

# Press Release



## **Baltic Sea Philharmonic joins with Gidon Kremer for September 'Baltic Sea Discovery' tour**

- **Concerts in Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Denmark and Germany**
- **Gidon Kremer plays Weinberg's rarely-performed Violin Concerto**
- **Kremerata Baltica players embedded in orchestra**
- **Rising star violinist Lidia Baich makes Baltic Sea Philharmonic debut**
- **Swan-themed works by Pärt and Tchaikovsky**
- **Programme offers well-known, new, and undiscovered repertoire**
- **Tour includes school concerts in Denmark**
- **First official album *Wagner: The Ring*, release date of 9 September**

**Berlin, 17 August 2016.** The newly formed Baltic Sea Philharmonic makes its second tour this September, in close collaboration with Gidon Kremer and his world-renowned orchestra, Kremerata Baltica, and under the baton of Founding Conductor and Music Director Kristjan Järvi.

The musical journey follows on from the successful launch tour in April, which focused on the northern part of the region – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Russia. September's 'Baltic Sea Discovery' tour will explore the southern part, starting again in Lithuania (Klaipeda) and continuing to Russia (Kaliningrad), Poland (Gdansk), Denmark (Sønderborg and Copenhagen) and Germany (Peenemünde). There will once again be a strong environmental theme to the repertoire, and the orchestra will perform daytime school concerts in Denmark.

Repertoire for the concerts will include works by Tchaikovsky, Pärt and Weinberg. Gidon Kremer will perform Weinberg's rarely played Violin Concerto in Gdansk (18 September), Copenhagen (20 September) and Peenemünde (24 September). In Klaipeda (15 September) and Kaliningrad (16 September), the soloist in the concerto will be the St. Petersburg-born violinist Lidia Baich. The orchestra will perform Arvo Pärt's *Swansong* and Kristjan Järvi's own concert arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*.

### **Discovering the undiscovered**

The programme for the tour offers a perfect balance, Kristjan Järvi says: 'We're bringing together different elements of new, popular, and completely undiscovered music, which is why we're calling

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it the “Baltic Sea Discovery” tour.’ The ‘undiscovered’ music is the Violin Concerto of Mieczysław Weinberg. Weinberg was born in Poland in 1919 and in 1939 fled to the Soviet Union, where he fell foul of the authorities for his Modernism, although he was staunchly defended by his friend, Shostakovich. His Violin Concerto, written in the 1960s, was premiered by Leonid Kogan, and is rarely performed, but in Gidon Kremer, one of the world’s most original and honest violinists, and Lidia Baich, who is rapidly making her name among top young violinists, it has its ideal champions.

## **The purity of the swan**

The other two works on the programme revolve around the theme of the swan. Arvo Pärt’s *Swansong* was commissioned in 2014 by Salzburg Mozart Week as an orchestral version of his 1999 choral work, *Littlemore Tractus*, based on a text by theologian Cardinal John Henry Newman. Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake* is one of the world’s best-loved ballets, from which Kristjan Järvi has created his own Suite for the orchestra. He explains the fascination: ‘Swans are creatures of great purity and beauty, and all the Nordic countries have them in their culture, which is why we’re focusing the repertoire in this way.’

## **Culture and the environment**

The swan theme also represents the orchestra’s concern for the environment, which is at the heart of its identity. Kristjan Järvi explains: ‘We are going beyond any expectation of what an orchestra should be. There should be a reason for having an orchestra – not just to play music. We’re creating a movement that brings people together from Norway to Russia. We have to take care of this Nordic region and the stronger we all are, the stronger we are as a region. Then we can set an example for the whole world. We all come from one region, with the same nature, forests and wildlife, and a sea that gives us the power to do anything. Everything is shaped by our environment – our food, language, architecture, fashion. If we don’t have that connection to that environment then we don’t have ourselves, our own identities. We are trying to establish this connection through culture.’

## **United front**

The collaboration with Kremerata Baltica is a natural one, says Kristjan Järvi: ‘This will be a true cooperation, with its players embedded in our orchestra, so the two orchestras will play as one. It is great to be able to come together with Kremerata Baltica in a united front, because this is part of

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becoming the environmental and social ambassador for the whole Baltic Sea region. As musicians we are all in the same boat together, working together for one cause.'

