

YOUNG EURO CLASSIC

Press Release, April 14, 2026

Optimism in Sound – International Encounters

Tickets for Young Euro Classic 2026 go on sale on April 16

For the 27th time, Young Euro Classic enriches Berlin's cultural summer: from July 31 to August 16, 2026, the international youth orchestra festival at the Konzerthaus Berlin demonstrates that the future of classical music has long begun. Young musicians from Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia bring their sounds, their stories, their curiosity to Berlin. They demonstrate that music forges connections while preserving uniqueness. For 17 days, 14 youth orchestras, two jazz formations, a young chorus and five ensembles contribute to the multi-faceted programme.

International encounters and new perspectives on the musical repertoire of our time are the focus of the programme. Familiar guests such as the European Union Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Germany, which opens the festival, are juxtaposed with fascinating debutante orchestras – with a special focus on the piano and virtuoso artists at the keyboard and on the conductor's podium.

At the same time, the festival thrives on dialogue and encounters: in special evening concerts with bi- and multi-national orchestras as well as the series "FUTURE NOW *Musical Diaries*", which presents five ensembles in cross-genre and non-traditional concert formats. The festival programme is rounded out by the „NEXT GENERATION Children's Day“, dedicated to the youngest listeners with children's concerts and interactive, hands-on events.

Memorable Encounters

This year, the festival programme includes a special highlight: for the very first time, a chorus presents a full evening programme at Young Euro Classic. The *Boys' Choir of the Estonian National Opera* (Aug. 15) will enchant the audience with the fascinating tradition of Estonian choral music – a very special experience!

Another unforgettable jazz evening beckons when the *Jakob Manz & Karthik Mani Project* takes place on Aug. 11, interweaving Southern Indian music and contemporary jazz in a musical conversation initiated by Young Euro Classic. The project also pays homage to the collaboration between the singer R.A. Ramamani, Karthik Mani's mother, with the alto saxophonist Charlie Mariano in the 1980s. The *Jong Metropole Symphonic Jazz Orchestra* (Aug. 6) under the baton of the Portuguese-American conductor Jacomo Bairos brings the flair and energy of Brazilian and Cuban rhythms to the Konzerthaus Berlin. And Pedro Carneiro and the *Jovem Orquestra Portuguesa* take the audience on a journey deep into the world of Portuguese *saudade* on Aug. 7.

The *European Union Youth Orchestra* (Aug. 3) celebrates an anniversary this year: for 50 years, it has been embodying the European idea – the founding impulse for Young Euro Classic itself. Rachmaninov's Symphony No. 2 and Brahms' Violin Concerto with the soloist María Dueñas, a rising star of the classical music world, will make this concert memorable. The *Angelika Prokopp Summer Academy of the Vienna Philharmonic* (Aug. 14) features the principal harpist of the Vienna Philharmonic, Anneleen Lenaerts, as the soloist, joining the highly talented young orchestral players from all around the world in Reinhold Glière's Harp Concerto.

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Konzerthaus Berlin
July 31-August 16, 2026

PROGRAMME & TICKETS
www.young-euro-classic.de

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Dr. Gabriele Minz

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS
Alban Gerhardt & Mathias Hinke

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The fact that Young Euro Classic is a space for special encounters is also demonstrated by the *Ulster Youth Orchestra* on Aug. 12. Since its founding in 1993 – when the Troubles still gripped Northern Ireland – the youth orchestra has united the most talented young musicians of Northern Ireland, regardless of religious or social background. It is considered one of most important cultural ambassadors of the region, far beyond its borders.

The *Orchestra of the Americas* and the *Penderecki Youth Orchestra* (Aug. 10) take musical cooperation to the next level, presenting a joint programme of European and Latin American works after several days of shared rehearsals in Poland. The concert at Young Euro Classic includes the work “Antrópolis” by the triple Grammy winner Gabriela Ortiz, a German premiere at Young Euro Classic.

After a hiatus of several years, a popular tradition returns to Young Euro Classic: for selected concert evenings, there will be introductory pre-concert talks. Renowned experts offer insights into the musical works of the evening and their history.

The Versatility of the Piano

The season programme also highlights the versatility of the piano. During the opening concert, performed by the *National Youth Orchestra of Germany* on July 31, the audience can enjoy Rachmaninov’s ravishing Piano Concerto No. 3. It is performed by the rising 25-year-old Georgian Giorgi Gigashvili, who joins conductor Aurel Dawidiuk, also only 25, for a very special opening night. The two following concerts of the opening weekend also feature piano concertos: despite the war in its homeland, the *Youth Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine* (Aug. 1) returns with its founder and conductor Oksana Lyniv. Together with pianist Illia Ovcharenko, they perform Johannes Brahms’ Piano Concerto No. 1. One day later, the audience can enjoy Rachmaninov’s “Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini”, played by Joseph Moog, the soloist with the *Orchestre National des Jeunes du Luxembourg* (Aug. 2). The *National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America* (Aug. 4) plays George Gershwin’s Piano Concerto in F with the exceptional soloist Kirill Gerstein – a piece that leans on tradition, while having its own idiom. The same can be said of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1, performed by the *National Youth Philharmonic of Turkey* under its founding conductor Cem Mansur with soloist Özgür Ünalı (Aug. 8).

