

# Press Release

## **Baltic Sea Philharmonic follows up successful tenth-anniversary year with exciting plans for 2019**

- **Orchestra launches new year with ‘Nordic Pulse’ tour of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Russia in March 2019**
- **‘Midnight Sun’ tour of Germany in June and July features performances at Philharmonie in Berlin and Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg**
- **‘Divine Geometry’ tour to Italy and to the Usedom Music Festival in September includes German premiere of new Steve Reich work**
- **Baltic Sea Philharmonic to perform entire concert from memory**
- **Orchestra to collaborate with leading young violinists Mari Samuelsen and David Nebel, and pianist Simone Dinnerstein**

**Berlin, 17 December 2018.** A first-ever tour outside Europe, a eulogy from the German Chancellor, an entire concert performed from memory – these were just some of the many highlights of 2018 for the **Baltic Sea Philharmonic** and **Kristjan Järvi**. With the orchestra’s tenth-anniversary year at an end, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic can now reveal its exciting programmes and touring plans for 2019. Three concert tours – **‘Nordic Pulse’**, **‘Midnight Sun’** and **‘Divine Geometry’** – will feature collaborations with violinists **Mari Samuelsen** and **David Nebel** and pianist **Simone Dinnerstein**, and will take the Baltic Sea Philharmonic to some of Europe’s most renowned concert halls, including Finlandia Hall in Helsinki (17 March), the concert hall of the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg (19 March), the Berlin Philharmonie (26 June), the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg (2 July) and to the Usedom Music Festival (21 September).

### **‘Nordic Pulse’ – music of light and magic**

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic’s **‘Nordic Pulse’** tour of the Baltic States, Finland and Russia in March 2019 features concerts in three European capitals – **Riga**, **Tallinn** and **Helsinki** – as well as Russia’s second largest city, **St. Petersburg**. The programme begins with **Kristjan Järvi**’s *Aurora*, a piece inspired by the Northern Lights, and ends with another *Aurora*, this one the Princess Aurora of **Tchaikovsky**’s ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* who is awakened from her 100-year sleep by a prince’s kiss. Kristjan Järvi has arranged a concert suite from Tchaikovsky’s masterful score, which the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will perform from memory.

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Swiss violinist **David Nebel** will join the orchestra to perform Lithuanian composer **Gediminas Gelgotas**'s Violin Concerto. Nebel, the concerto's dedicatee, gave the world premiere of the work with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi in July 2018 at the Kissinger Sommer festival in Bad Kissingen, Germany. Nebel will also perform **Pēteris Vasks**'s 'Lonely Angel', a 'meditation' for violin and string orchestra that the Latvian composer wrote after experiencing a vision of an angel flying over the world and viewing it with 'grieving eyes, but an almost imperceptible, loving touch'. The 'Nordic Pulse' concert in Helsinki will underline the Baltic Sea Philharmonic's commitment to the environment: one Euro from each ticket purchased will go to the John Nurminen Foundation, a Finnish organisation that promotes projects dedicated to a clean Baltic Sea.

### **'Midnight Sun' – a celebration of nature and Nordic unity**

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's **'Midnight Sun'** tour of Germany in June and July 2019 is inspired by the phenomenon of the sun never setting at night. This magical endless light can be experienced around the time of the summer solstice in the far north of Norway, Finland, Sweden, Russia and other countries that straddle the Arctic Circle. 'It's a phenomenon that only the populations of the north are favoured with,' says Kristjan Järvi. 'It unites Nordic communities, and with this musical programme we are proclaiming a message of Nordic unity.'

The 'Midnight Sun' programme opens with **Rautavaara**'s *Cantus Arcticus*, his concerto for birds and orchestra that features taped birdsong recorded around the Arctic Circle and in the marshlands of Liminka in northern Finland. Norwegian violinist **Mari Samuelson** then joins the orchestra to perform four works: **Kristjan Järvi**'s *Aurora*, in a version for violin and orchestra; **Arvo Pärt**'s *Fratres*, a classic example of his 'tintinnabuli' style; **Pēteris Vasks**'s 'Lonely Angel'; and 'Dona Nobis Pacem' by **Max Richter**. 'Midnight Sun' climaxes with more magical light, this time courtesy of the mythical Firebird of Russian folklore, in the form of **Stravinsky**'s 1945 orchestral version of his great ballet *The Firebird*. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic will perform the entire programme from memory, bringing a thrilling extra dimension to these scores.

The debut of 'Midnight Sun' will be on 26 June at the **Berlin Philharmonie**, where the orchestra first performed in 2014. For the second 'Midnight Sun' performance, in Hamburg on 2 July, the

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Baltic Sea Philharmonic is excited to return to the **Elbphilharmonie**, which was the final venue on the orchestra's acclaimed 'Waterworks' tour of 2017.

