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Baltic Sea Philharmonic has opened tenth touring season with acclaimed concerts at Kissinger Sommer festival in Germany

- **Orchestra and Kristjan Järvi debuted ‘Nordic Pulse’, a programme marking ten years since the creation of Baltic Sea Philharmonic**
- **‘Nordic Pulse’ concert included world premiere of Gediminas Gelgotas’s Violin Concerto with soloist David Nebel**
- **Orchestra also performed spectacular ‘Waterworks’ programme featuring lighting and sound design in collaboration with Sunbeam Productions**
- **School concert for 600 pupils continued Baltic Sea Music Education Foundation’s commitment to young people**
- **Orchestra to tour ‘Nordic Pulse’ in Italy, Germany and Poland from 17 to 24 September**

Berlin, 11 July 2018. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic has launched its landmark tenth season of international touring with concerts at the **Kissinger Sommer** music festival in Bad Kissingen, Germany. On 7 July the orchestra, under its Founding Conductor and Music Director **Kristjan Järvi**, made its debut at the prestigious Bavarian music festival with a new programme called **‘Nordic Pulse’**, which showcases music by composers from the Baltic Sea region. Then on 9 July the Baltic Sea Philharmonic performed its unique **‘Waterworks’** programme in a spectacular concert presentation featuring cutting-edge lighting and sound design. Bavarian public-service broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk recorded both performances in Bad Kissingen’s Max-Littmann-Saal for radio broadcast on 30 July (‘Waterworks’) and a future date (‘Nordic Pulse’). The orchestra’s stay in Bad Kissingen also included a special ‘Waterworks’ school concert for more than 600 children.

‘Nordic Pulse’: a celebration of freedom

The ‘Nordic Pulse’ concert at the Kissinger Sommer festival on 7 July was a foretaste of the orchestra’s major ‘Nordic Pulse’ tour of Italy, Germany and Poland this September, when it will celebrate the independence centenaries of Finland, Poland and the three Baltic States with music by composers from these nations. In Bad Kissingen the Baltic Sea Philharmonic performed works by **Kristjan Järvi**, the contemporary Lithuanian composer **Gediminas Gelgotas**, and **Tchaikovsky**. The concert opened with Järvi’s *Aurora*, a piece inspired by the iconic Northern

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Lights, and closed with his arrangement of Tchaikovsky's ballet *Sleeping Beauty*. Some 250 music fans had already had the opportunity to hear this arrangement on 5 July, when the Baltic Sea Philharmonic held an open rehearsal at the Landesmusikakademie Rheinland-Pfalz in Neuwied, Rhineland-Palatinate, the orchestra's rehearsal base ahead of its appearances at Kissinger Sommer. And music fans everywhere will soon have the chance to hear the work, as a live recording of the *Sleeping Beauty* arrangement, made at the Kissinger Sommer performance, is set to be released by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic later this year.

The centrepiece of the 'Nordic Pulse' concert was the world premiere of Gelgotas's Violin Concerto, with its dedicatee, Swiss violinist **David Nebel**, as soloist. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic previously premiered Gelgotas's *Never Ignore the Cosmic Ocean* in 2012 and *Mountains. Waters. (Freedom)* in 2015, and the composer says that the orchestra and Järvi are ideal advocates for his symphonic music: 'Their energy and strength, their freedom of phrasing the music, the fearlessness in the way they express themselves – these are qualities that I admire very much.' Speaking after the world premiere of the Violin Concerto, Nebel echoed Gelgotas's praise: 'I couldn't imagine anyone else partnering me in this work but Kristjan Järvi and the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. The concerto is a brilliant piece and I'm so proud of everyone who supported me in this performance and the rehearsal process.'

A Kissinger Sommer audience regular, Klaus Seifert, congratulated the performers on Facebook on their 'daring premiere of the Violin Concerto' and added this tribute to the musicians' spirit: 'The world belongs to the daring and courageous!' The Würzburg-based *Main-Post* newspaper was also impressed with the orchestra's playing. 'This ensemble of young, outstanding musicians from ten countries bordering the Baltic Sea can only be described as excellent,' wrote its reviewer. 'Compact, powerful, graceful and filigree, warmly shimmering in the overall sound, here was music played with dedication, concentration and passion, and of course with great skill.'

Return of the revolutionary 'Waterworks'

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic won acclaim in 2017 for its water-inspired concert presentation '**Waterworks**', a bold new fusion of music, light, visual art and sound design in collaboration with Sunbeam Productions. The orchestra and Kristjan Järvi brought 'Waterworks' to Bad Kissingen on 9 July with a programme of original arrangements of Handel's *Water Music* and a new orchestral version of Philip Glass's *Agua da Amazonia*, a piece inspired by the great Amazon river and its

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tributaries. The Kissinger Sommer audience had never experienced anything quite like this immersive symphonic production, and the orchestra's powerful performance, in combination with **Bertil Mark's** lighting design and **Holger Schwark's** sound engineering, thrilled concert goers and critics alike.

The *Main-Post* reviewer summed up the joyful atmosphere at the end of the concert, when Järvi invited the audience to join in with an encore of the *Aguas da Amazonia* finale: 'Hundreds of people, of all ages, standing and cheering, dancing and singing, clapping rhythms and waving their arms... No, this wasn't Woodstock on Monday evening; this was the venerable Max-Littmann-Saal in tranquil Bad Kissingen!'

Järvi said after the 'Waterworks' performance: 'This project is inspired by water, and in particular by something that's absolutely precious to the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, and that's the Baltic Sea itself. It's our sea, our water, the key to our life and our existence. We want to share that inspiration with our audience, and I'm delighted to see that so many people were enthralled by tonight's performance.'

