

Dear Local Residents Dear Visitors



The Board of the Les Arts Gstaad Foundation is delighted to inform you in this Newsletter of the latest, most encouraging developments. Read on to find out which strategy the municipal authorities of Saanen and the Foundation Board have chosen so that the local electorate can vote as soon as possible on the future of this project which is now ready for construction. Visitors will learn more about the vision and inspiration which guided our architect as he continued to improve the Les Arts Gstaad project. You will also see what young people who are concerned with future issues relating to the cultural centre have to say.

Prominent new donors have pledged their support. The key element for us, however, is that these well-known people will give Les Arts Gstaad much

more than just financial support. They stress the importance of building a cultural centre in Gstaad – and want to play an active role in the future of our resort. The families of Stephan Schmidheiny and Aline Foriel-Destezet both value their strong links with Gstaad and this makes their donations all the more significant for us all.

Over the past two years the Les Arts Gstaad project has been brought to maturity. Local residents and regular visitors have witnessed both lively debates and discussions. And at the same time – and this is particularly gratifying for the Foundation Board – a great deal of encouragement and recognition has been received. Numerous criticisms have led to better solutions.

Raising the remaining funds required to finance the projects remains a significant challenge for us. Our calculations and financial planning indicate that roughly 30 million Swiss francs are still required for the overall financing of the cultural centre. We are immensely grateful to all those who have enabled us to bring this project to maturity or are now providing the funds to build this groundbreaking cultural centre.

Together we shall build Les Arts Gstaad.

J. Markus Kappeler
Chairman of the Les Arts Foundation Board

PROJECT

2016 2nd PUBLICATION AND VOTE BY THE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

The Les Arts Gstaad project has again been significantly improved. The Foundation Board and the municipal authorities have agreed to make the development plan – comprising three structures with three different owners – available for a second public inspection in spring 2016. Thereafter the ball will be in the court of the municipal assembly which will decide whether Les Arts Gstaad is to be built or not.

The Board of the Les Arts Gstaad (LAG) Foundation and the municipal authorities of Saanen have agreed on a combined approach for the next stage of the project for the cultural centre Les Arts Gstaad. The local population will be given a second opportunity to inspect the plans and consider the optimised project before it is put to the vote at the municipal assembly.

The Foundation Board and the municipal authorities have decided to make the development plan, comprising three different structures owned by three different parties, available for a second public inspection in spring 2016. This will be done after it has been assessed by the municipal and cantonal authorities. The various parts of the whole (access tunnel: municipality of Saanen), railway project (MOB) and cultural centre (Les Arts Gstaad Foundation) will now be assessed simultaneously in one combined planning application. Once this has been completed, any objections have been dealt with and financing is in place, the authorities will hold a municipal assembly to vote on the implementation of the project, the corresponding loans and the necessary contracts.

2nd opportunity for people in the Saanenland to consider the project

The improvements made by the architect, Rudy Ricciotti, and his team in recent months have brought the Les Arts Gstaad project to maturity.

It is precisely these changes, relating to the perimeter of the site, the arrangement of the various parts of the structure on the site and the spatial concept inside the building, which have considerably improved the project. They allow for a space-saving construction method.

All these changes should be interpreted as project amendments in response to initial objections. The first public inspection (Development Plan 79: Les Arts / Ried) allowed conflicts to be analysed and solutions sought. This shake-out process demonstrated where, in a second round, adjustments would be needed. Therefore, local people are being given a second chance to reconsider the project – and express any concerns they may have about these changes.

Sensitivity towards surroundings and environment

The Foundation Board feels strongly that it is important to emphasise that this project, which has been extremely well received by business enter-



prises, regional associations and political circles, also enjoys wide support from local people. The Foundation Board has done its utmost to optimise Les Arts Gstaad as far as possible before it is put to the final vote. The quality of the project and of the building remains as high as ever, in spite of the more compact construction method.

