

## The Molyvos Festival celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> edition: An ode to friendship

PHILIA – ΦΙΛΙΑ – FRIENDSHIP is the motto of this year's **Molyvos International Music Festival (MIMF)**. The two German-Greek sisters, pianists, and festival directors **Danae & Kiveli Dörken** are putting on the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of their festival together with musician friends, presenting outstanding gems of chamber music. On the Greek island of Lesbos from **August 9 to 19 2024**, there will be four main concerts, a children's concert, four "Opening Acts" at unique archaeological sites and panel discussions that look at different facets of friendship with input from experts in relevant fields.



„Philia‘ is the Greek word for friendship, and it encompasses both the idea that friendship is an aspirational ideal and one of the foundations for a flourishing society“, Danae and Kiveli Dörken write of this year's festival motto. The festival's existence and success are fruits of the power of friendship, of the trust between people, countries and cultures — trust that can thrive only on the basis of openness, tolerance, honesty and courage. After the festival's ten years of existence, it is time to give it a motto honouring the friendship that plays such an important role in music and playing music together and at the same time to examine the meaning of friendship in a bigger social context and as an ideal of successful human coexistence.

In this year's festival programme, Danae and Kiveli Dörken deeply engage with the theme of friendship at a musical level as well, delving into a wide variety of aspects of this phenomenon that are also reflected in the concert titles. The first main concert (16 August) bears the title **PHOBIA – ISOLATION** and will use Vaughan Williams' song cycle "On Wenlock Edge" to look at the loneliness engendered by a failed friendship. The rare combination of tenor, piano and string quartet is fascinating in itself and promises to provide a subtly nuanced musical experience. Simon Bode is one of the most sought-after lyrical tenors of his generation, with an imposing stage presence. Later, the concert features the G minor piano quartet by Brahms, which bears witness to the composer's friendship with the violinist Joseph Joachim.

The second concert (17 August) with the title **EGO – FRIENDSHIP OF UTILITY** will open with the wonderful clarinet quintet by Brahms, for which the composer was inspired by the playing of the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld. Sebastian Manz, who won the first prize at the ARD music competition in Munich, makes it very easy to understand why Brahms was virtually mesmerised by the sound of the clarinet. Later in the evening, Sebastian Manz will again appear and display his double talent as musician and gifted arranger with trio arrangements that reflect the friendly atmosphere of the festival. The programme will also feature a **world premiere** with a work by the Greek composer **Lucas Thanos**.

The guitar quartet by Boris Papandopulo, a Croatian composer of Greek descent, is the central work in the third concert (18 August) with the title **IMPULSE – FRIENDSHIP OF PLEASURE**. It will be followed by the rarely performed concerto for violin, piano and string quartet by Ernest Chausson, a testimonial to the friendship between Chausson and the Belgian violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe. The correspondingly brilliant violin part is to be

played by the outstanding violinist Antje Weithaas, who has had a friendly association with the festival and the Dörken sisters for some time.

**PHILIA – FRIENDSHIP OF VIRTUE** is the title of the final concert (19 August). It will kick off with the last work from the pen of Max Bruch, a string octet written shortly after the death of his beloved wife whose solemn Adagio is pervaded by touches of melancholy. The model for the work was the famous string octet by the 16-year-old Felix Mendelssohn. The first string quintet by Mendelssohn, with an expressive slow movement in which the young Mendelssohn worked through his grief at the sudden death of his teacher and friend Eduard Rietz, is less well-known. Before this moving work is played, Simon Bode will once more lift up his tenor voice to sing about friendship and constancy in Schubert's impressive setting of the Schiller ballad "Die Bürgschaft" (Eng: "The Pledge").

Alongside Danae and Kiveli Dörken, other musicians at this year's anniversary edition of the festival include the Albanian guitarist Petrit Çeku, the Belgian-born violinist Noé Inui, who has Greek and Japanese roots, the cellist Benedict Kloeckner from Germany, the Greek-Russian cellist Timotheos Petrin, the double bass player Marco Behtash from the US, who is of Italian and Iranian descent, and the Storioni Trio from the Netherlands with Bart van der Roer (piano), Wouter Vossen (violin) and Marc Vossen (cello).

