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Baltic Sea Philharmonic makes spectacular debut at Pärnu Music Festival in Estonia

- **Orchestra celebrated Philip Glass's 85th birthday and Kristjan Järvi's 50th birthday with sold-out concert featuring music by both composers**
- **Baltic Sea Philharmonic also supported three conducting masterclass concerts with Järvi Academy students**
- **Orchestra to return to Estonia in August for debut at Birgitta Festival in Tallinn, and in September as part of Estonia-focused 'Meresillad' tour**

Berlin 18 July 2022. The **Baltic Sea Philharmonic** made a memorable debut at the **Pärnu Music Festival** in Estonia this month, performing four concerts in as many days. This year's 12th edition of the festival (13–22 July) in the seaside resort town of Pärnu on Estonia's southwestern coast is celebrating the 85th birthday of Estonian conductor **Neeme Järvi**, who conducted the festival's opening concert. The Järvi family have been reunited at the Pärnu Music Festival, with **Paavo Järvi** conducting the Estonian Festival Orchestra and **Kristjan Järvi** conducting the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. In addition to performing a spectacular '**Nordic Amazonia**' concert on 15 July, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic gave three **masterclass concerts** in Laulasmaa, Tallinn and Pärnu, with conducting students from the Järvi Academy.

Celebration and education

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's 'Nordic Amazonia' concert experience at the sold-out Pärnu Concert Hall was a double celebration: On one side, it paid tribute to the American minimalist **Philip Glass** marking his 85th birthday, on the other, it celebrated the 50th birthday of **Kristjan Järvi**, the orchestra's Founding Conductor and Artistic Director. Kristjan Järvi conducted the ensemble of 49 musicians in a programme comprising Glass's *Agua da Amazonia* and pieces by Järvi from his 2020 album *Nordic Escapes*, including *Nebula*, *Aurora*, *In Horizons* and *Kirbu Epiphany*. The orchestra was joined by Swiss violinist **David Nebel**, a frequent collaborator with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, who has recorded Stravinsky's Violin Concerto with the orchestra, and was the soloist in *Nebula* and *Aurora* on the album *Nordic Escapes*. The musicians performed the music in signature Baltic Sea Philharmonic style – completely from memory, and as a single continuous flow of music with no intermission. Atmospheric lighting, sound design and choreography created an electrifying concert experience, with the musicians moving and dancing on stage and finally exiting the hall still dancing amid standing ovations from the excited audience. The concert was livestreamed and



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remains available to watch on [Pärnu Music Festival TV](#).

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic also had an important role at the Pärnu Music Festival supporting the education of young musicians selected for the **Järvi Academy**, which is an inseparable part of the festival. Students on this year's Järvi Academy conducting course had coaching sessions with Neeme Järvi, Paavo Järvi, Kristjan Järvi and Leonid Grin, and took part in three **Masterclass Concerts** with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. The first of these was at the Arvo Pärt Centre in **Laulasmaa** on 12 July, and featured music by the renowned Estonian composer. Two more masterclass concerts with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic took place in **Tallinn** (12 July) and **Pärnu** (14 July), both featuring music by Ravel, Stravinsky and Bartók. All three concerts were livestreamed. The international group of ten young Järvi Academy conductors included Baltic Sea Philharmonic bassoonist **Arseniy Shkaptsov**, who said: 'As I was also playing in the orchestra I constantly had to switch roles between musician and conductor, which was not so easy. As a musician in the orchestra you have to pay attention to the conductor and listen to the other musicians. As a conductor you have to lead, to hear every voice, give ideas to the orchestra, and encourage and inspire people. For me, taking part in the masterclasses was a unique opportunity. I can highly recommend this to every young conductor.'

Returning to Estonia in August and September

Kristjan Järvi and the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will be back in Tallinn on 12 August for the orchestra's debut at the **Birgitta Festival**, a music theatre festival that was first held in 2005. At an open-air concert in the historic ruins of the Pirita Convent, the orchestra will perform Kristjan Järvi's suite from **Sibelius's** masterful theatre music for *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare. In a performance co-created with the orchestra members, the musicians will be performing both music and text, and the concert will be accompanied by special lighting and sound design. As well as the music from *The Tempest*, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will also perform pieces by Kristjan Järvi, including *Midnight Sun*, *Aurora* and *Frozen Tears*.

Tallinn is also the final destination on the Baltic Sea Philharmonic's '**Meresillad**' tour of Germany and Estonia (15–21 September). The tour, the Estonian language title of which translates as 'sea bridges', celebrates Estonia, which as one of the most progressive and



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innovative Nordic countries is a natural fit with the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. The tour programme includes music by Estonian composers past and present, with works by **Eduard Tubin** (1905–1982) and **Jaan Rääts** (1932–2020) as well as **Liis Jürgens**, who is a harpist in the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. The programme will also feature Kristjan Järvi's arrangement of **Tchaikovsky's** *Nutcracker* as a Dramatic Symphony. This completes his trilogy of reworkings of the Russian composer's ballets, after *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*. The 'Meresillad' tour will conclude in Tallinn on 21 September with a concert at the Estonia Concert Hall.

Baltic Sea Philharmonic – a revolution in music and culture

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic takes the orchestral concert experience to a new dimension. Every performance is a voyage of musical discovery, as the musicians perform the entire programme from memory, creating a one-of-a-kind artistic journey. Each concert is a unique spectacle of sound, light, visual art, technology, choreography and playing by heart, and under the electrifying baton of Music Director and Founding Conductor Kristjan Järvi every performance has a special energy that is absolutely infectious. But even more than this, as a community of musicians from ten Nordic countries, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic transcends 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.

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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. The orchestra started life in 2008 as the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic on the joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival. 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's achievements were honoured with the prestigious European Culture Prize by the European Culture Foundation 'Pro Europe'. In 2016 the orchestra was renamed the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. Since then it has toured innovative programmes that throw classical music conventions out of the window and enable audiences and the musicians alike to experience new musical dimensions. After becoming the first orchestra in the world to perform Stravinsky's *The Firebird* from memory, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic is now widely known for its commitment to playing entire programmes by heart. The orchestra's growing discography with Kristjan



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Järvi includes three acclaimed recordings for Sony Classical, the most recent of which was Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*, newly arranged by Järvi as a Dramatic Symphony, and released in November 2020. In addition, Max Richter's album *EXILES*, recorded by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic and Kristjan Järvi, was released in August 2021 on Deutsche Grammophon. In 2022 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will continue its innovative digital project 'Musical Chain', which it launched in 2020 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This unique series of classical remix videos brings musicians from the orchestra together with international artists and creative collaborators. In 2022 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will once again be able to travel thousands of kilometres around Europe, beginning in March with a tour of 'Nordic Swans' to Belgium, Germany and Poland. In July and August the orchestra and Kristjan Järvi will perform special concerts at the Pärnu Music Festival and the Birgitta Festival in Estonia. In the second half of 2022 the Baltic Sea Philharmonic will once again bring the magical power of fairy tales to life. Kristjan Järvi's own reworking of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* showcases the quintessential colour and drama of the great Russian composer's theatre music. The programme including the *Nutcracker* among others will be performed at the Usedom Music Festival and in Tallinn in September as well as on a tour of Germany and Switzerland in December. www.baltic-sea-philharmonic.eu