Investments of roughly 120 million Swiss francs have been budgeted for the cultural centre. This sum includes the additional costs incurred during the last phase of the project: the temporary rise in the ground water level in May 2015 gives rise to additional costs of approx. 10 million francs. A further 10 million have been budgeted for additional incidental costs. The cost of the traffic infrastructure inside the building amounting to 15 million Swiss francs will be funded by the municipality (car park, bus terminal and underpass).

«It takes time to implement an exceptional project and adapt it in response to criticism. The building now sits more naturally in the slope and is more compact. This also makes it more economical. The cultural centre is not pretentious but blends well with the unspoiled landscape. It has been designed for Gstaad and Gstaad alone».

Rudy Ricciotti, architect Les Arts Gstaad

COMMITMENT

NOTABLE NEW DONORS HAVE NOW PLEDGED THEIR SUPPORT

Notable persons with close links to Gstaad wish to contribute to the realisation of the forward-looking Les Arts Gstaad project. The families of Stephan Schmidheiny and Aline Foriel-Destezet have pledged their financial support.

So far, donors have either made available or pledged approx. 40 million Swiss francs towards the development and realisation of the project. In recent months the Foundation Board has presented the project to a number of interested parties and potential donors. It has remained true to the principle that the funds required for the construction of Les Arts Gstaad should be obtained from private individuals and corporate entities alongside the financial contribution from the municipality.

The Foundation Board is delighted that the family of well-known Swiss entrepreneur Dr. Stephan Schmidheiny intends to make a substantial financial contribution to the Les Arts Gstaad project. Another well-known benefactor, Aline Foriel-Destezet, has also pledged her financial support for Les Arts Gstaad.



Stephan Schmidheiny

«The Saanenland is a unique part of Switzerland. The beauty of its Alps, its rich cultural traditions and the open-mindedness of its people are the ideal breeding ground for a project such as Les Arts Gstaad. The cultural centre will provide a venue for culture lovers, tourists and local people to experience extraordinary encounters with the arts. I am happy that my wife Viktoria – a Viennese and a passionate music lover – and I can contribute to the realisation of this visionary undertaking».

Aline Foriel-Destezet

«My family and I feel privileged to have a home in the Saanenland and it fills me with joy that I have been able to sponsor Menuhin Festival concerts for many years now. The quality of the tent, however, is that of a temporary solution which neither artists nor audience can be expected to put up with for much longer. Rudy Ricciotti's wonderful project now deserves the support of all of us. Artists, visitors and local people should be able to come together at a beautiful and inspiring venue. I am delighted to make a commitment towards making Les Arts Gstaad a reality».

Prominent new member of the Patrons Committee

Viktoria Schmidheiny, wife of Stephan Schmidheiny, will be actively involved in making the project known to a wider public and obtaining support as a new member of the Patrons Committee. The Foundation Board is delighted to welcome another well-known person with special links to Gstaad, namely Michael S. Bach, head of the Music School Saanenland-Obersimmental, as a new member of the Patrons Committee.



Michael S. Bach

Head of the Music School
Saanenland-Obersimmental

He is one of the people who have made important contributions to cultural activities in the municipality of Saanen for many years.

NEW PHILHARMONIE DE PARIS MEETING WITH SIR HAROLD MARSHALL

At the end of October 2015, an international conference on the subject of «Auditorium Acoustics» was held in Paris. Sir Harold Marshall, founder and doyen of the company commissioned by Les Arts Gstaad for realising the acoustics in the Concert Hall, was awarded a medal of honour for the unparalleled solution in the Philharmonie de Paris.

During the conference Sir Harold met with a delegation from Gstaad and introduced them to the secrets of the unique acoustics of the new hall. He also took the opportunity to talk about his proposed solutions for the concert hall at Les Arts Gstaad, which promise to deliver a further masterpiece for us.

We were also taken behind the scenes at the Philharmonie de Paris and gained insights into the so-

phisticated modern technology. We were shown how the hall, which is designed to seat an audience of 2,400 for classical music, can be transformed into a rock arena for 3,500 at the touch of a button. Even though the dimensions of the Philharmonie de Paris bear no relation to the size of Les Arts Gstaad, the basic principles of functionality, architectural acoustics and building technology apply no matter what the size of hall.

