

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (SKO)

Since its inception, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (SKO, Stuttgarter Kammerorchester), founded in 1945 by Karl Münchinger, has developed an unmistakable musical culture and has thereby become a role model for numerous other newly-founded ensembles. Under Dennis Russell Davies, the honorary conductor of the SKO, the orchestra made a concerted effort to open itself to contemporary music. With his successor, Michael Hofstetter, the group developed new skills in the area of historical performance.

Today, 75 years after its founding, the SKO sees itself in a dual role as a culture institution. Under the direction of Principle Conductor Thomas Zehetmair, Jörg Widmann as an Artistic Partner, as well as Markus Kosselt as the General and Artistic Director, the group has focused both on maintaining its traditions, as well as setting new musical and programmatic standards for the future. A rich repertoire spanning the centuries from Baroque to commissioned compositions, as well as confident forays across genres with jazz and electronic music in exciting formats and projects bridging the gap to the audience make this musical body one of the most adept of its kind. The SKO maintains close ties to Stuttgart and the group's home in the region through concerts, cooperation arrangements and projects, and thrills audiences around the world as a musical ambassador at tournaments and on tour. Its comprehensive discography boasts top-quality soloists from the ranks of the ensemble and selected programs.

The orchestra presents itself as "SKO pure" in its basic arrangement with 17 strings, but also symphonically. For 2021, first-rate artists such as Kristian Bezuidenhout, Arabella Steinbacher and Okka von der Damerau have joined the group as guests. Tour concerts at the leading European concert halls, including the Elbe Philharmonic in Hamburg, the Cologne Philharmonic or the Concert House in Vienna appear on the list of upcoming dates.

During the SKO's own "Great Moments" concert series, genres are gleefully broken through and programmatic experiments undertaken. 2021 brings with it a sort of musical redemption as Nirvana meets Henry Purcell; the Bach expert Henning Möller investigated the mathematical thought experiments of the great German composer; the premier performances of two commissioned compositions from the Jazz violinists Adam Bałdych and Adriana Hölszky are also on the calendar.

In the constantly shifting area of digitalization, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is continuously discovering new spaces for creativity. Since 2018, innovative projects have arisen here using virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence and hologram concerts which broaden the classical foundation of the group and offer the audience new artistic experiences.

With its musical communication program "SKOhr-Labor", the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra has been developing participative formats for children and youth from all backgrounds since 2015. Through tailor-made programs, the SKO lives up to its social responsibilities and prepares the way for the future. For example, the "Jail Opera" was developed with young offenders at the juvenile detention center Adelsheim, for which the SKO was awarded the prize „The Power of the Arts“. Performances are planned for 2022.

The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is supported by the state of Baden-Württemberg, the city of Stuttgart and Robert Bosch GmbH, as well as numerous project sponsors, patrons and donors.