

The Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin presents its 2018-19 season

Robin Ticciati
Music Director

Kent Nagano
Honorary Conductor

Berlin, 19 April 2018

At the annual press conference of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (DSO), held today at Bertelsmann's Berlin premises on Unter den Linden, Music Director Robin Ticciati, Managing Director Alexander Steinbeis and the DSO's musicians committee presented the projects of the 2018-19 season to the public.

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Concerts with music director Robin Ticciati

Robin Ticciati already impressively demonstrated his openness for the breadth of the repertoire and his discriminating examination of the diversity of musical styles in his first season as **Music Director** of the DSO. The programmes in his second season promise to be just as varied and dynamic a continuation – with lines that span across several seasons, with focus areas that are like a season's magnetic poles, and with dramaturgical principles bent on lively experience.

One major programme strand comes from **Claude Debussy**, the initiator of French modernism, the hundredth anniversary of whose death will be commemorated in 2018 by the world of music. To **kick off the season** on **16 September** in the scope of the Musikfest Berlin, Robin Ticciati follows Debussy's stage music for the mystery play '**Le martyre de Saint Sébastien**' with a suite from **Wagner's 'Parsifal'**. In the last programme of the season he explores the conceptual ties between **Mahler's 'Lied von der Erde'** and Debussy's '**Pelléas et Mélisande**'. **Anton Bruckner's** symphonies have been accompanying Robin Ticciati and the DSO since 2014 – at the end of September he will place the **Seventh** as a contrasting foil to the music-historical milestone of Debussy's '**Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune**'.

Special attention will be devoted to **Johannes Brahms's four symphonies**, which can be heard over the course of just a few days in the Berliner Philharmonie. During the '**Brahms Perspectives Festival** from **17–23 February 2019**, Robin Ticciati will explore them from a wide variety of perspectives – the interplay between orchestral instrumentation and the sound, the juxtaposition with solo compositions for piano (Kristian Bezuidenhout, Igor Levit) and cello (Nicolas Altstaedt) and vocal works (Rachel Harnisch, Dorothea Röschmann, RIAS Kammerchor), in an encounter with Schumann and Wagner, reverting to Bach and Schütz, from the French field of vision with Debussy and Dutilleux, complemented by ensemble and chamber music concerts, introductions with Brahms experts and a musical reading with actors Tom Schilling and Corinna Harfouch.

Another major project of the season is **Händel's 'Messiah'**. Robin Ticciati considers the oratorio a musical meditation on the biblical text, the intensity of which he will attempt to enhance with a stage design in the Philharmonic Hall of Berlin's Philharmonie – jointly with British director Frederic Wake-Walker.

With the dramatic symphony '**Roméo et Juliette**' the DSO's Music Director also takes a look at **Hector Berlioz**, touches on **Strauss, Webern** and **Ravel**, and, following the flow of time and sound, starts with **Beethoven's Violin Concerto** and moves on to contemporary composers, this time with works by **Lera Auerbach, George Benjamin** and **Harrison Birtwistle**, as well as the world premiere of **Aribert Reimann's 'Fragments de Rilke'**, a DSO commission.

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Concerts with guest conductors

Numerous guest conductors complement, comment on, expand on and provide a counterpoint to the Music Director's musical milestones. **Lionel Bringuier** adds important aspects of French colour with his DSO debut; **Stéphane Denève** builds a bridge from contemporary musical sounds in the neighbouring country to Richard Strauss. **Ton Koopman** prepares the way for Händel's 'Messiah' with works by Bach and Haydn; **Jean-Christophe Spinosi** continues the Baroque thread with Biber and creates a link to Shostakovich. **Kent Nagano** and **Jakub Hruša** take up the great romantic and post-romantic symphonic tradition with Mahler, **Andris Poga** with Tchaikovsky, **Osmo Vänskä** with Barber and Sibelius, **Andrew Manze** with Nielsen and **Fabien Gabel** with a look at the crucible of "Vienna in 1900".

Two former Music Directors return to conduct the DSO in the 2018-19 season once again: **Kent Nagano**, the orchestra's honorary conductor, is twice a guest – after Mahler's Ninth in October, he will follow the traces of musical Italianità to conclude the season with works by Mozart, Schubert and Mendelssohn. **Ingo Metzmacher** will bring together confessional works by two contemporaries who otherwise encounter each other rather rarely: Messiaen's 'Trois petites liturgies' and Shostakovich's 13th Symphony 'Babi Yar'.

The DSO's long-standing collaboration with grand masters of conducting is also a symbol of continuity. Having concluded his Vaughan-Williams cycle over the course of several years, **Sir Roger Norrington** will present an additional expansion of the repertoire planned for the coming seasons: Bohuslav Martinů's five symphonies, which he has been presenting since May 2017 in constellations with Mozart's late symphonies. In two programmes with the pianist Tzimon Barto, **Christoph Eschenbach** devotes himself to Bartók's three piano concertos, juxtaposing them with Schumann and Tchaikovsky.

Collaborations with a long-term perspective also endure with conductors of the younger generation. **Jakub Hruša** and **Stéphane Denève** have been regular guests since their debuts with the DSO and will return; **Santtu-Matias Rouvali** and **Cristian Măcelaru** are both conducting the orchestra for the third time already. For the first time, by contrast, one can hear **Karina Canellakis**, and the series 'Debüt im Deutschlandfunk Kultur' will present promising young artists **Marie Jacquot** and **Valentin Uryupin**. In the scope of the New Year's Eve and New Year's Day concerts with the **Artists of the Circus Roncalli**, the conductor **Kevin John Edusei** and the soprano **Jeanine De Bique** will premiere in the circus ring of the Tempodrom.

