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The Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi end their Midnight Sun tour 2023 with an uplifting concert for Ukraine and refugee support

- **Summer tour took Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi to the Berlin Philharmonie, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Kissinger Sommer and the Mecklenburg State Theatre Schwerin from 21 to 25 June 2023**
- **Programme featured music from Arvo Pärt to Sibelius, with original compositions by orchestral musicians from Estonia, Lithuania and Poland**
- **Baltic Sea Philharmonic gave around 5,400 concertgoers an uninterrupted rush of sound, played entirely from memory**
- **Further tours in second half of 2023, with Babylon Berlin, Midnight Sun and a collaboration with pioneering British musician Brian Eno**

Berlin, 27 June 2023. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's summer tour **Midnight Sun** ended on 25 June with an uplifting concert at the Mecklenburg State Theatre in Schwerin to honour **the citizens and volunteers who have supported Ukraine and refugees**. The performance also marked the orchestra's state capital debut with Kristjan Järvi in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. **From 21 to 25 June**, ensemble and conductor thrilled audiences at the Berlin Philharmonie, a sold-out Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Max Littmann Concert Hall in Bad Kissingen and the Mecklenburg State Theatre. Around **5,400 concertgoers** celebrated midsummer by dancing, singing and giving standing ovations for the orchestra, which played completely from memory for more than two hours and even improvised collectively.

For this outstanding summer event, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic included original compositions by four orchestral musicians from Estonia, Lithuania and Poland. The orchestra also performed the *Concertino bianco* by Latvian composer **Georgs Pelēcis**, excerpts from **Sibelius's** Symphony No. 2, works by **Kristjan Järvi**, **Arvo Pärt's** *Da pacem Domine* and, in Hamburg, Berlin and Bad Kissingen, excerpts from **Stravinsky's** *The Firebird*.

The Midnight Sun tour was sponsored by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Minister of State Claudia Roth.

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From classical music remix to an orchestral midsummer rave

Beyond conjuring the magical atmosphere of a Nordic high summer, the immersive sound spectacle of *Midnight Sun* invited the audience to experience an innovative performance that involved them more and more in the creative process as the evening progressed. In return, Kristjan Järvi drove the orchestra to ever new heights in a rousing, energetic performance that once again proved to be a great success.

The programme seamlessly linked works by composers from the Baltic region, in a stream of sound that was interrupted only by audience applause. There were sustained moments of sublime expression in Sibelius's Symphony No. 2, and sections of great harmonic clarity in the second movement of Georgs Pelēcis's *Concertino bianco*. The powerful, almost brutal blows in **Liis Jürgens'** *The Dream of Tabu-tabu* – a reminiscence and indictment of the prohibitions on free speech in Stalin-era Estonia – were seamlessly followed by excerpts from Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. In addition to the work by Jürgens, the orchestra's Estonian harpist, the conductor wove in two other pieces by members of the ensemble: *Hollow in the tree* by **Mintautas Kriščiūnas** from Lithuania and **Zuzanna Wąsiewicz** from Poland, which was also released as a video in the orchestra's **Musical Chain** series () of innovative music videos; and *Sirene* by **Maria Mutso** from Estonia, a work that was created as part of a **Creativity Lab** that the Baltic Sea Philharmonic regularly organises for its musicians. Kristjan Järvi contributed several of his own compositions, with his Sibelius arrangement *Ascending Swans* alongside *Midnight Sun* and *Runic Prayer Remix*. The latter two were presented as orchestral versions of club remixes, accompanied by Estonian electro-folk musician **Mari Meentalo** on Estonian bagpipes and Jew's harps. Both pieces ultimately transformed the concert performance into a boisterous midsummer night party, where Kristjan Järvi encouraged the audience to sing and dance along, and quite a few visitors joined the musicians well beyond the concert's end.

Stormy acclaimed concerts in Berlin, Hamburg, Bad Kissingen and Schwerin

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic creates unforgettable musical experiences for its audiences. A visitor wrote about the *Midnight Sun* concert in Berlin: 'The atmosphere was bombastic... I've never stood in the Philharmonie during a concert and clapped and danced with enthusiasm.... It didn't keep anyone in their seats any more.... Wow!' Others wrote about the concert in Hamburg: 'Thank you so much for this fantastic and inspiring concert! It was the highlight of our visit to Hamburg.'

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The livestream of the Bad Kissingen concert, which is still available to watch here, also evoked enthusiasm: 'I saw your sensational concert on my way home and almost forgot to get off the train during the last bit!'

