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Introduction

The Summer Courses in Santander, organized each year by the Isaac Albéniz Center for the Study of Music in collaboration with the Reina Sofía School of Music, are now firm fixtures in the cultural landscape. They have become a veritable custom, a habit, with all the attendant advantages and even a certain amount of risk. The former stand on their own: any stability or order that rises above mere random flux allows for active, useful and interesting work to be done; the danger resides in the possibility that the very repetition of the courses causes them to slumber and lose their stimulative character.

We who work in the Fundación Albéniz, in whatever facet or capacity, spend countless hours creating and working out ways to assure that the above pitfall is avoided and that the virtues of the courses are maintained and renewed. This year has been an especially important one for the educational programmes of the Foundation: we have on numerous occasions enjoyed the presence of our patron, Her Majesty the Queen Sofía, whose enthusiasm and knowledge of music have always magnified her committed collaboration; our students were increasingly successful, both nationally and internationally; the Chamber Orchestra of the School of Music has picked up pace and established its excellence; new professors joined the faculty, and the resonance of our educational mission has echoed in more and more of the public's ear.

In the upcoming edition of the Summer Courses, the Spaniard José Luis García has assumed the professorship of the violin, and the pianist Marta Gulyas that of chamber music. The violin chair will be filled by guest professor Gérard Causse, famous in the worlds of teaching, concerts, chamber music genres, as well as in the trends and styles of both classical and romantic as well as of contemporary music. Another renowned figure of the current scene will take up the piano chair: Emile Naoumoff, who, despite his youth, is a master re-