## **First official album of the Baltic Sea Philharmonic**

Baltic Sea Philharmonic releases its first CD on 9 September by Sony Classical label, performing Wagner's four-part opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung* in an orchestral version that distils the musical highlights of the composer's turbulent epic. Kristjan Järvi said: 'The Wagner Ring Cycle without words is a symphonic voyage. It will be the first release of the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. Many people don't know that Wagner spent time in the Baltic Sea region, for instance in Riga. He based his Ring Cycle on Nordic mythology and his time there. It's well researched that if it hadn't been for his fascination with creating a mythology based on Nordic legends in this sea-faring part of Northern Europe, none of it would have come into being.'

## **Baltic Sea Philharmonic – a new era in performance and presentation**

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic is a new force in music and culture. Taking the traditional orchestral model further than it's gone before, the orchestra is becoming a whole social movement, with a vision for the Nordic region that encompasses the environment, culture and society. Kristjan Järvi explained: 'The Baltic Sea Philharmonic is the one single Nordic cultural export that unifies all ten countries that surround the Baltic Sea. From Norway to Russia, whether they're in the EU or not, whether they're north or south – we're all connected by this incredible body of water. And with this orchestra it is a new beginning in a unified Baltic region which finds its mission in the discovery and empowerment of self and this entrepreneurial and start-up mentality which has gripped the region, everything from fashion to technology. It's all part of our culture. We're discovering this.'

## **Press contact**

Alexander Datz, Press Officer, Baltic Sea Music Education Foundation e.V.  
Mobile: +49 176 741 61 157  
[alexander.datz@bmef.eu](mailto:alexander.datz@bmef.eu), [www.bmef.eu](http://www.bmef.eu)

## **Notes to editors:**

### **'Baltic Sea Discovery' Tour**

+Thursday, 15 September 2016, 6.30 pm, Klaipeda Concert Hall, Lithuania  
+Friday, 16 September 2016, 7.00 pm, Cathedral of Kaliningrad, Russia  
\*Sunday, 18 September 2016, 7.00 pm, European Solidarity Centre, Gdansk, Poland  
\*Tuesday, 20 September 2016, 5.00 pm, Copenhagen (DR Concert Hall), Denmark  
Wednesday, 21 September, 2016, 9.00 am, 11.00 am, 1.00 pm, Alsion, Sønderborg, Denmark (school concerts)

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Thursday, 22 September, 2016, 9.00 am, 11.00 am, 1.00 pm, Alsion, Sønderborg, Denmark (school concerts)

\*Saturday, 24 September 2016, 8.00 pm, Peenemünde/Usedom (Kraftwerksmuseum), Germany

## Programme

Baltic Sea Philharmonic

Kristjan Järvi, conductor

+Gidon Kremer, violin

\*Lidia Baich, violin

Arvo Pärt: *Swansong* (Littlemore Tractus) for orchestra

Mieczysław Weinberg: Violin Concerto in G minor, Op. 67

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P.I. Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake* Ballet Music (Arr. K. Järvi)

## About the Baltic Sea Philharmonic

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic is the sister orchestra of the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic (BYP), which 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. BYP was awarded the European Culture Prize 2015 in recognition of its exceptional achievements in developing creativity and innovation, and influencing the young classical scene across the Baltic Sea region. Both ensembles bring together orchestra musicians from the ten countries of the Baltic Sea region and share the same ambitions towards culture, society and the environment, upholding the principle that music can unite people of all nationalities and backgrounds and change society for the better, especially in a region that has historically been divided. Baltic Sea Philharmonic was founded in 2015 as the more public-facing side of the Baltic Sea Music Education Foundation, coming together several times a year to tour specific projects across Europe, and beyond, while BYP remains a high-level orchestra that trains musical and social skills in talented young performers and composers. Both orchestras are run by the Baltic Sea Music Education Foundation e. V. based in Berlin, Germany. [www.bmef.eu](http://www.bmef.eu)