



PRESS INFORMATION

Orchestra in Residence

NDR ELBPILHARMONIE ORCHESTRA

The change of a symphony orchestra's name, especially one with such a long and glorious past, is not an everyday occurrence. Exactly this has happened recently in Hamburg: the NDR Symphony Orchestra, originally established as the symphony orchestra of North German Radio (NDR), has been renamed the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra.

This alteration clearly signals the close connection between the orchestra and the concert hall. Previously, the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra mostly performed in the Laeiszhalle and in the NDR studio on Rothenbaumchaussee. In its new location in the Grand Hall of the Elbphilharmonie, the resident orchestra continues to develop the musical profile of the concert hall. Sound and image coverage via NDR broadcasts will transport the Elbphilharmonie and its orchestra in residence throughout north Germany and beyond. The Elbphilharmonie's exceptional spatial and acoustic qualities will be decisive to the further development of the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra.

Many 20th and 21st century works demand a concert hall that is able to meet the acoustic requirements of their formidable orchestrations. In the Grand Hall of the Elbphilharmonie, such pieces can now be heard under optimal conditions. In addition, the Elbphilharmonie's role as both an event location and as a home to the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra is advantageous. It is orchestras in residence, after all, that furnish the major classical music venues – for example, those in the music metropolises of Vienna, Berlin and Amsterdam – with international fame. At the same time, the majority of orchestras first need a top grade location before they can attain international ranking.

The NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra was founded in 1945 and played an important part in the spiritual and cultural reconstruction of northern Germany following the Second World War. For more than a quarter of a century, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt shaped the artistic profile of the orchestra as its first Principal Conductor. In 1982, he was succeeded by Günter Wand, who forged a strong and highly successful relationship with the orchestra over the next two decades. The artistic reputation of the orchestra reached a new level with Wand's benchmark interpretations of the Brahms and Bruckner symphonies. For his hand in cementing the orchestra's international status, Wand was awarded a lifetime title as Honorary Conductor in 1987.

In 1998, Christoph Eschenbach was appointed to the position of Principal Conductor, followed by Christoph von Dohnányi in 2004, who, from the outset, was a supporter of the Elbphilharmonie. Hamburg has redefined itself as a city of music with the construction of the new concert hall. Now, seventy years since its establishment, a new chapter for the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra together with the Elbphilharmonie has also begun. Thomas Hengelbrock has been at the helm of this transformation as Principal Conductor since 2011 and with his experimental approach to interpretation and unconventional programming, he has brought a fresh and inspiring spirit of musicianship to the orchestra. Hengelbrock is also a dedicated music educator: he is one of few conductors that regularly introduce the concert programme to audiences one hour before the start of the concert.



With these qualities, Thomas Hengelbrock has awakened an upbeat mood among the musicians and their audiences. The orchestra is also greatly enhanced by its first Guest Conductor, the young and dynamic Polish conductor Krzysztof Urbanski, and by its own Orchestra Academy, which continually brings emerging talents into the orchestra. The move to the Elbphilharmonie and the name change are two highlights that have been added to the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra's reputable history – preludes to further crowning moments.

The NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra offers six different subscriptions as well as numerous extra concerts in the Elbphilharmonie – including the two official opening concerts in January 2017.

www.ndr.de/elbphilharmonieorchester

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