During all the discussions of technology, we also got to know Sir Harold as a person. Not only is he a recognised expert in his field, he has a wealth of life experience and has remained a modest individual. The Foundation Board of Les Arts Gstaad made the correct decision two years ago in choosing Sir Harold and his company Marshall Day Acoustics (MDA) as partners for our project.



INTERVIEW

«UNIQUE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL LANDSCAPE OF CONCERT HALLS»

Architect Rudy Ricciotti on the importance of his project Les Arts Gstaad and his efforts to tailor it perfectly to Gstaad's needs. The cultural centre will be unique on the international scene – «designed for Gstaad and Gstaad alone.»



Rudy Ricciotti was awarded the French Grand Prix de l'architecture in 2006 and the gold medal of the French Académie d'architecture in 2013.

Has the Les Arts Gstaad project changed significantly since the outset and what can you say about it?

It sits more harmoniously in the hillside; it is more compact and thus more economical. Close collaboration with the acousticians guarantees the concert hall acoustics of an international standard.

What does it mean to you to be able to implement such a project in the Swiss mountains?

It means showing sensitivity for the landscape and the environment. The project is not pretentious but blends harmoniously with the authentic, rural countryside. I believe that it inspires a feeling of empathy more than aversion. It steers clear of urban mythologies and aesthetic globalisation.

It has been designed for Gstaad – and Gstaad alone.

LAG will give Gstaad a 'new' future. What, in your opinion, is the 'benefit' that the Saanenland will derive from your project?

It is a uniquely wistful and romantic project within the overall international landscape of concert halls. It is inimitable.

Has one of your projects ever assumed such an important role for the economic and touristic future of a region?

Well yes, the Museum of the Civilisations of Europe and the Mediterranean in Marseille, which has had five million visitors in just over two years,



has brought revenues of 500 million euros to that city. The new wing dedicated to Islamic Art at the Louvre has had three million visitors over this same period of time. The Jean Cocteau Museum in Menton and the Nikolaï Hall in Potsdam near Berlin also attract international visitors.

How is LAG to be interpreted and defined compared with other projects that you are working on or have completed?

For me, it is the culmination of my research into the question of identity and context.

It is clear that the architect cannot hand out advice to the local electorate which will decide whether LAG should go ahead or not. But, what is your message to the local population?

It is first and foremost the inhabitants of Gstaad and Saanen who will fill this venue with life.

Gstaad is not setting out to be imperialistic; rather it sees itself as humble on the outside yet magical on the inside.

What is your message for potential donors?

We must thank the generous donors who have understood that culture is an alternative to the prevailing cynicism of the international community.

Rudy Ricciotti's design allows the Les Arts Gstaad building to nestle gently in the slope in harmony with the landscape and the character of the village. By cladding the cubic volume with tree trunks he succeeds in creating a striking visual point of reference. It does not dominate but appears gentle and unobtrusive.

Ricciotti designed the Pavillon Noir in Aix-en-Provence, the Musée Jean Cocteau in Menton, the new wing dedicated to Islamic art at the Louvre in Paris and the Musée national des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée in Marseille. He was also responsible for the remodelling of the Nikolaï Hall in Potsdam.

www.rudyricciotti.com.

Can LAG become a shining example for other resorts?

In the context of competitiveness between prestigious resorts, adding an element for the muses will kindle new desires.

What lessons have been learned so far?

Exceptional projects take time to develop and to adapt in response to criticism. That is both normal and positive.

COMMITTED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

LES ARTS GSTAAD SHOULD ALSO OFFER SOMETHING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

During a panel discussion organised by ›Denkfass 2020+‹ in autumn 2014 four high school students offered some constructive criticism: they felt that the Les Arts Gstaad project was not taking the needs of young people adequately into account. The Foundation Board took their criticism to heart – and developed the students' good ideas.

