



## **Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic searches for next generation of members across Baltic Sea region**

- **500 young musicians apply to join Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic (BYP)**
- **Auditions to be held in Copenhagen, Riga, St Petersburg and Berlin**
- **Participants to experience unique mini masterclasses as part of auditions**

**Berlin, 22 October 2015.** Nearly 500 young music students from across the Baltic Sea region have applied to join Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic (BYP) for its 2016 programmes under the baton of Founding Conductor and Music Director Kristjan Järvi. When the deadline passed on 15 October, 500 musicians aged between 18–28, who were either born in or are studying in one of the ten countries around the Baltic Sea (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia or Sweden), had submitted their applications. They will go through to audition in one of four cities: Copenhagen (30 November); Riga (1 December); St Petersburg (2 December) and Berlin (3 and 4 December).

### **Auditions as mini masterclasses**

Auditions follow BYP's innovative formula of being both mini masterclass and audition, offering everyone who attends the chance to benefit in some way, even if they aren't selected, and making sure that the most talented and responsive players are chosen for the orchestra. Coaches offer feedback to players on their performance and work constructively with them in the masterclasses, which are open to the public. Tutors this year are Jan Bjøranger (professor and head of the string department at the University of Stavanger, Norway) and Justas Kulikauskas (solo cellist of the New Ideas Chamber Orchestra NICO, Lithuania) for strings; Martin Kuuskmann (Estonian solo bassoonist of worldwide renown) and Andrej Zust (hornist at the Berlin Philharmonic) for woodwind and brass; and Damien Bassman (principal percussionist of Absolute Ensemble and teacher at Marymount Manhattan College in New York City and at New York University) for percussion.

With around 100 places in the orchestra in 2016, competition to join is fierce, although it varies according to instrument. According to statistics, 105 violinists have signed up to audition for 30 places, but 64 flautists, 32 trombone players and 46 clarinetists have applied for the more limited wind and brass sections. 19 per cent of applications come from musicians who have already been in the orchestra, and 81 per cent are from new players, ensuring that more players from across

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the region will be able to have the special BYP experience, while the orchestra maintains its identity and there is a sense of continuity in the group.

For more details about our auditions, see [www.auditions-bmef.eu](http://www.auditions-bmef.eu).

## **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.

## **Press contact**

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

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## **About the Usedom Music Festival**

The Usedom Music Festival initiated the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic to give the rich cultural region of the Baltic Sea an united voice. As the sounding Podium of the Baltic Sea, the Festival has equally presented the musical life of all countries surrounding the Baltic Sea, providing a special country focus each year of one of the Baltic Sea countries. Thus, the Festival is fostering artistic cooperation and dialogue across borders. World renowned soloists, conductors and ensembles such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Kurt Masur, Kremerata Baltica, Esbjörn Svenson Trio, Kristjan, Paavo and Neeme Järvi or Esa-Pekka Salonen and many more present the music cultures of their countries being more or less unknown to an German audience. The programmes cover a wide range of classical music spiced up with jazz and popular music. The Peenemünde Concerts, frequently featuring the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic and 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 this year's Festival focus. [www.usedomer-musikfestival.de](http://www.usedomer-musikfestival.de)

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## **About 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)