-renowned spas and resorts and in a widespread emphasis on wellness and good health among those who live here. Those seeking a connection with the spiritual life find kindred spirits in Ojai, which is home to a variety of New Age and religious groups.

Ojai is and has always been an artistic community, attracting writers, photographers, painters, musicians, composers, sculptors, potters, weavers, and jewelry makers. The Ojai Center for the Arts is the oldest continually operating arts center in California. Painting, poetry, theater, dance, and music classes and workshops are held at the center throughout the year and the center also produces art shows, theater productions, poetry festivals, crafts fairs and dances.

Today, Ojai is a beacon for ecologically aware citizens who wish to preserve the unique character of the Ojai Valley by engaging in occupations that are compatible with nature and the small-town atmosphere of the city. The arts flourish here, as does tourism, education, and agriculture.

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

Did You Know?

1. The breathtakingly beautiful Ojai Valley was portrayed as the mythical Shangri-La by Frank Capra in his 1937 film *Lost Horizon*.
2. The Ojai Valley is known for its “Pink Moment,” which occurs every evening at sunset when the valley’s mountains are bathed in a pink and mauve glow.
3. Tons of avocados, oranges and lemons from nearly 3,000 acres of groves leave the Ojai Valley every season for markets around the world.
4. The Ojai Valley was home for thousands of years to the Chumash Indians who believed the valley had mystical powers.
5. Since its founding in 1947, the Ojai Music Festival has held its concerts in the Libbey Bowl, marked sacred by the Chumash Indians, and safeguarded by the “Wedding Tree,” a sycamore thought to have taken root at the same time our nation took root in the western world.
6. The Ojai Music Festival has presented many of music’s legends—everyone from Igor Stravinsky and Aaron Copland through Olivier Messiaen, Pierre Boulez and Ravi Shankar, to Michael Tilson Thomas and Steve Reich—who have made the Festival famous for pushing the musical envelope..
7. At the Ojai Music Festival, audiences can always expect the unexpected. In 2007 a team of local college students got together to wind up 100 metronomes for a rare performance of Gyorgy Ligeti’s *Poem symphonique*.
8. Bart’s Books, a Parisian-style open-air bookshop and a collector’s delight, known as “the world’s greatest outdoor book store,” stocks more than 100,000 used (and some new) books on every topic imaginable. Shopping after hours? A friendly sign suggests you use the honor system and just toss your coins inside the gate.
9. The crinkly white California native flower—the Matilija Poppy—was named after an ancient Chumash village located in Ojai.
10. The local cemetery is the resting place for Ojai’s last full-blooded Chumash Indian elder, as well as a half-dozen Confederate soldiers.
11. South African, Australian and Mediterranean native plants and the Audubon Society’s bird-banding project are featured at the 276-acre Ojai Center for Earth Concerns, a wildlife preserve, botanical garden, and environmental center.
12. During World War II the 134th infantry set up their training camp from 1942-1945 on the golf course of the Ojai Country Club.

13. Tennis greats Pancho Gonzalez, Tracy Austin, Jack Kramer, Billie Jean King, Arthur Ashe, Stan Smith, Alex Olmedo, Chris Evert, Jimmy Connors, and Michael Chang have all played in the Ojai Valley's annual tennis tournament.
14. And golf greats Arnold Palmer, Chi Chi Rodriguez, Tom Weiskopf, Al Geiberger, Dave Stockton and Gary Player, are among the army of golf legends who descend on Ojai every year for the Senior PGA Tour.
15. The town of less than 8,000 boasts five of the nation's top private, college prep schools (one founded by Aldous Huxley) in addition to its 12 public schools and the World University of America.