

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, 7 May 2019

2019/20 season

Konzerthaus Berlin presents its 2019/20 season

In the annual press conference on 7 May 2019 at the Konzerthaus Berlin, Artistic Director **Sebastian Nordmann** and **Christoph Eschenbach**, the new principal conductor of the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, presented the 2019/20 season.

With **Gustav Mahler's** Symphony No. 8, **Christoph Eschenbach** will begin his first season at the Konzerthaus Berlin on 30 August 2019. Alongside **Johannes Brahms**, he will focus on 21st century works by **Sofia Gubaidulina** and **Thomas Adès** and a world premiere by **Christian Mason**. Special highlights of the 2019/20 season include the “**Homage to Gidon Kremer**” and the **Icelandic Festival**. In keeping with the latter, the Konzerthaus Berlin welcomes pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** as **Artist in Residence**, who can be heard as soloist with the Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin, as well as in recitals and chamber music performances.

NEW PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH

“I was fascinated by the special history of the Konzerthausorchester and the concert hall with all its highs and lows, which mirrors the history of Berlin. The collaboration has been a great inspiration from both an artistic and a personal perspective, stimulating my ideas on where I'd like to go with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin over the next few years,” said **Christoph Eschenbach**, describing the appeal of his new position and the special atmosphere he enjoyed with orchestral musicians during initial projects over the past two seasons. A **Brahms cycle** and the start of a **Shostakovich cycle** in the shape of the composer's Fifth Symphony will form the focal points of his 2019/20 programme.

“Christoph Eschenbach is a humanist and world citizen who, as a conductor, is distinguished not only by his enormous musicality but also by his ability to bring musicians together around the globe in such a way that they enthusiastically follow his path through the various eras of music history. His creative will fits in with our idea of an open and innovative concert hall. Together with our audience, we are delighted to follow our new principal conductor and the Konzerthausorchester Berlin on this special journey,” said Konzerthaus Artistic Director **Sebastian Nordmann**.

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SEASON OPENING AND WELCOME DAY

For the **festive season opening on 30 August 2019**, the new principal director has chosen a formidable work, the unofficially named “Symphony of a Thousand”, **Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 8**. Two days after this rousing start, the **“Welcome Day for and with Christoph Eschenbach”** will give the Berlin public the opportunity to get to know the “newcomer” as a conductor and conversational partner free of charge on 1 September. In addition to performing a public rehearsal and a symphony concert, the ensembles of the Konzerthausorchester will welcome their new conductor.

CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH'S 80th BIRTHDAY

February will also be a festive month: on 20 February 2020, Christoph Eschenbach celebrates his 80th birthday. From **25 February to 1 March**, the Konzerthaus Berlin will celebrate together with him, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the **Orchestre de Paris**, which has been associated with him for a long time, along with many musical companions and friends: singers like **Matthias Goerne**, whom he has accompanied on the piano for decades, pianists such as **Lang Lang** and **Tzimon Barto**, as well as string players like violinist **Midori** and cellist **Kian Soltani**, whose musical development he has mentored over the years.

“CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH'S KEY WORKS”

With **“Christoph Eschenbach’s Key Works”**, the new principal conductor brings a very personal series to Gendarmenmarkt: “Works that are close to my heart, played by people whom I know share my vision of the works” – from Bach’s “Well-Tempered Clavier” to Bartók’s “Microcosmos”.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE VÍKINGUR ÓLAFSSON

The Konzerthaus Berlin welcomes Icelandic **Víkingur Ólafsson** as Artist in Residence this season. In recent years, he has established himself as one of the most sought-after pianists of his generation, not least with Deutsche Grammophon releases featuring the music of Philip Glass and Johann Sebastian Bach. A **Bach recital** will be just as much a part of his residency as concerts with the **Danish String Quartet**, the clarinetist **Martin Fröst** and a concert as soloist with the **Konzerthausorchester Berlin** under **Christoph Eschenbach**.

ICELANDIC FESTIVAL

The four-day Icelandic Festival (14 to 17 November 2019) offers insights into the **multifaceted music scene** of the volcanic island in the far north of Europe. **Jazz musicians, multi-instrumentalists**, strings performing cover versions of Björk songs, **singer-songwriters**, the Icelandic Schubert and Artist in Residence **Víkingur Ólafsson** performing a piano concerto written for him by **Daníel Bjarnason** as soloist with the **Iceland Symphony Orchestra** will all be featured at the concert hall.

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HOMAGE TO GIDON KREMER

This season, the traditional ten-day tribute at the Konzerthaus Berlin will be paid to the great violinist **Gidon Kremer** from 18 to 27 October 2019. In addition to his chamber orchestra **Kremerata Baltica** and renowned colleagues, such as **Christoph Eschenbach**, **David Zinman**, and **Martha Argerich**, numerous younger musicians associated with Kremer will also be performing. He has chosen the work of **Mieczysław Weinberg** and **Franz Schubert** as his special focus.

