

Biography | October 2026

Born and raised in Switzerland, Leila Schayegh began her studies on modern violin before switching to period instruments and never looking back. She is now regarded as one of leading violinists of the early music scene, captivating audiences with great expressiveness and energy both on and off stage. Her repertoire ranges from the beginnings of the violin literature around 1600, when the instrument was held lower down against the chest, to the high romantic period. Alongside the core repertoire of Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, Brahms and their contemporaries, she champions works which have been unjustly overshadowed by names which are well-known today. In 2017 she released a highly-regarded CD with sonatas by Carlo Farina, and in 2020 she concluded a complete recording of Jean-Marie Leclair's concertos with La Cetra Basel which has been very enthusiastically received. Her recordings of the Bach Solo Sonatas and Partitas (2021) and the Rosary Sonatas by Biber (2026) have received equally high praise. Schayegh's recordings have regularly won awards including several Diapason de l'année prizes, the Diapason d'Or, Editor's Choice of the Gramophone magazine and the German Record Critics' List of the Best. In 2024 she was awarded the Swiss Music Prize for outstanding and innovative music making.

Leila Schayegh is in great demand at major international festivals and a regular guest leader of both early music ensembles and modern orchestras. Invitations include concerts in North and South America, Australia, Europe and Asia. Recent projects have brought her together with Tafelmusik (Canada), the Juilliard School NY, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, the Freiburger Barockorchester and the Bayerischer Rundfunk, to name a few. In addition, Schayegh is pleased to regularly work with wonderful musicians such as Christoph Prégardien, Andreas Scholl, Vaclav Luks, Jörg Halubek, Joerg-Andreas Boetticher and Amandine Beyer. In 2019 Leila Schayegh founded her own ensemble La Centifolia, with whom she enjoys performing a large variety of chamber music from 1600 to 1900, from Farina to Schoenberg.

Since 2010 Leila Schayegh has been Professor at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, passing on her knowledge and experience to the up-and-coming generation of players. As successor to Chiara Banchini she directs a class for violin in old notation, conveying great expressiveness based on an extensive knowledge of historical sources.