Critics echoed the audience praise. Helmut Peters of the **Hamburger Abendblatt** wrote: 'We need more of such concert formats as Kristjan Järvi, the younger brother of conductor Paavo Järvi, offered on Thursday with his Baltic Sea Philharmonic in the Elbphilharmonie. Hardly anyone before him has managed so convincingly to transform a classical concert with the means of pop music culture into an event that inspires very young people in particular, without damaging the classical originals in the slightest.' And Frederik Hanssen of the **Berliner Tagesspiegel** reported: 'The Philharmonie audience is initially only allowed to participate in this communal experience by listening. In the encore block, however, Järvi finally involves everyone present, inviting them to clap and stomp their feet rhythmically, and later even to sing and dance along. Whereby he himself has the most fun, rushing across the stage as if unleashed, gesticulating as much as possible, shouting into the microphone "We are all magicians!" An elemental force, half guru, half imp. And it works: the hall goes into collective rapture, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* has become a classic party.'

Brian Eno, Babylon Berlin and more Midnight Sun

Further outstanding tours await the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi in the second half of the year. From **11 to 13 September**, they will present the soundtrack of the hit TV series **Babylon Berlin** together with musicians and actors such as Meret Becker and Max Raabe as a live musical event at the Theater des Westens in Berlin. Just a few days later, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic's *Midnight Sun* programme will undergo another transformation, enchanting audiences with the magical world of midsummer nights at more concert experiences in Germany and Italy. The orchestra and Kristjan Järvi open the **Usedom Music Festival** on 16 September, before going on tour in Italy from 20 to 23 September, with stops at the **Merano Music Festival** (20 September), the **Teatro Filarmonico** (21 September) in **Verona** and the **Teatro Amintore Galli** (22 September) in **Rimini**. And on **21 October 2023** the orchestra and conductor will make their **Biennale debut in Venice** with two concerts at the **Teatro La Fenice**, featuring the world premiere of **Brian Eno's** *Ships*, before touring with Eno in October. This will be the pioneering British musician's first ever tour with an orchestra. For detailed information on the Baltic Sea

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Philharmonic's concert calendar, visit .

Baltic Sea Philharmonic – a revolution in music and culture

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic takes the orchestral concert experience to a new dimension. Every performance is a voyage of musical discovery, as the musicians perform the entire programme from memory, creating a one-of-a-kind artistic journey. Each concert is a unique spectacle of sound, light, visual art, technology, choreography and playing by heart, and under the electrifying baton of Music Director and Founding Conductor Kristjan Järvi every performance has a special energy that's absolutely infectious. But even more than this, as a community of musicians from ten Nordic countries, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic transcends boundaries and has become a movement for bringing people together. Embodying all that is innovative and progressive about the Nordic region, this visionary ensemble is taking the traditional orchestral model further than ever before. 'It is a living breathing creature, with boundless energy and enthusiasm for the new – an adventure in itself,' says Kristjan Järvi.

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About the Baltic Sea Philharmonic

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic is a unique Nordic orchestra that brings together musicians from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. The orchestra started life in 2008 as the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic on the initiative of the Usedom Music Festival. It quickly established an international reputation, not just for its acclaimed performances under the baton of Kristjan Järvi, but also with its powerful message of unity and cooperation in a historically divided region. In 2015 the orchestra's achievements were honoured with the prestigious European Culture Prize by the European Culture Foundation 'Pro Europe'. In 2016 the orchestra was renamed the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. Since then it has toured innovative programmes that throw classical music conventions out of the window and enable audiences to experience new musical dimensions. After becoming the first orchestra in the world to perform Stravinsky's *The Firebird* from memory, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic is now widely known for its commitment to playing entire programmes by heart. The orchestra's growing discography with Kristjan Järvi includes four acclaimed recordings for Sony Classical, the most recent of which is Järvi's own arrangement of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*. Recorded by the orchestra completely from memory, *Nutcracker. A Dramatic Symphony* was released in December 2022. In addition, Max Richter's album *EXILES*, recorded by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi, was released in August 2021 on Deutsche Grammophon. In 2022 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic continued its innovative digital project Musical Chain, which it launched in 2020 in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This unique series of classical remix videos brings musicians from the orchestra together with international artists and creative collaborators. In 2023 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will once again travel thousands of miles across Europe: With *Midnight Sun* in June, the orchestra captures the magic of midsummer nights by weaving the special colours and rhythms of Nordic



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composers into a total artistic experience combining music, choreography, light and sound design. In September 2023 the orchestra and Kristjan Järvi will give further concerts in Germany and Italy in a second Midnight Sun tour with a new programme. www.bmf.eu