

The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra

The Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (SKO), founded in 1945 by Karl Münchinger, has developed an unmistakable sound culture since its inception and has thus become a model for many other subsequently founded ensembles. Under Dennis Russell Davies, the SKO's honorary conductor, the orchestra also intentionally opened up to contemporary music. With his successor Michael Hofstetter, the orchestra further developed its competence in the field of historical performance practice.

Today, 75 years after it was founded, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra stands for the inspiring combination of tradition and pioneering spirit. The SKO maintains close links with Stuttgart and its home region through concerts, collaborations, and projects and inspires audiences all over the world as a musical ambassador on tours and at guest appearances. Its extensive discography, featuring top-class soloists and hand-picked programmes, is a testament to the ensemble's international standing.

The principal conductor is the internationally acclaimed violinist and conductor Thomas Zehetmair. The orchestra's artistic partner is the renowned composer, conductor, and clarinetist Jörg Widmann. Together, the duo's musical leadership provides the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra with fresh impetus to interpret the wide-ranging repertoire from the early baroque to the 21st century, and they also perform as soloists. The orchestra performs both as "SKO pur", with its regular line-up of 17 string players, and as a symphonic line-up. First-class artists such as Heinz Holliger, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Arabella Steinbacher, and Kristian Bezuidenhout will be appearing as guest performers in 2021. Guest performances in the leading concert halls, including Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Tonhalle Zurich, and Konzerthaus Wien, are also on the programme.

The "Sternstunden", the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra's own concert series, transcends genre boundaries and features daring programmatic experiments. Stravinsky's "Apollon musagète" ballet music is combined with works and dance choreographies from the time of Louis XIV. Nirvana meets Purcell. In addition, the world premieres of two commissioned compositions by Adriana Hölszky and jazz violinist Adam Bałdych are among the highlights ahead in 2021.

In the ever-changing field of digitization, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is constantly discovering new creative fields. Since 2018, innovative projects featuring virtual reality, music games, and hologram concerts have been created here, which expand the classical foundation of the orchestra and offer the audience new artistic experiences.

Through its "SKOhr-Labor" music education programme, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra has been developing participatory formats for children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds since 2015. The SKO takes on social responsibility and paves the way for the future through custom projects. At the end of 2021, for example, the programme features a "prison opera" with juvenile offenders from the Adelsheim prison, for which the SKO won the "The Power of the Arts" award from Philip Morris GmbH.

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