Instrumental and vocal soloists

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The 2018-19 season is also a season of great soloists. The violin virtuosos include **Joshua Bell**, **Leonidas Kavakos**, **Pekka Kuusisto**, **Christian Tetzlaff** and **Nikolaj Znaider**; **Nicolas Altstaedt**, **Gautier Capuçon** and **Jean-Guihen Queyras** can be heard on cello. For the first time, the great pianist **Mitsuko Uchida** can be experienced with the DSO in November; other pianists making a guest appearance are **Emanuel Ax**, **Igor Levit**, **Tzimon Barto**, **Kristian Bezuidenhout**, **Martin Helmchen**, **Francesco Piemontesi** and **Cédric Tiberghien**. With clarinetist **Martin Fröst** and percussionist **Simone Rubino** additional masters of their instrument are returning to the DSO.

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The renowned vocal soloists of the season include sopranos **Louise Alder**, **Rachel Harnisch**, **Erin Morley** and **Dorothea Röschmann**, and mezzo-sopranos **Julie Boulianne**, **Karen Cargill**, **Magdalena Kožená**, **Anna Stéphany** and **Katharina Magiera**. Vocal parts are also played by countertenor **Tim Mead**, tenors **Paul Appleby**, **Allan Clayton** and **Simon O'Neill** as well as bassists **Ildar Abdrazakov**, **Florian Boesch** and **Vitalij Kowaljow**. Last but not least, the legendary **Felicity Lott** will take on the speaking role in Debussy's 'Le martyre de Saint Sébastien'. The work will be realised, as will Berlioz's 'Roméo et Juliette' and Shostakovich's 13th Symphony, with the **Rundfunkchor Berlin**. The **RIAS Kammerchor** is the partner in the staged version of Händel's 'Messiah' and at the 'Brahms Perspectives' Festival.

Other concert formats

The **Casual Concerts** – the DSO's open, popular concert format – have long since become a hallmark of the orchestra. The three concerts in the Philharmonie will be moderated and conducted this time by **Robin Ticciati**, **Ingo Metzmacher** and **Andrew Manze**. These evenings wind down, as usual, in the Casual Concerts Lounge with a live act and DJ. The opening and closing concerts of the 'Ultraschall Berlin' festival for new music in the Great Broadcast Hall of the rbb will be shaped by **Sylvain Cambreling** and **Simone Young**. The **Kulturradio children's concerts** for young listeners aged six and up will be continued on six dates, also in the Great Broadcast Hall.

The popular 'Notturmo' concerts, which the DSO holds in cooperation with the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, will again entice a great number of chamber music fans late at night to exciting cultural locations of Berlin: the **Gemäldegalerie**, the **Alte Nationalgalerie** and the **Hamburger Bahnhof**. With seven concerts in the **Villa Elisabeth** and the **Heimathafen Neukölln**, the **Chamber Music Series** remains faithful to venues ideally suited in terms of both acoustics and atmosphere. The **Scholars of the Orchestra Academy** will present themselves this year once again not only at a chamber music concert, but also with works for chamber orchestra conducted by Robin Ticciati. Small ensembles will perform in the scope of the 'Brahms Perspectives' Festival at the **ehemaliges Stummfilmkino Delphi** (a former silent film cinema) and the **State Library on Unter den Linden**.

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‘Symphonic Mob’ with Robin Ticciati

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With about 1,000 participants, the ‘**Symphonic Mob**’ demonstrated the considerable appeal of Berlin’s largest spontaneous orchestra also when headed up by the new Music Director in the autumn of 2017. The event will take place for the fifth time on **23 September 2018** at the Mall of Berlin – with DSO members and hundreds of amateur instrumentalists and singers – playing works by **Elgar, Grieg and Verdi** and conducted again by **Robin Ticciati**. As in previous years, the ‘Symphonic Mob’ will be implemented in 2018 at additional locations in Germany with local partner orchestras, in cooperation with the DSO.

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Guest performances

Above and beyond its concerts in Berlin, the DSO will again be present in national and international music life in the new season. Conducted by Robin Ticciati (and) jointly with violinist Vilde Frang, the orchestra will be guests in the **Elbphilharmonie Hamburg** early in September for the second time this year, then in November in **Lugano, Friedrichshafen, the Philharmonie Köln, in Eindhoven, Ludwigshafen and Lyon**. In March the orchestra, its Music Director and violinist Nicola Benedetti will conduct a two-week tour to **Moscow, Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen**, among others. Finally, the DSO, honorary conductor Kent Nagano and pianist Emanuel Ax will conclude the season at the end of June at the **Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern** and at the **Kissinger Sommer**.

Success record and outlook at a glance

The Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin can look back again on excellent figures for the **concert year 2017**. With **87% capacity utilisation** (2014: 85%, 2015: 89%, 2016: 86%) and **ticket sales totalling EUR 1.95 million** (2014: 1.68, 2015: 1.90, 2016: 1.90) for a total of **58 Berlin** events of our own (48 symphony and ten chamber concerts), the DSO is continuing the extremely positive development of recent years with its new Music Director Robin Ticciati. In the **2018-19 season** the DSO will give a total of at least **77 concerts: 63 in Berlin**, of which 33 are symphony concerts, three Casual Concerts and two concerts in the ‘Debüt im Deutschlandfunk Kultur’ series in the Philharmonie, three New Year’s Eve concerts in the Tempodrom, two concerts in the scope of the ‘Ultraschall Berlin’ Festival, and six Kulturradio children’s concerts in the Great Broadcast Hall of the rbb, as well as eleven chamber concerts, two ensemble concerts at different venues and a special concert in the Waldbühne. In addition, the orchestra will perform **14 guest concerts** in concert halls in Germany, Europe and Asia.

Subscription sales for the 2018-19 season begin on 19 April 2018, individual ticket sales on 16 July 2018.