Daniela Haldi, Celine Solenthaler, Nicole Werren and Fabienne Zimmermann are the four students in their last year at the Gymnasium Interlaken/Gstaad. They have given the Foundation Board a deeper understanding of the requirements and needs of young people in the Saanenland.

After the four high school students had spoken out during a panel discussion on behalf of young people in the Saanenland, they were invited by the Foundation Board in 2015 to an exchange of ideas about the planned cultural centre. Their expectations of the groundbreaking project have now been formulated and ideas in the form of a catalogue of demands have been presented to the project management. The Foundation Board is delighted to see how actively committed they are.

Not restricted to the 50 plus target group

The high school students had noted that the age of the target audience had so far been explicitly described as 50 plus. This was outdated and surely incorrect. Events should also be planned for the age group 18 to 30 because, currently, not a single venue in the Saanenland offers young people, locals and visitors, an adequate choice of cultural entertainment. In individual cases there are some good initiatives – but they almost always come to nothing because of the lack of suitable premises.

As a result of this unsatisfactory state of affairs young people aged 18 to 30 tend to seek their en-

tertainment further afield – primarily in nearby towns. It is in everybody's interest to consider the needs of young people when planning Les Arts Gstaad.

As concrete examples, the high school students could very well imagine Les Arts Gstaad as a suitable venue for concerts with young Swiss bands, for theatrical performances, musicals, events with famous DJs, fashion shows or parties of all kinds.

Film music performed by big orchestras, for example, was popular. The Foundation Board is pleased to note that in this instance there is a meeting of the generations as, in recent years, film music has been performed at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival.

Think ahead and plan accordingly

Another problem raised by the young people will have to be addressed when fixing ticket prices. A concept must be found which offers moderately priced tickets to young people.



Daniela Haldi, Celine Solenthaler, Fabienne Zimmermann und Nicole Werren (from left to right).

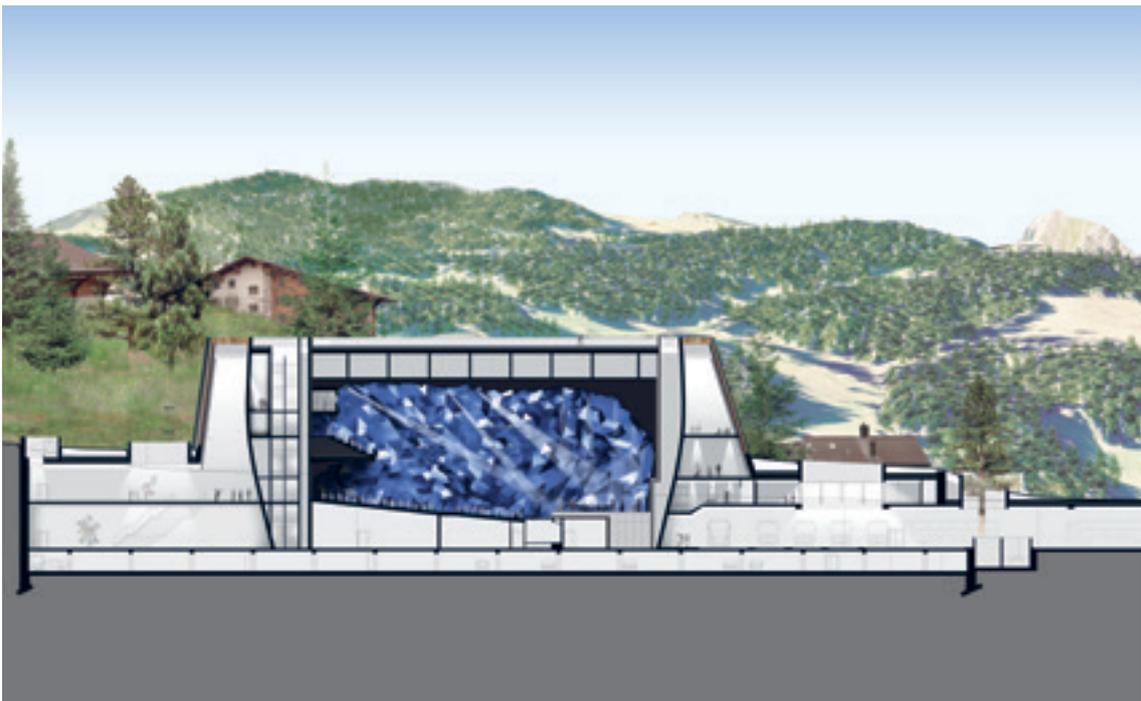
The Foundation Board is fully aware of this. It goes without saying that ticket prices will be fixed in such a way that young people with a very tight budget can enjoy high quality cultural events and exhibitions.