### **'Divine Geometry' – connecting past and present, Baroque and minimalism**

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi explore the past and present through two distinct musical eras in **'Divine Geometry'**, a new programme that the orchestra will perform in **Merano**, Italy, and the **Usedom Music Festival** in Peenemünde, Germany, in September 2019.

Contemporary arrangements of music by Baroque masters **Bach** and **Handel** share the programme with American minimalist **Philip Glass's** Piano Concerto No. 3. **Simone Dinnerstein**, the American pianist who premiered this concerto in September 2017, will be the soloist again for these performances with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. The concert at the Usedom Music Festival will also feature the German premiere of a major new work by another great American minimalist, **Steve Reich**: his 'Music for Ensemble and Orchestra' was co-commissioned by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

### **Review of 2018, the orchestra's tenth-anniversary year**

A **'Waterworks'** tour of the **United Arab Emirates** in November 2018 crowned the Baltic Sea Philharmonic's tenth-anniversary year. It was the ensemble's first ever tour outside Europe, and was the first tour on which the orchestra performed all its music from memory. The groundbreaking 'Waterworks' programme, presented in collaboration with **Sunbeam Productions**, combined state-of-the-art lighting, sound design, projection art and music in spectacular fashion, thrilling more than 2,800 listeners at the **Dubai Opera** and the sold-out **Emirates Palace** in Abu Dhabi. The programme included **Handel's** *Water Music* and water-inspired works by **Charles Coleman**, **David Rozenblatt** and **Philip Glass**. The tour also marked the launch of a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development of the United Arab Emirates.

In September the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi toured Italy, Germany and Poland with **'Nordic Pulse'**, a programme celebrating the tenth anniversary of the orchestra and 100 years since the declarations of independence by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Poland. The programme featured music by composers from all five countries, and the orchestra performed Kristjan Järvi's arrangement of **Sibelius's** 'The Tempest' concert suite and the first movement of

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the 'Rock' Symphony by Latvian composer **Imants Kalniņš** entirely from memory. A sold-out concert at the Usedom Music Festival in Peenemünde attracted 1,300 people, including German Chancellor **Angela Merkel**, who in her opening speech praised the 'depth and elegance' of the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and said: 'The members of the orchestra embody international understanding; they use music as a timeless language that can be understood across borders.'

### **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**

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:**

#### **'Nordic Pulse' – March 2019**

Monday, 11 March 2019, 7.00 pm, Palanga (Palanga Concert Hall), Lithuania  
Tuesday, 12 March 2019, 7.00 pm, Riga (Great Guild Concert Hall), Latvia  
Saturday, 16 March 2019, 7.00 pm, Tallinn (Estonia Concert Hall), Estonia  
Sunday, 17 March 2019, 3.00 pm, Helsinki (Finlandia Hall), Finland  
Tuesday, 19 March 2019, 7.00 pm, St Petersburg (Mariinsky Theatre Concert Hall), Russia

Baltic Sea Philharmonic  
Kristjan Järvi  
David Nebel

Kristjan Järvi: *Aurora*  
Pēteris Vasks: *Vientulais Engelis* (Lonely Angel), Meditation for violin and string orchestra  
Gediminas Gelgotas: Violin Concerto  
Peter I. Tchaikovsky: *The Sleeping Beauty* concert suite arranged by Kristjan Järvi – from memory

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## **'Midnight Sun' – June/July 2019**

Wednesday, 26 June 2019, 8.00 pm, Berlin (Philharmonie), Germany – ticket sale to start February 2019  
Tuesday, 2 July 2019, 8.00 pm, Hamburg (Elbphilharmonie), Germany – ticket sale to start February 2019

Baltic Sea Philharmonic  
Kristjan Järvi  
Mari Samuelsen

Einojuhani Rautavaara: *Cantus Arcticus* Op. 61  
Kristjan Järvi: *Aurora* for violin and orchestra  
Arvo Pärt: *Fratres* for violin, percussion and string orchestra  
Pēteris Vasks: *Vientulais Engelis* (Lonely Angel), Meditation for violin and string orchestra  
Max Richter: *Dona Nobis Pacem*  
Igor Stravinsky: *The Firebird* (1945) – from memory

## **'Divine Geometry' – September 2019**

Friday, 20 September 2019, 8.30 pm, Merano (Merano Music Festival), Italy  
Saturday, 21 September 2019, 8.00 pm, Peenemünde (Usedom Music Festival), Germany

Baltic Sea Philharmonic  
Kristjan Järvi  
Simone Dinnerstein

Johann Sebastian Bach / Charles Coleman: *Bach Journey*  
Philip Glass: Piano Concerto No. 3 (2017)  
George Frideric Handel / Kristjan Järvi: *Too hot to Handel* Concerto grosso Suite  
Steve Reich: Music for Ensemble and Orchestra (2018) (Usedom Music Festival only, German premiere)  
(co-commissioned by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra)

## **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 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](http://www.baltic-sea-philharmonic.eu)