In the supporting programme of the festival, all those interested in a deeper look at the theme of friendship with scientific backing are invited to "Panel Discussions" (17 August): in a lively public discussion, reputed experts will examine whether the Aristotelian ideal of friendship going beyond the individual can exist. The podium discussion in English and Greek will be moderated by **Chloe Balla**, professor of ancient philosophy at the University of Crete. Other participants are **Stamatios Krimigis**, the president of the Academy of Athens, scientist and space researcher and emeritus head of the Space Department Applied Physics Laboratory of the Johns Hopkins University (topic: Earth and Space), **Paraskevi Kefala**, professor for international relations in the Middle East at the Department of Mediterranean Studies at the University of the Aegean and director of the Centre for Mediterranean and Middle East Policy and Culture (KEMMEP) (topic: War and Peace) and **Anthony Bossis**, clinical psychologist, professor of psychiatry at the NYU School of Medicine, professor of classical philology and religious studies at the University of Ottawa and researcher at the Lundquist Institute-UCLA (topic: Life and Death).

In 2024, "Molyvos Musical Moments" will once again round out the multi-faceted festival programme and encourage visitors to enjoy the unique atmosphere in the picturesque village of Molyvos: at the beach, at the port, by the hotel pool and on the village streets, the festival artists will give spontaneous musical tastings in short pop-up concerts, enchanting listeners big and small, village residents and visitors and making the music accessible to all.

*"Classical music is constantly searching for the symbiosis of different motives, cultural influences, rhythms, ideas and emotions. We want to let the music be the ideal example to awaken in us the same vision – **to venture into new friendships and be grateful for the friendships that already surround us,**" say Danae and Kiveli Dörken. "During the past 10 years, we have witnessed unique moments of friendship throughout the festival – different cultures and people from various walks of life coming together, a marriage proposal, people connecting with music across all ages, a wedding and so many more unforgettable experiences."*

The existential significance of "friendship" in a larger context has been palpable at the Molyvos festival ever since it was established in 2015: located in one of the main focuses of the international refugee crisis, the festival participated directly in the activities undertaken locally to cope with the dramatic situation. Ten years later, it still aims to support the island's residents, who see their own existence endangered by the enormous decline of tourism amid the refugee crisis.

The Molyvos International Music Festival is put on with the support of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Athens and the Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne.



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## Dates 2024 PHILIA – ΦΙΛΙΑ – FRIENDSHIP (Main concerts)

### 16.08 / 21:00 PHOBIA – ISOLATION

DELFINIA HOTEL / SEAFRONT PARK

Agustín Barrios "Una Limosnita por el Amor de Dios"  
Vaughan Williams "On Wenlock Edge: A Cycle of Six Songs"  
Johannes Brahms Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25

### 17.08 / 21:00 - FRIENDSHIP OF UTILITY

DELFINIA HOTEL / SEAFRONT PARK EGO

Johannes Brahms Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115  
Loukas Thanos **WORLD PREMIERE**  
Benny Goodman "After You've Gone" (Arrangement for clarinet, guitar, and double bass)  
Sidney Bechet "Petite Fleur" (Arrangement for clarinet, guitar, and violin)  
Ástor Piazzolla "Nightclub 1960" (Arrangement for clarinet, guitar, and violin)  
Gioachino Rossini "Introduction, Theme and Variations" (Arrangement for clarinet, guitar, and violin)

### 18.08 / 21:00 - FRIENDSHIP OF PLEASURE

DELFINIA HOTEL / SEAFRONT PARK IMPULSE

Ludwig van Beethoven Songs  
Boris Papandopulo Quartet for Guitar and String Trio  
Ernest Chausson Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet in D major, Op. 21

### 19.08 / 21:00 - FRIENDSHIP OF VIRTUE

DELFINIA HOTEL / SEAFRONT PARK PHILIA

Max Bruch String Octet in B-flat major  
Franz Schubert "Die Bürgschaft" (Text: Friedrich Schiller)  
Felix Mendelssohn String Quintet No. 1 in A major, Op. 18

### Musicians

<i>Violine</i>	<i>Viola</i>	<i>Piano</i>	<i>Clarinet</i>
Noé Inui	Karolina Errara	Kiveli Dörken	Sebastian Manz
Byol Kang	Tomoko Akasaka	Danae Dörken	
Antje Weithaas	<i>Violoncello</i>	Bart van der Roer	<i>Guitar</i>
Rosanne Philippens	Senja Rummukainen	<i>Tenor</i>	Petrit Çeku
Danae Papamattheou-Matschke	Timotheos Petrin	Simon Bode	<i>Double bass</i>
			Marco Behtash

More Information: [www.molyvosfestival.com](http://www.molyvosfestival.com)