



Osterfestspiele *Salzburg*  
Salzburg *Easter Festival*

23

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## A new direction for the Salzburg Easter Festival in 2023

With his first programme as the Artistic Director of the Salzburg Easter Festival, Nikolaus Bachler is announcing a new path for this festival that is so steeped in tradition. From 2023 onwards, a different top-class orchestra each year will come with its chief conductor to give guest performances in Salzburg, bringing its own unique sound culture to the Easter Festival. The first guest ensemble will be the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, conducted by Andris Nelsons. The focus of the 2023 Easter Festival will be the Leipzig-born composer Richard Wagner, and it will include a new staging of Romeo Castellucci's production of »Tannhäuser« and the world premiere of »Träume« [»Dreams«], by the choreographer Emanuel Gat.

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»The world of Richard Wagner, the most radical innovator in music history, is both a starting point and a laboratory. We shall be exploring his extraordinary view of the world in opera, in concerts, in dance and even in electronic music«, says Nikolaus Bachler. »I am extraordinarily pleased that we will be setting out on this new path in 2023 with Andris Nelsons at the helm of the Gewandhaus Orchestra – the oldest public symphony orchestra in the world, and one of the most remarkable orchestras of our time«.

Andris Nelsons will be responsible for all the concerts and the three opera performances in the Grosses Festspielhaus. He is looking forward »with an extraordinary sense of anticipation« to his residency at the Salzburg Easter Festival: »Wagner and Mendelssohn, Schumann and Bach: the works of these composers have had a lasting impact on the history of our orchestra and have made us the orchestra that we are today«, says the chief conductor of the Gewandhaus. »To share our core repertoire with Salzburg audiences means revealing our innermost selves – and telling the story of where our journey is taking us. Contemporary music also plays an important role in our work. I am therefore especially pleased that a work by the Gewandhaus Composer Sofia Gubaidulina is on our programme«.

»We are especially delighted to be invited as the first orchestra in residence after the reorientation of the Salzburg Easter Festival in 2023, and to be given the opportunity to showcase our individuality in such a many-faceted way. After all, we are the orchestra of the Leipzig Opera, the concert orchestra of the Gewandhaus and the church orchestra of St Thomas's, which means we have for several centuries been cultivating an exceptionally diverse repertoire«, says Andreas Schulz, the Director of the Gewandhaus. »Our programmes for 2023 also hark back to our first appearance at the Easter Festival in 1990, when the Gewandhaus Orchestra stepped in for the opera production of »Fidelio«.

## TANNHÄUSER und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg – A new staging

Andris Nelsons will conduct Richard Wagner's masterpiece in a production by Romeo Castellucci, a true visionary of the theatre. This will be a new staging of the production that premiered at the Bavarian State Opera in 2017. Jonas Kaufmann last appeared at the Easter Festival in »Cavalleria rusticana« / »Pagliacci« in 2015, and will here make his debut in the title role. Marlis Petersen as Elisabeth will be singing her first-ever Wagner role. This German soprano, who has been named the »Singer of the Year« several times, will also be celebrating her debut at the Easter Festival. The quintet of soloists will be completed by Elina Garanča as Venus, Georg Zeppenfeld as the Landgrave Hermann and Christian Gerhaher as Wolfram von Eschenbach. This production will largely follow Wagner's final version of the opera, namely the version that was first performed in Vienna in 1875.

## DREAMS – World premiere

For the first-ever time, dance will feature at the Easter Festival – in the archaic setting of the Felsenreitschule. The French/Israeli choreographer Emanuel Gat will present a work for 14 dancers that is inspired by Richard Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder. Gat will combine the five famous poems with excerpts from Wagner's essay »Art and Revolution« [»Die Kunst und die Revolution«]. »Träume« is a choreographic work that engages with different facets of Wagner's oeuvre. In the first act, excerpts from his revolutionary essay will be juxtaposed with the poems by Mathilde Wesendonck in order to create a kind of textual score in a dialogue between the sexes; it is followed by a second act that unfolds to the music of the five songs«, says Emanuel Gat. This world premiere will be danced by members of the Emanuel Gat Dance Company.

## ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

### Orchestral concert I: Gubaidulina / Bruckner

Sofia Gubaidulina's »Der Zorn Gottes« [»Wrath of God«] was composed for the Salzburg Easter Festival, though the pandemic meant it could not be given its world premiere here. It has meanwhile been acclaimed by critics and audiences alike, and now this mighty orchestral work is finally coming to Salzburg. The Russian composer Gubaidulina has enjoyed a long-standing collaborative relationship with the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and in the last two seasons and next season she is the official »Gewandhaus Composer«. The second half of this concert will feature Anton Bruckner's 7th Symphony, which was given its world premiere by the Gewandhaus Orchestra under Arthur Nikisch on 30 December 1884. This performance finally brought the composer his first-ever resounding success and national recognition.

