

# Press Release

## **Baltic Sea Philharmonic thrills Birgitta Festival audience in Tallinn with immersive concert experience ‘The Tempest’**

- **Orchestra’s debut at Estonian music theatre festival was sold out, with around 850 people experiencing a unique multisensory performance**
- **Programme featured Sibelius’s music for Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, arranged by Kristjan Järvi, plus works by Järvi, Sibelius and Liis Jürgens**
- **Concert blended memorised musical performance with choreography, lighting and sound design, and digital projection art**
- **Baltic Sea Philharmonic will return to Tallinn on 21 September for final concert of Estonia-themed ‘Meresillad’ tour**

**Berlin 15 August 2022.** The **Baltic Sea Philharmonic** made a thrilling debut at the **Birgitta Festival**, Estonia’s annual music theatre festival, on 12 August. The orchestra and its conductor **Kristjan Järvi** presented their unique take on **Shakespeare’s *The Tempest***, performing Järvi’s own arrangement of **Sibelius’s** masterful theatre music alongside other works by Sibelius, Järvi and Baltic Sea Philharmonic harpist **Liis Jürgens**. The orchestra performed the entire programme from memory and without intermission. With no music stands on stage, the musicians were free to move and interact with each other, and the dynamic choreography, with players changing places, moving across the stage and among the audience, dancing and play-fighting, all underscored the drama of Shakespeare’s play. The immersive performance also featured atmospheric lighting and sound design, as well as original projection art. The audio-visual concept was done by Sunbeam Productions.

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic collaborated in *The Tempest* with soloist **Mari Meentalo** on the Estonian bagpipes. She also had a striking role in Kristjan Järvi’s *Midnight Sun* and in addition she played the mouth harp in Jürgens’ *The Dream of Tabu-tabu*. The orchestra’s programme included another celebrated work by Sibelius in the shape of his 1895 tone poem *The Swan of Tuonela* from *The Lemminkäinen Suite*, and five other pieces by Kristjan Järvi – *Life Lives Ethereal*, *Frozen Tears*, *Runic Prayer*, *Aurora* and *Ascending Swans*, which is based on the *Song of Praise* from Sibelius’s *Swanwhite Suite*. *Ascending Swans* was released as part of the series of innovative music videos of the orchestra ‘Musical Chain’ ([Youtube link](#)).

The Birgitta Festival concert, which took place in the ruins of the 15th-century Pirita convent in Tallinn, was sold out, with around 850 people in the audience. It came a month after the Baltic Sea Philharmonic made a memorable debut at Estonia’s **Pärnu Music Festival**, performing



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four concerts in as many days. In a 2022 season focused on Estonia, the orchestra will return to Tallinn next month as part of its **'Meresillad'** tour of Germany and Estonia (15–21 September). This tour, the Estonian language title of which translates as 'sea bridges', will celebrate Estonia and also the deep connections between the countries of the Baltic Sea region. The programme includes music by Estonian composers past and present, with works by **Eduard Tubin** (1905–1982), **Jaan Rääts** (1932–2020) and Liis Jürgens. It also features Kristjan Järvi's arrangement of **Tchaikovsky's** *Nutcracker* as a Dramatic Symphony, a work which completes Järvi's trilogy of adaptations of the Russian composer's ballets, after *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*. The 'Meresillad' tour will take the orchestra to **Eisenach** (15 September) and the **Usedom Music Festival** (17 September) before the tour concludes 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.

### **Press contact**

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**'Meresillad' tour, 15–21 September 2022**

**Baltic Sea Philharmonic**  
**Kristjan Järvi**

Thursday 15 May 2022, 7.30pm, State Theatre, Eisenach (Germany)



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Saturday 17 September 2022, 8pm, Usedom Music Festival, Peenemünde, Island of Usedom (Germany)

Wednesday 21 September 2022, 7pm, Estonia Concert Hall, Tallinn (Estonia)

Liis Jürgens: *The Dream of Tabu-tabu*

Eduard Tubin: *Setu Tants* from Estonian Dance Suite

Jaak Rääts: Concerto for Chamber Orchestra No. 1 Op. 16 (excerpts)

Tchaikovsky: *Nutcracker*. Dramatic Symphony arranged by Kristjan Järvi

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