La Jolla Music Society and SummerFest
Music Director Inon Barnatan Agree to New Three-Year Contract

San Diego, CA — As a successful SummerFest 2022 draws to a close at The Conrad, La Jolla Music Society (LJMS)’s leadership announced it has come to an agreement with Music Director Inon Barnatan for a new three-year contract, through September 2025.

Barnatan, an internationally acclaimed concert pianist, has been Music Director of SummerFest since 2019. In that role he creates the theme and programming for the summer festival concerts and selects the musical artists who will perform them.

“As a longtime admirer of both Inon the artist and Inon the person, I couldn’t be more thrilled to get a chance to work with him for another three years,” says LJMS Artistic Director Leah Rosenthal. “Thanks to Inon’s creative vision, collaborative spirit, and impeccable artistry, the most prolific and in-demand classical musicians, jazz artists, and dancers in the world are excited to come here to The Conrad to play with him. There is no one better to lead SummerFest into the next phase of its evolution as one of the best chamber music festivals in the U.S., let alone the world.”

SummerFest 2022 was the biggest in the company’s history, expanded to 20 concerts over four weeks and more than 70 free Education and Community Engagement events.

“In addition to his international career as a concert pianist, Inon has clearly found a new career niche that fits his skill set and expertise perfectly. With each season his curatorial skills develop and expand, and you can palpably sense his personal exuberance for the work in the performances on the stage and in the artists he hires,” says Todd Schultz, President and CEO of La Jolla Music Society. “Inon’s personal enthusiasm and creativity are
helping draw new audiences. In fact, this summer’s festival—even after two years of quarantine and Covid—will nearly match the record-setting sales of 2019 when The Conrad was brand new. Inon’s contract extension lines up perfectly with the Board’s recently developed strategic plan, which lays out goals for more extensive utilization of our new venue and a dedication to deeper service to the community.”

Barnatan’s activities outlined in the contract include overseeing the committee that selects SummerFest Fellowship Artists annually from an international pool of applicants. He also participates in various SummerFest Education and Community Engagement events including Coaching Workshops, Encounters, Open Rehearsals and Artist Lounge conversations.

Equally celebrated as a soloist, curator, and collaborator, Inon Barnatan is a regular soloist with many of the world’s foremost orchestras and conductors, and served as the inaugural Artist-in-Association of the New York Philharmonic for three seasons. He has played with the BBC Symphony for the BBC Proms, the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, the Chicago, Baltimore, Fort Worth, Indianapolis, Nashville, San Diego, and Seattle Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the London, Helsinki, Hong Kong, and Royal Stockholm Philharmonics. He performed a complete Beethoven concerto cycle in Marseilles; Copland’s Piano Concerto with the San Francisco Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas in San Francisco and at Carnegie Hall; and a U.S. tour with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, playing and conducting Mozart and Shostakovich from the keyboard and premiering a newly commissioned concerto by Alasdair Nicolson. With the Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä, Barnatan played Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto on New Year’s Eve, followed by a Midwest tour that culminated in Chicago, and a return to the BBC Proms in summer 2018.

The recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant and Lincoln Center’s Martin E. Segal Award, Barnatan is also a sought-after recitalist and chamber musician, playing solo recitals at prestigious venues including Carnegie Hall and Wigmore Hall, and touring with his frequent recital partner, cellist Alisa Weilerstein. He is also an acclaimed recording artist. The most recent addition to Barnatan’s acclaimed discography is a two-volume set of Beethoven’s complete piano concertos, recorded with Alan Gilbert and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields on Pentatone. In 2021 he released his *Time-Traveler Suite* album on Pentatone, recorded at The Conrad, a program that merged Baroque movements by Bach, Handel, Rameau and Couperin with movements by Ravel, Ligeti, Barber and Thomas Adès, culminating in Brahms’ Variations on a theme by Handel.

“Working with Leah, Todd, and the entire incredible staff of The Conrad these past four years has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my musical life,” says Inon Barnatan. “It’s deeply gratifying to feel the audiences responding so enthusiastically and with such love to the work we have been putting on stage. I can’t wait to see what the next three years bring.”

The 35th annual SummerFest will return to The Conrad in La Jolla in July and August 2023. When announced, complete details, tickets and registration will be available at [www.TheConrad.org/summerfest](http://www.TheConrad.org/summerfest).
ABOUT LA JOLLA MUSIC SOCIETY AT THE CONRAD
As one of Southern California’s leading presenters of premier performing arts, La Jolla Music Society contributes to San Diego’s cultural vitality year-round through a rich variety of presentations, including classical, jazz, global roots, contemporary music, and dance, at its state-of-the-art venue, The Conrad. In addition to robust educational programs and community outreach, La Jolla Music Society produces SummerFest, a four-week music festival featuring over 80 world-class artists and ensembles performing eclectic concerts and programs. For more information, visit www.TheConrad.org, or call 858.459.3728.


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