

## Concerto Köln

International  
Artists &  
Tours

Passionate performance style and an insatiable appetite for venturing into uncharted territory are the trademarks of Concerto Köln. For over 30 years, the orchestra with the distinctive sound has ranked among the leading historically-informed performance practice ensembles. Maintaining deep roots in Cologne's own musical scene while making regular guest appearances in the great music capitals around the world and at renowned festivals, Concerto Köln is synonymous with outstanding interpretations of early music. Concerto Köln opens the 2019/20 season with the Oratorio “Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno” by Georg Friedrich Handel in a production by Folkert Uhde as part of the newly founded Cologne Festival “Felix! Originalklang in Köln”. With a prominent line-up, Handel remains in the ensemble's spotlight: In November, the Cologne ensemble will perform Handel's “Alexanderfest” and “Ode for St.Cecilia's Day” together with the Chorwerk Ruhr under the direction of Ivor Bolton at the Essen Philharmonie and Hamburg's Laeiszhalle. In January, Concerto Köln will perform “Rodelinda, Regina de Longobardi” in the orchestra pit of the Amsterdam Opera under the baton of Italian baroque specialist, Riccardo Minasi.

Two new CD releases attest to the boundlessly enthusiastic approach to playing exhibited by the Cologne musicians: One recording sheds a new light on Francesco Geminiani's bold compositions. The other features virtuoso Italian Concerti for four solo violins, recorded live by the concertmasters of Concerto Köln who will also present this repertoire on tours in Germany, Austria, Spain, Canada and the USA. Musical partners in the new season include violinist Giuliano Carmignola, with whom the ensemble has worked for many years, soprano Emöke Baráth, concert designer Folkert Uhde and conductors Kent Nagano, Ivor Bolton and Riccardo Minasi. With soprano Julia Lezhneva, the ensemble makes appearances at the Festival de Fénétrange, in St. Petersburg and at the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie.

The multiannual research project, “Wagner Readings” that was launched in the 2017/18 season has received a great deal of international attention. This project, initiated and led by Concerto Köln together with Kent Nagano, will be an ongoing process in the years ahead and involves working through Richard Wagner's Tetralogy, “The Ring of the Nibelung”, from a historical performance perspective. The Kunststiftung NRW, the Strecker-Stiftung, the Province of North-Rhine Westphalia and MBL assist in supporting the ensemble with this artistic-academic project. With a delicate juxtaposition of Wagner, Debussy and Offenbach, Concerto Köln can be heard at the Cologne Philharmonic on October 20, 2019, under the baton of Kent Nagano. The versatile Cologne musicians will mark the Beethoven Anniversary Year 2020 with a series of performances of Beethoven's grandiose Missa solennis together with Kent Nagano.

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Concertmasters Mayumi Hirasaki, Evgeny Sviridov and Shunske Sato together with the Artistic Director, Alexander Scherf, assume the leading roles within the self-governed orchestra. With their choice of projects, the musicians manage to prove time and again that artistic standards and popular success are by no means a contradiction in terms.

Concerto Köln also interprets well-known repertoire in such a refreshing and "remarkable" way (Die Zeit), as if heard for the first time. Since 2008, Concerto Köln maintains close ties with the label, Berlin Classics, but collaborates frequently with other labels as well. By now, the ensemble is able to boast a discography of over 75 recordings, the majority of which are distinguished with awards such as the ECHO Klassik, the Opus Klassik, the Grammy Award, the German Record Critics Award, the MIDEM Classic Award, the Choc du Monde de la Musique, the Diapason d'Année and the Diapason d'Or. Particularly noteworthy are the recordings of the "Brandenburg Concertos" as well as the brilliant, recently-recorded "Four Seasons" with Shunske Sato (both recordings by Berlin Classics). The latter was realized through a close collaboration with the high end specialists, MBL: In the quest to replicate a live experience, the concert was recorded without cuts and in the highest audio quality. A new album with MBL is planned for the 2018/19 season.

As a cultural ambassador of the European Union (2012), the orchestra acts as a musical figurehead for Cologne and its province, North Rhine-Westphalia. To help in the realization of its ideas, the ensemble is able to rely on the support of numerous partners: The Ministry of Science and Culture of the Province of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Kunststiftung NRW and the Goethe Institute help to support the ensemble in e.g. its research and realization of musical projects. The RheinEnergie Foundation for Culture and the Foundations of the Kreissparkasse Köln play significant supporting roles in the extensive and unique musical education project, "Die Hörpiraten". TÜV Rheinland aids in supporting the extraordinary concert format, AfterWorkClassix, in which new programs of rediscovered works are presented in a lounge atmosphere. In addition, a close partnership with the High End Audio specialists, MBL, was established in 2009, enabling the orchestra to intensively examine the sound and playback of its recordings.

*Saison 2019/2020  
(Translation Jennifer Smyth)*

*For any changes please ask Weigold & Böhm!*