

# Press Release



## Highlights of the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic in 2015

- **Two major tours across Europe including debuts in Paris and Zurich**
- **Recipient of the European Cultural Prize by the European Foundation for Culture**
- **First official album release ‘Baltic Sea Voyage’, on Naïve Classique**

**Berlin, 26 January 2015.** The Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic (BYP) goes from strength to strength as it enters its eighth year. Following on from a hugely successful 2014, the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic and Kristijan Järvi return to captivate audiences in 2015 with two concert tours across Europe, their first official album release *Baltic Sea Voyage*, on French label Naïve Classique, concert debuts in Paris and Zurich and an educational workshop, “BYP LAB”, in Poland in March. 2015 also sees the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic honoured with the major award, the European Cultural Prize by the European Foundation for Culture. The orchestra was founded in 2008 as a joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG, the gas pipeline operator.

### **World premieres, tours and original programmes**

Renowned for their exhilarating live performances, Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic’s concerts have been heralded as inspiring examples of cultural collaboration in-action. This year, under the baton of Founding Conductor and Music Director, Kristijan Järvi, they bring their electrifying concert experience to, among others, audiences in Poland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Finland and Germany, including at the opening of the Usedom Music Festival, the birthplace of BYP. Featured in over 10 concerts throughout 2015 will be world-premieres of two new works by Baltic composers: by Lithuanian BYP composer-alumnus Gediminas Gelgotas and by Finnish composer Severi Pyysalo. In supporting new works and performing little-known Baltic music, BYP continues its commitment to keeping the musical landscape of the region alive and buoyant.

### **First official album release**

The Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic also makes its Paris debut at the city’s prestigious Théâtre des Champs Elysées, where it will present its signature programme, *Baltic Sea Voyage*, celebrating the rich and diverse musical landscape of the entire region. *Baltic Sea Voyage* also becomes BYP’s first official album release, out in April on renowned French record label Naïve Classique as part of the Kristijan Järvi Sound Project recording series.

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## **Major prize-winner**

In October the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic will be awarded the European Cultural Prize of the foundation “Pro Europe”, recognizing its exceptional achievements in developing creativity and innovation, and influencing the young classical scene across the Baltic Sea region. In particular the prize jury cited BYP’s *“passionate and thrilling performances as an example to others to inspire worldwide audiences and foster cultural understanding in Europe and beyond.”* The prize will be presented by former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder on the 25th anniversary of the reunification of Germany in Dresden’s Frauenkirche, and BYP and Kristjan Järvi will perform in the live televised ceremony.

## **Innovative educational programmes**

This year’s Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic educational workshop, ‘BYP LAB’, will take place in March in Poland and will feature coaching and seminars. BYP LABs run by an international team of renowned coaches, embrace music of all genres, with rhythm and composer workshops and emphasis on the development of ‘groove’ and phrasing. BYP’s approach is spearheaded by Järvi, who founded the award-winning jazz-folk-classical-hip-hop group *Absolute Ensemble* over 20 years ago. As part of its September tour, the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic will give special performances for school classes in Copenhagen and teach young musicians the BYP approach.

## **Unique voice from the North**

Founded in 2008 as a joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG, who continue to support the orchestra, the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic features musicians aged 18-30 from, or studying in, the ten countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Retaining national specialities but opening up to international perspective, the musicians share their influence, knowledge and perspective to create a unique voice for the region. More than a youth orchestra, it is a project for cultural and social integration and cooperation to create unity in a historically-divided region.

## **Notes for Editors:**

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## Concert highlights 2015

26 March 2015: 19th Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival, Warsaw (Poland)  
31 March 2015: Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris (France)  
12 September 2015: Tonhalle, Zurich (Switzerland)  
14 September 2015: Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan (Italy)  
15 September 2015: Teatro Filarmonico, Verona (Italy)  
17 September 2015: NDR Sendesaal, Hanover (Germany)  
18 September 2015: DR Concert Hall, Copenhagen (Denmark)  
19 September 2015: Usedom Music Festival, Peenemünde (Germany)  
20 September 2015: The Philharmonie, Gdansk (Poland)  
22-24 September 2015: Among others Hartwall Arena, Helsinki (Finland) (tbc)  
26 September 2015: The Philharmonie, Tallinn (Estonia) (tbc)  
2 October 2015: Award Ceremony of the European Culture Prize 2015, Frauenkirche, Dresden (Germany) – live-broadcast on German TV MDR

## About the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic

The Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic was founded in 2008 as a joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG, who have continued to support the orchestra ever since. The orchestra has been funded since 2013 by the Baltic Sea Music Education Foundation. [www.bmef.eu](http://www.bmef.eu)

## Usedom Music Festival

The sound of the Baltic Sea has been heard since 1994 on the island of Usedom. Every year in late summer, the Usedom Music Festival devotes itself to the cultural region around the Baltic Sea. The festival has presented the musical life of Russia, Poland, the Baltic States, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, as well as former Prussia. Soloists such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Gidon Kremer, Olli Mustonen, Nina Stemme, Bo Skovhus as well as Jan Garbarek and the Esbjörn Svensson Trio have enthralled their audiences. The Peenemünde Concerts, frequently featuring the NDR Symphony Orchestra, are among the highlights of the more than 40 events presented by the Festival each year. From 19 September to 10 October 2015, the musical and cultural life of Finland will be the focus of the Festival. [www.usedomer-musikfestival.de](http://www.usedomer-musikfestival.de)

## Nord Stream AG

Co-founder and lead sponsor of the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic, Nord Stream AG is an international joint venture established for the planning, construction and subsequent operation of a natural gas pipeline to link Russia and the European Union through the Baltic Sea. Sponsorship of the BYP is part of Nord Stream's programme of cultural, scientific and environmental initiatives that benefit the Baltic Sea region. Nord Stream AG stands for sustainable development, environmental, economic and social responsibility in the energy sector. The idea of a Baltic youth orchestra struck a chord with Nord Stream immediately: like Nord Stream the BYP would be innovative, cross-cultural and only made possible through teamwork and close collaboration across frontiers. [www.nord-stream.com](http://www.nord-stream.com).