

GÜRZENICH ORCHESTER KÖLN

The **Gürzenich Orchestra**, firmly rooted in Cologne but open to the world, stands for ground-breaking interpretations, innovative programmes and a great diversity of events that take place beyond the concert hall. It is one of Germany's leading orchestras in both concert and opera with a unique history.

The orchestra was founded in 1827 by the *Concert-Gesellschaft Köln*, but its history can be traced back to the medieval *Musikpflege* of music in Cologne. Since 1888, the Gürzenich Orchestra has been the orchestra of the City of Cologne. It delights more than 100,000 visitors in about 50 concerts per season in the Cologne Philharmonic Hall. It also performs as the Cologne Opera Orchestra in around 160 performances each season.

Since the 2015/16 season, François-Xavier Roth has been Gürzenich Kapellmeister and General Music Director of the City of Cologne. In this position he joins a glorious line of predecessors: Ferdinand Hiller (1850-1884) or Franz Wüllner (1884-1902), honorary conductor Günter Wand (1946-1974) and Dmitri Kitajenko and, since 1986, the principal conductors Marek Janowski, James Conlon and Markus Stenz.

It is with pride that the Gürzenich Orchestra looks back on its great history. Outstanding works of the Romantic repertoire by Johannes Brahms, Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler were premiered with the Gürzenich-Orchestra. Today, this legacy is an incentive for the orchestra's approximately 130 musicians and its conductors to build bridges to the music of our day: here, too, the Gürzenich Orchestra can point to an impressive list of important premieres.

The Gürzenich Orchestra is an orchestra for everyone, eager to jump right into the center of society – leaving the traditional concert hall behind – and inspire people with its creativity. That, too, is part of its self-conception. To achieve the goal of bringing music into the lives of people in very different situations, the orchestra performs in senior citizens' homes and kindergartens, workshops, concerts for schoolchildren. Offers, such as the family concerts or initiatives such as the Cologne Civic Orchestra that invites everyone to actively participate in a concert with our musicians inspire most diverse target groups for music.

With its GO Plus livestreams, podcasts and videos, the Gürzenich Orchestra is also on the move into the digital space.

Its award-winning CDs enable the world to experience its uniqueness as a cultural ambassador for the city of Cologne.