### Orchestral concert II: Bach / Escaich / Schumann

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, a former chief conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, is regarded as the man who ushered in a lasting renaissance of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. This second symphonic programme of the 2023 Easter Festival will therefore revolve around these two men who have long been focal points in Leipzig's musical life. Mendelssohn Bartholdy arranged Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D major for orchestra and gave its first performance in Leipzig. Robert Schumann's 2nd Symphony in C major was premiered by Mendelssohn Bartholdy at the Gewandhaus in 1846, and is notable for its numerous references to Bach's music. These two works will be placed alongside music of the 21st century: a work for cello and orchestra by the French composer Thierry Escaich, which will here be given its Austrian premiere, with Gautier Capuçon as soloist.

## CHORAL CONCERT: Brahms

In 1869, Johannes Brahms's »German Requiem« was given its first complete performance in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, when the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Chorus gave the world premiere of the final, seven-movement version of this work under the direction of their chief conductor Carl Reinecke. The Bavarian Radio Chorus will sing the work at the 2023 Easter Festival, and will be joined by Julia Kleiter and Christian Gerhaher as soloists.

## WESTBAM MEETS WAGNER

Westbam, one of the most significant electronic artists of our time, will here engage with masterpieces by Richard Wagner to develop a symbiosis of beats and Wagner's greatest works. It is an experiment to mark the beginning of a dialogue with electronic music at the Salzburg Easter Festival.

Westbam is considered a revolutionary of electronic music – his performances at the Berlin Love Parades are legendary – and he is the only musician in his genre to have enjoyed number-one hits as an artist, producer and label owner. In »Westbam meets Wagner« he will unite his passion for both classical and electronic music: »I'm interested in the futuristic Wagner, the man who conceived the artwork of the future, the detonating steam pile driver at the entrance to the storm of steel«, says Westbam. Together with the members of the Mendelssohn Orchestra Academy of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, conducted by Oscar Jockel, Westbam will present his view of Wagner at the Felsenreitschule.

## CHAMBER CONCERTS / LATE NIGHT

*The chamber music concerts and the Late-Night Concert feature ensembles that have emerged from the ranks of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and that bear the name of the Leipzig concert hall »Gewandhaus« as part of their own. Only four ensembles have been granted this distinction: The Gewandhaus Wind Quintet, the Gewandhaus String Quartet and the Gewandhaus Brass Quintet (all of which will perform in Salzburg at Easter 2023), and the Gewandhaus Octet.*

### Chamber concert I

The Gewandhaus Wind Quintet, together with the pianist Kirill Gerstein, will perform classics by Ludwig van Beethoven and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart as well as works by Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler. Eisler was born in Leipzig, studied with Arnold Schoenberg, returned to Europe from his American exile and lived first in Vienna and then in East Berlin, where he remained until his death. Like Eisler, the other composer on this programme was also closely associated with the playwright Bertolt Brecht: Kurt Weill, who composed the opera »Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny« [»Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny«] to a libretto by Brecht, which was given its world premiere in Leipzig in 1930. Excerpts from this opera will be heard here in an arrangement for wind quintet by Christian Muth (it will also be this arrangement's first performance in Austria).

### Chamber concert II

This programme by the Gewandhaus String Quartet also presents two pieces that were given their world premieres in Leipzig: Ludwig van Beethoven's String Quartet in E-flat major, op. 74, received its first verifiable public performance in 1811, played by the Gewandhaus Quartet, while Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's String Quartet in f minor, op. 80, was premiered posthumously on 4 November 1848. It was the last work to be completed by its composer, who died in November 1847, the year in which he wrote it. Also on the programme is Franz Schubert's String Quintet for two violins, viola and two cellos, for which the cellist Gautier Capuçon will join the Gewandhaus musicians as a special guest.

### Late-Night Concert

This programme will be announced at a later date. The Gewandhaus Brass Quintet will be playing.

## NEWS ABOUT TICKET SALES

Tickets will go on open sale two months earlier than in previous years, and will be available as of 3 October 2022.

### A trio for you – Our »Subscription to go«

This is a new, very special offer: a subscription at a special price, available exclusively at the counter of the Ticket Office at Herbert-von-Karajan Platz.

This special cycle with prices reduced by 30% includes:

- Orchestral Concert II (4 April)
- »Tannhäuser« (5 April)
- »Träume« (6 April)

*The »Subscription to go« will be available in two categories as of 3 October 2022. No advance bookings will be possible. A maximum of two subscriptions per person can be purchased, as there is a limited number available.*

### Concessions

U27: As of 3 October 2022, the Easter Festival will be offering an exclusive contingent of heavily discounted tickets for everyone under 27, in collaboration with the Ticket Gretchen App.

Holders of the European Youth Card Austria, students and everyone under the age of 27 can purchase one ticket per performance in category VI upon presentation of a valid ID.

Ö1 Club members will each receive 10% discount for Orchestral Concert II, the Chamber Concerts and »Träume«.

2023 SALZBURG EASTER FESTIVAL  
1 to 10 April 2023  
Andris Nelsons – Gewandhaus Orchestra  
[osterfestspiele.at/2023](https://osterfestspiele.at/2023)