

# Press Release



## **European Baltic Sea Voyage tour of Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi ends on celebratory note in Gdansk**

- **Entire tour celebrated inclusiveness**
- **Collaboration with amateur musicians**
- **Welcome Concert for refugees in Hanover**
- **Concert for 3,700 school children in Copenhagen**
- **Celebration of 25th anniversary of German unification**
- **Two world premieres**
- **Seven encores in Verona**

**Berlin, 21 September 2015.** Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic's nine-city tour has come to a stirring climax in Gdansk, following an intensely packed ten days of educational work and concerts across Europe, delighting audiences and making friends in five different countries.

The first stop of the tour was in Heiden, Germany, where the players worked together with amateur musicians who had the unique opportunity to perform together with the orchestra under Founding Conductor and Music Director, Kristjan Järvi. Michael Roski, who directs the 100 flautists and percussionists of Spielmannszug Heiden, one of the groups of amateurs, said: 'It made me proud because they have their jobs outside music but they love music and they're so full of energy. They can now see that what they're doing is good and they don't have to hide from professional musicians.'

### **A debut and a premiere**

From Heiden the tour bus went to Zurich, where for its Tonhalle debut, Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic gave the world premiere of *Mountains. Waters. (Freedom)*, by Lithuanian composer Gediminas Gelgotas, specially commissioned by the Orpheum Foundation. The piece represents Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic's concern for the environment, and also reflects the nature of the orchestra itself, as Gelgotas said: 'The three words – mountains, waters and freedom – connect especially well with this orchestra because all of us are connected by the Baltic Sea. Some of us, such as the Scandinavians, have great mountains, and some of us had a struggle fighting for independence, so these three words are familiar to the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic.' The audience at Zurich Tonhalle also heard young violin virtuoso Hyeyoon Park perform Saint-Saëns's Violin Concerto no.3 and Heigo Rosin playing Tüür's *Ardor* for marimba and orchestra. The

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orchestra's programme was so well received that Kristjan Järvi led the players in an encore of 'Rock' Symphony by Latvian composer Imants Kalniņš.

## **Seven encores**

There were even more encores in Verona, where, following his solo performance of Erkki-Sven Tüür's *Ardor* for marimba and orchestra, percussionist Heigo Rosin was called back for three encores. The orchestra itself was called back for four, the audience offering an ecstatic reception to the programme. This was the second concert of the orchestra's Italian leg of the tour, made possible by the sponsor Saipem, the orchestra having performed the night before in Milan's historic Santa Maria delle Grazie.

The concert in Hanover was particularly special, as Kristjan Järvi declared it a Welcome Concert and invited some of the many refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan who have recently arrived in Europe, as a gesture of solidarity and inclusion towards the newcomers. Indeed, inclusivity and community are the values by which Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic lives, and the next stop after Hanover was Copenhagen, where the orchestra performed a dedicated concert for 3,700 school children from the remote region of Ringkøbing-Skjern in western Denmark, offering many of them the chance to hear live classical music and to come to a concert hall for the first time.

## **Celebrating unity**

From Denmark, it was back to the German island of Peenemünde for the Usedom Festival, where the orchestra came into existence in 2008. Here they gave their second world premiere, of Severi Pyysalo's 'Green' Piano Concerto, with the orchestra accompanying Finnish star Pauli Kari.

Throughout the tour the orchestra demonstrated the unifying force of music, both in its own performances and in its collaborations, so it was fitting that the final concert of this extensive European tour was in Gdansk, where the orchestra performed a special programme to celebrate the 25th anniversary of German unification.

From there, the young players made their respective ways home to the ten different countries of the Baltic Sea region. But the music and events they participated in and the friendships and collaborations they made will surely go with them, and they will briefly reunite on 2 October in Dresden, where they will pick up the coveted European Cultural Prize 2015 and perform under Kristjan Järvi at a star-studded musical gala.

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## **Back to the future**

Many of the players will return for next year's innovative educational LAB sessions and two tours, in April and September, with auditions taking place in November and December 2015 in Copenhagen, Riga, Berlin and St Petersburg. In this way, the orchestra continues to build and grow, offering more talented musicians from the Baltic Sea region the opportunity to take part in the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic experience.

## **Unique voice from the North**

Founded in 2008 by the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG, the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic features musicians aged 18-28 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. In 2015, BYP is supported by its co-initiator and main sponsor, Nord Stream AG, operator of the natural gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea, as well as Saipem, one of the global leaders in the engineering & construction and drilling businesses, as sponsor.

For more details of the recent *Baltic Sea Voyage* concert tour visit our [website](#) or our [Facebook pages](#).

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## **Notes for editors**

### **About the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic**

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## **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 rich 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, ensembles and conductors such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Kurt Masur, Gidon Kremer, Kristjan, Paavo and Neeme Järvi, Nina Stemme, Alan Gilbert, Esa-Pekka Salonen 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)