'Waterworks' school concert inspires next generation

On the morning of 9 July in Bad Kissingen the Baltic Sea Philharmonic performed an hour-long school concert for more than 600 children aged 6 to 18, featuring selections from the main 'Waterworks' concert programme. Two musicians from the orchestra, double bassist Miranda Erlich and violist Maximilian Procop, moderated the concert. Audience member Rüdiger Wiesenhütter, a music teacher at the Friedrich-List-Gymnasium in Gemünden am Main, praised the orchestra's commitment and passion on Facebook: 'My students and I loved the concert. The Handel was awesome and very clean. And *Aguas da Amazonia* really was impressive. Everyone could immediately feel the enthusiasm of the musicians and their love for music.'

Since its formation in 2008 the orchestra has always maintained a strong commitment to education and training, and this latest school concert builds on the ensemble's extensive experience of performing to children in Denmark between 2015 and 2017. In cooperation with Danish Radio, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic played to around 16,000 young people from rural areas of Denmark, many of whom had never experienced a live orchestral performance.

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'Nordic Pulse' tour to Italy, Germany and Poland

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's major 'Nordic Pulse' tour will take place this September as a double celebration. It marks ten years since the orchestra's creation and 100 years of independence for the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as well as Finland and Poland. The tour opens with a concert at the Merano Music Festival in Merano, Italy, on 17 September. The orchestra then travels to Germany, where it will play in Munich for the first time on 18 September. After a performance in Halle (Saale) on 20 September, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will open the 25th Usedom Music Festival in Peenemünde on 22 September. The tour concludes with a concert in Gdańsk, Poland, on 24 September.

Norwegian violinist **Mari Samuelson** will join the orchestra to perform two works by Estonian composers: *Fratres* by **Arvo Pärt** and **Kristjan Järvi's** *Aurora*, in its concerto version for violin and orchestra. The programme also includes Polish composer **Wojciech Kilar's** *Orawa*, **Gediminas Gelgotas's** *Mountains. Waters. (Freedom)*, the first movement of the 'Rock' Symphony by Latvian composer **Imants Kalniņš**, and **Sibelius's** concert suite from *The Tempest*, in an arrangement by Kristjan Järvi. The orchestra will perform the Sibelius and Kalniņš pieces entirely from memory.

Baltic Sea Philharmonic – a revolution in music and culture

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic, which celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2018, is a new paradigm for music making in the 21st century. Its concerts are a unique spectacle of sound, light, projection art and choreography; its passion for playing orchestral works from memory transforms the musical experience for both players and audiences; and its performances, under the electrifying baton of Music Director Kristjan Järvi, have a special passion and energy that's infectious. But even more than this, as a community of musicians from ten Nordic countries, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic transcends geographical and historical 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.

Press contact

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Notes to editors:

'Nordic Pulse' and 'Waterworks' – Concert broadcasts on BR Klassik (Bayerischer Rundfunk)

Monday, 30 July 2018, 8.30 pm

Baltic Sea Philharmonic
Kristjan Järvi

Programme 'Waterworks'
Gene Pritsker/George Frideric Handel/Charles Coleman: *Water Music*
Philip Glass: *Agua da Amazonia* (orchestrated by Charles Coleman)

Date and time tbc

Baltic Sea Philharmonic
Kristjan Järvi
David Nebel

Programme 'Nordic Pulse'
Kristjan Järvi: *Aurora*
Gediminas Gelgotas: Violin Concerto (world premiere)
Peter I. Tchaikovsky: *Sleeping Beauty* concert suite (arranged by Kristjan Järvi)

'Nordic Pulse' – September 2018

Monday, 17 September 2018, 8.30 pm, Merano (Merano Music Festival), Italy
Tuesday, 18 September 2018, 8.00 pm, Munich (Herkulesaal), Germany
Thursday, 20 September 2018, 7.30 pm, Halle/Saale (Händel Halle), Germany
Saturday, 22 September 2018, 8.00 pm, Peenemünde (Usedom Music Festival), Germany
Monday, 24 September 2018, 6.00 pm, Gdańsk (Polish Baltic Philharmonic), Poland (without soloist)

Baltic Sea Philharmonic
Kristjan Järvi
Mari Samuelsen

Wojciech Kilar: *Orawa*
Gediminas Gelgotas: *Mountains. Waters. (Freedom)*
Arvo Pärt: *Fratres* for violin, percussion and string orchestra
Kristjan Järvi: *Aurora* for violin and orchestra
Jean Sibelius: 'The Tempest' concert suite (arranged by Kristjan Järvi) – from memory
Imants Kalniņš: 'Rock' Symphony (Symphony No. 4), first movement – from memory

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. In 2018 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic celebrates its tenth anniversary. The orchestra started life in 2008 as the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic, a joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG. 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 region that has historically been divided. In 2015 the orchestra was awarded the prestigious European Culture Prize for its achievements in developing creativity and innovation, and influencing the cultural scene across the Baltic Sea region. Newly renamed the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, in 2016 the orchestra collaborated with Gidon Kremer and the Kremerata Baltica, and

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celebrated the release by Sony Classical of its recording of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, arranged by Henk de Vlieger. In 2017 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic made history by becoming the first orchestra to perform Stravinsky's *The Firebird* from memory. The orchestra continues its commitment to innovation and to the environment in 2018 with an immersive, water-themed concert show that features cutting-edge visual art, lighting and sound design. www.baltic-sea-philharmonic.eu