

## **Press information Wiener Symphoniker**

**As Vienna's cultural ambassador and concert orchestra, the Wiener Symphoniker handles the lion's share of symphonic activity that makes up the musical life of the Austrian capital. The orchestra's activities centre on innovative projects that are associated with the purposeful cultivation of important Viennese musical traditions.**

In October 1900, the newly formed Wiener Concertverein, as it was called back then, gave its first public performance at the Vienna Musikverein with Ferdinand Löwe on the podium. The Wiener Symphoniker has premiered works that are now undisputed staples of the orchestral repertoire, including Anton Bruckner's Ninth Symphony, Arnold Schönberg's Gurre Lieder, Maurice Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, and Franz Schmidt's The Book with Seven Seals. Over the course of its history, conducting greats like Bruno Walter, Richard Strauss, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Oswald Kabasta, George Szell and Hans Knappertsbusch have left an indelible mark on the orchestra.

In later decades, Herbert von Karajan (1950–1960) and Wolfgang Sawallisch (1960–1970) were the Chief Conductors who moulded the sound of the orchestra most significantly. After the brief return of Josef Krips, the position of Chief Conductor was filled by Carlo Maria Giulini and Gennadij Roshdestvensky. Georges Prêtre was Chief Conductor from 1986 to 1991. Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Vladimir Fedoseyev and Fabio Luisi then assumed leadership of the orchestra.

Leonard Bernstein, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Claudio Abbado and Sergiu Celibidache are among the luminaries who have enjoyed notable success as guests on the podium of the Wiener Symphoniker.

The Swiss conductor Philippe Jordan took up the position of Music Director at the beginning of the 2014–15 season, leading the Wiener Symphoniker into a new era. In the process, the orchestra focuses especially on seasonal involvement with major composers, contemporary music, collaboration with Artists in Residence, and spirited activity in music education.

The Wiener Symphoniker appears in more than 150 concerts and operatic performances per season, the vast majority of which take place in Vienna's well known concert venues, the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus. Added to that is a very busy and extensive touring schedule. Since 1946, the Wiener Symphoniker has been the Orchestra in Residence at the Bregenz Festival, where it also plays the majority of operatic and symphonic performances. The orchestra took on a new challenge at the beginning of 2006: That's when the Theater an der Wien became a functioning opera house again, and the orchestra has been responsible for a significant number of productions ever since.

The appearance of the Wiener Symphoniker at the Festival of Joy is kindly supported by Oesterreichische Nationalbank and Münze Österreich AG.