New piano perspectives come from the concerto “Er Huang” by the composer Chen Qigang, performed by the *Orchestra of the Zhejiang Conservatory of Music* (Aug. 5) and interweaving the sonic world of the Far East with an opulent tonal idiom. The *Youth Symphony Orchestra of Turkmenistan* (Aug. 9) combines music of its Turkmen homeland with contemporary 20th-century sounds in Chary Nurymov’s Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.

Debuts at Young Euro Classic

These orchestras from China and Turkmenistan, as well as the above-mentioned Luxembourgish orchestra, are making their Young Euro Classic debuts. The Italian *AYSO – Accademia Youth Symphony Orchestra* (Aug. 16) presents a programme with an all-Italian bent – with works by Italian composers such as Giuseppe Martucci and Ottorino Respighi and Italian-inspired works by William Walton and Piotr Tchaikovsky. Another debut is the *Slovenian Youth Orchestra* (Aug. 13) which performs not only Beethoven’s Fifth, but is also joined by the Finnish metal bass player Lauri Porra, a great-grandson of Jean Sibelius, in his “Entropy”, a concerto for electric bass and orchestra in its German premiere.

“FUTURE NOW Musical Diaries” – The Festival within the Festival

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For the fourth time, Young Euro Classic's festival-within-the-festival looks beyond the European classical orchestral tradition. Entitled "FUTURE NOW *Musical Diaries*", it presents ensembles from Argentina, Morocco, Vietnam, Tajikistan and the FUTURE NOW ensemble &ñjo ڻ, which makes different musical worlds collide. The concerts take place on the Festival weekends in the late afternoons, before the evening events.

The *Mohiron Ensemble* (Aug. 1) from Dushanbe combines traditional and modern Tajik music with international works on traditional instruments such as the rubab, ney and ghichak. The programme "Lách Tách" (Aug. 2) features an encounter between the Vietnamese vocalists Lương Huệ Trinh and Vũ Thị Thuỳ Linh. Here, electric sounds meet Ả Đào, a musical tradition dating back millennia and recognized as intangible world heritage. From Morocco, the ensemble *JISR // جسر // BRÜCKE* (Aug 8) builds a bridge between Europe and North Africa: traditional Arabo-Andalusian music meets contemporary compositions, with singing, gembri, qanun and percussion creating brilliant sonic colours. The *ni-va Music Ensemble* (Aug. 15) from Buenos Aires creates completely new sounds with synthesizers in a live improvisation. And finally, the FUTURE NOW Ensemble &ñjo ڻ unites musicians from Egypt, Argentina, Germany and Vietnam living in Berlin (Aug. 16). The resulting music is engendered by a shared process, beyond cultural attributions.

NEXT GENERATION – A Children's Day full of Experiments and Adventures

The junior programme NEXT GENERATION, which began in 2019, is Young Euro Classic's contribution to fostering a love for music at the earliest ages: age-appropriate and playful formats introduce young listeners to the world of music. The programme of this year's Children's Day on Sunday, Aug. 9, 2026, is full of experimentation and adventures. *Suli Puschban & die Kapelle der guten Hoffnung* invites children aged 5 and up to rock the main hall. "Mice on the Moon" is a musical space journey presented by the singer and percussionist *Ravi Srinivasan*, inviting children aged 3 and up to dance, clap and drum. The *Music Studio Blockbox* enables curious children aged 5 and up to experience playing in a band and record their own songs. Finally, the *Resounding Museum* offers workshops in which children aged 3 and up can try out various musical instruments.

European Composition Award

The European Composition Award sends a strong message for contemporary music every year: with this prize, the Mayor of Berlin honours composers for their innovative works. Once again, a jury consisting of amateur volunteers chooses the winning composition from this year's world and German premieres.

Acknowledgments

Without the support and trust of the festival's major and long-standing partners, Young Euro Classic could not take place. The presenter thanks the Federal Government, the State of Berlin, the Hauptstadtkulturfonds, the KfW as well as the Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken, the GVL, the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Ströer corporation, the Stiftung am Grunewald, the Karl Schlecht Foundation, the Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben, the festival's media partners, its numerous donors and supporters and its wonderful audience. The festival-within-the-festival "FUTURE NOW *Musical Diaries*" is supported by the Lotto Foundation Berlin.

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For making NEXT GENERATION possible, the Festival thanks the Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

Tomorrow's Musicians Today!

Young Euro Classic. The Festival of the World's Best Youth Orchestras July 31 to August 16, 2026 at the Konzerthaus Berlin

All evening concerts begin at 7 pm, all "FUTURE NOW" concerts at 4:30 pm. Selected evening concerts are preceded by pre-concert talks at the Werner-Otto-Saal at 6 pm.

The detailed Festival programme is available starting on April 16 at: <https://young-euro-classic.de/en/>

Ticket price categories 39 € / 27 € / 16 € (plus advance ticketing fees). Eligible persons may receive a 30% discount; please consult the "Service" page of our website. Tickets can be purchased via the Young Euro Classic website, the Ticket Hotline (+49 / (0)30 / 8410 8909, Monday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm) and at all regular ticket sales points.

Festival within the Festival "FUTURE NOW": all tickets 18 €

Festival Pass for all six FUTURE NOW concerts: 70 €

Festival Pass for a selection of three FUTURE NOW concerts: 45 €

Tickets for the NEXT GENERATION Children's Day: 8 € for children, 10 € for adults

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