Young people, represented in this instance by the four high school students, tend to take a critical look at their personal financial situation in the future: financial burdens which they as taxpayers may one day have to bear must obviously be avoided. The fund which is envisaged as part of the financing concept to cover future deficits and guarantee the maintenance of the building is essential.

The Foundation Board wishes to thank these committed high school students for sharing their thoughts: their input will be assessed and considered in the overall Les Arts Gstaad project. Les Arts Gstaad is a vision which can become an inspiring and tangible reality for everyone.

Les Arts Gstaad is ...

- a venue for concerts, exhibitions, ballet, conferences, literary events and much more;
- a concert hall seating 1200;
- the new home of the Gstaad Menuhin Festival and its Academies;
- a meeting place for international, national and regional artists;
- a building with charisma between train station and Riedhubel;
- a flagship project for the whole region.



The spacious concert hall will have 1200 seats and be the stage for local and international artists.

Les Arts Gstaad means ...

- private funding
(donors and benefactors)
of the cultural infrastructure
(construction costs of
CHF 120 million)
and an operating fund
(CHF 50 million);
- public funding
of traffic infrastructure
CHF 28.2 million
(access to the site, car park,
bus terminal and underpass).

Les Arts Gstaad will become a reality ...

- when funding is in place;
- when the municipal assembly
says yes to the project
(development plan, loans and
contracts);
- when the authorities grant
planning permission;
- when the Foundation Board
decides by a qualified
majority to go ahead with
construction work.



The architecture defines the aesthetic framework and inspires both artists and visitors.

Enthusiastic about Les Arts Gstaad?

We shall be happy to send you the publication «Gstaad in a new Dimension» by post. You can order it from the following address:

Stiftung Les Arts Gstaad
P.O. Box 316
Suterstrasse 1
CH-3780 Gstaad
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Foundation Board and Patrons Committee Les Arts Gstaad are working hand in hand.

Foundation Board

J. Markus-Kappeler (chairman), Marco Strahm (deputy chairman), Stephan Jaggi, Hans Ulrich Märki, Jobst Wagner, Tetiana Bersheda. Kurt Aellen heads the Building Committee and Hans-Ueli Tschanz is responsible for fundraising.

The Patrons Committee

Michael S. Bach, Cecilia Bartoli, Andreas Hurni, Noëlle de Kostine, Bethli Küng, Aldo Kropf, Werner Luginbühl, Joachim Sartorius, Viktoria Schmidheiny, Rolf T. Schneider, Erich von Siebenthal, Christoph Vitali.

Les Arts Gstaad

The cultural centre Les Arts Gstaad is to provide a venue for art exhibitions, concerts (the hall with max. 1200 seats is to replace the current Gstaad Menuhin Festival concert tent) and other public events. The goal of the Les Arts Gstaad foundation is to strengthen the reputation of the Saanenland as a world class tourist destination and further increase its pulling power all year round. In February 2010 the Foundation Board and an international jury chose the design submitted by Rudy Ricciotti, holder of the French Grand Prix national de l'architecture as the winner of the competition. The cultural infrastructure of Les Arts Gstaad is to be private funded; the traffic infrastructure inside the building and access to the site will be financed by the public purse – provided the municipal assembly gives the green light.

LES ARTS GSTAAD
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