NEW FORMATS

An early music series and a contemporary music series will see their first season at the Konzerthaus Berlin in 2019/20. The **late-night format "360Raum:Klang"** allows audiences to follow unconventional groups of the early music scene, including the **Calmus Ensemble** and **The Playfords**, up close and personally in the Great Hall. The **composer portrait** is dedicated to one living composer per season across all formats at the Konzerthaus. The highlight of the coming season with works by **Sofia Gubaidulina**: the German premiere of her cantata **"On Love and Hatred"** on 14 June 2020, performed with the **Konzerthausorchester** under **Christoph Eschenbach** in a portrait concert.

STRONG PRESENCE

Honorary conductor Iván Fischer will remain closely associated with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin in the coming season. He will conduct four programmes in 2019/20, including **Gustav Mahler's** Third Symphony. He will continue the successful series **"Mittendrin"**. Principal guest conductor **Juraj Valčuha** will also conduct four programmes in the upcoming season, including one with works by **Arthur Honegger**, **Béla Bartók** and **Claude Debussy** as part of the **musikfest berlin** on 6 September.

GUEST PERFORMANCES

In the upcoming season, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin will give guest performances with **Christoph Eschenbach** at the Konzerthaus Dortmund, the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie and the Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Also with **Eliahu Inbal** at the Brucknerfest Linz, with **Michael Sanderling** in Bruges and Antwerp, and with **Dmitri Kitayenko** and **Gabriel Bebeselea** in Salzburg, Rotterdam and Eindhoven.

DIGITAL MUSIC EDUCATION

Developments at the interface of classical music and immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are still a novelty. The Konzerthaus Berlin was the first concert hall in Germany to release its own AR app and to inaugurate a digital exhibition in 2018. In cooperation with the **University of Applied Sciences HTW Berlin** and supported by the European Regional Development Fund, a 360-degree concert experience with VR glasses, various AR applications on the concert hall's history and architecture, and the world's first "Virtual String Quartet" were developed. Each month, more than **10,000 visitors**

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from across the world have visited the exhibition in the vestibule, which is free and open almost daily. The digital applications are also integrated into the educational programme of the Konzerthaus and shown to school classes during rehearsal visits.

With the kind support of “experimente#digital”, a cultural initiative of the Aventis Foundation, the Konzerthaus Berlin plans to realise an “interactive composition” in the coming season, together with a composer, a visual artist and the HTW.

JUNIOR PROJECTS

In the coming season, two very successful formats in the Junior area will also offer classical music to the next generation at the Konzerthaus Berlin. For youngsters aged 3 and up, there will be four lovingly designed **KlangKüken** concerts, which can also be experienced as part of the musical childcare programme during the Mozart Matinees. Families with children aged 6 and up are the target group for the four concerts of the **TonSpur** series, which will bring Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Nightingale” to the stage, for example, and will take a voyage to the North Pole with the entire Konzerthaus Orchestra for Christmas. In the 2019/20 season, the Konzerthaus Berlin will once again be involved in one of Berlin’s largest music education projects together with its education partner degewo. Since 2011, more than 8,000 children and young people from Marzahn, Kreuzberg and Neukölln have been prepared for visits to the Konzerthaus Berlin in the “Konzerthaus meets degewo” development programme, introducing them to the world of classical music in the process.

A LOOK BACK AT 2018

The Konzerthaus Berlin can look back on a successful 2018 financial year. With 331 self-organised events (previous year: 355), we attracted **169,166** guests, for an average occupancy rate of **85.2%** (84.6% in 2017). The symphony concerts of the Konzerthausorchester Berlin in the Great Hall achieved an average occupancy rate of **85.7%**.

The **Baltic States Festival** in February 2018 attracted 10,000 visitors with an occupancy rate of **86.5%**, the **Homage to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** in December 2018 attained an occupancy rate of **94.6%**.

COMMITMENT

The Konzerthaus Berlin would like to continue and further intensify its refugee initiatives. Since September 2015, the Konzerthaus has regularly invited refugees and their volunteer helpers to events – so far 11,176 refugees have been guests of the house.

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2019/20 SEASON IN FIGURES

In the upcoming season, the Konzerthaus Berlin will host some 500 events, including 300 self-organised events. The **Konzerthausorchester Berlin** schedule encompasses a total of 126 concerts, including 103 symphonic concerts – 88 in Berlin and 15 guest performances – as well as 23 chamber concerts. With its principal conductor **Christoph Eschenbach**, the Konzerthausorchester can be experienced at 21 concerts in Berlin and at 4 guest performances.

The **Junior area offers over 100 events** for children and young people, pupils and students, as well as numerous musical introductions, workshops and projects in Berlin schools. Every year, it offers some 18,000 young visitors an imaginative approach to the world of classical music.

In the coming season, the Konzerthaus will provide a prestigious setting for more than 200 **external events**.

Around 300 **walks and guided tours** as well as “**EinBlick frei**” from March to October allow visitors to become acquainted with the Konzerthaus at Gendarmenmarkt square.

You will find the complete programme in the current SEASONAL BROCHURE.

Advance booking for all self-organised events of the 2019/20 season starts on 20 May 2019.

Subscription sales are already underway.

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