



## **Tippet Rise Art Center's summer season 2023**

*Seen & Heard International*

By Rick Perdian

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**Tippet Rise – where music, art and nature combine to nourish the soul**



Olivier Music Barn and Will's Shed © Erik Petersen

There are no bounds to Lindsey Hinmon's enthusiasm when describing what makes Tippet Rise Art Center such a magical place. She and her husband, Pete, are its co-directors, tasked with running an art center situated in a 12,500-acre working ranch – a thousand head of sheep, 145 cows and 630 yearling cattle (mostly heifers) – in Fishtail, Montana. This remarkable place where music, art and nature intertwine is the vision of Cathy and Peter Halstead, who established Tippet Rise in 2016.

The natural surroundings are spectacular. Tippet Rise is in Montana's Big Sky Country with the Beartooth Mountains looming on the horizon. The man-made elements are equally impressive, including its concert venues and large-scale outdoor sculptures. Works such as Alexander Calder's *Two Discs* and *Stainless Stealer* (both on loan from the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden), Patrick Dougherty's *Daydreams* and *Cursive Takes a Holiday*, Louise Nevelson's *Trilogy* and Ai Weiwei's *Iron Tree* are at one with the breathtaking vistas.

A recent addition to Tippet Rise was Francis Kéré's *Xylem* in 2019. Winner of the 2022 Pritzker Architecture Prize, Kéré was inspired by structures sacred to the Dogon communities in West Africa to create a space where visitors to Tippet Rise are encouraged to gather to converse, contemplate the views or sit and meditate in solitude. Although its roots may be in a faraway place, the structure was constructed from locally sourced ponderosa and lodgepole pine.

As essential as art, architecture and nature are to Tippet Rise, music is what brings people to Tippet Rise's five-week series of concerts each summer. The artists who perform here rank among some of the world's finest, known for virtuosity and musicianship as well as their daring and integrity. This is due in no small part to the sensibilities of Pedja Mužijević, the pianist and arts curator who serves as Tippet Rise's artistic advisor.

Tippet Rise's main indoor performance venue is a 150-seat theater inside the Olivier Music Barn. The building was designed by the architectural firms Gunnstock Timber Frames and Arup. The latter was engaged specifically due to the perfect acoustics of the Snape Maltings concert barn in Suffolk, England, which the firm assisted Benjamin Britten in adapting for musical performances. London's Wigmore Hall was another of its projects.

Music is not confined to the concert hall: from the beginning the Halsteads embraced spontaneity. It is important to them that people hiking or biking at Tippet Rise hear music from a distance and be drawn to it. This can be a pop-up performance or concerts held outdoors at art installations. That spirit carries over into the ticketing process where all tickets are \$10.00, and most are awarded in a randomized drawing.

The 2023 festival opens on 18 August with a recital by Sir Stephen Hough performing works by Mompou, Debussy and Liszt, as well as *Partita* (2019), his own composition. It will be Hough's third appearance at Tippet Rise. Concerts by pianists Richard Goode and Anna Geniushene, guitarist JJJ, and ensembles such as the Imani Winds, Dior Quartet, Brentano String Quartet and Merz Trio are also slated. The concluding recital on 17 September will be by Clayton Stephenson, the first Black finalist at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2022.



*Beethoven's Quartet* by Mark di Suvero © Erik Petersen

Tippet Rise seeks to expand the contemporary classical music repertoire by commissioning new works from both established and emerging composers. This season will see the world premieres of Amy Beth Kirsten's *holy sonnet* (2023), inspired by di Suvero's *Beethoven's Quartet* and composed in celebration of the sculptor's ninetieth birthday; Douglas J Cuomo's *Proverb* (2023); and four works commissioned by Tippet Rise from the Ukrainian composer Valentyn Silvestrov: *Three Serenades for Violin and Piano* (2019), *Three Waltzes of the Moment for Violin and Piano* (2019), *Five Bagatelles for Solo Piano* (2020) and *Four Pieces for Piano* (2020).

Hinmon doesn't hesitate when asked if there is a single moment from prior seasons that captures the essence of Tippet Rise. That was on 19 July 2019 during an outdoor performance by violinist Annalee Patipatanakoon and cellist Roman Borys, both members of Canada's Juno Award-winning Gryphon Trio, with flutist Brandon Patrick George at the Domo, an acoustical sculptural structure created by Ensemble Studio. It was, in her words, a 'celebratory experience' for all in attendance and the manifestation of what Tippet Rise strives to achieve.

As with any performing arts organization, Tippet Rise was impacted by the Covid pandemic which prompted many to take the time to pause and value hearing music and experiencing art. Tippet Rise is anchored in the belief that art, music, architecture and nature are intrinsic to the human experience, each making the others more powerful. For Hinmon, that means that Tippet Rise is even more essential now. Apart from the music and the art, 'people can just take a moment to breathe that big air', an act as necessary for life as it is for the soul.

***Rick Perdian***

**For more information click here.**

<https://seenandheard-international.com/2023/08/tippet-rise-art-centers-summer-season-2023/>