

TONHALLE ORCHESTER ZÜRICH

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2024/25 season: A New Open Air for the City

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The Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich is expanding its collaborations: At the first edition of tonhalleAIR in June 2025, it will not only perform orchestral concerts, but also invite other formations to the Münsterhof stage. Otherwise, the upcoming season will focus on Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson and South African singer Golda Schultz as Focus Artists (Fokus-Künstler*innen) and Icelandic composer Anna Thorvaldsdottir as Creative Chair.

For two days, on 13 and 14 June 2025, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich will perform in Zurich's Münsterhof with the newly founded open-air format tonhalleAIR – both with its own concerts and as host. In sing-along and side-by-side concerts, the Zurich Jazz Orchestra (Zürcher Jazz Orchester), the Zurich Youth Symphony Orchestra (Jugend Sinfonie Orchester Zürich), orchestras and choirs from Superar Suisse and municipal school classes will also perform. The orchestral concerts will be conducted by Music Director Paavo Järvi, with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet as soloist. «We are delighted that this event can take place thanks to the support of the Canton of Zurich's Culture Fund,» says Martin Vollenwyder, President of the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich.

Old and New Co-Operations

tonhalleAIR, which will take place every two years in future, will thus complement the Tonhalle-Orchester's collaborations in recent years and will continue to do so in the 2024/25 season. Under the title «Classic meets art», concerts will once again take place at Hauser and Wirth Zurich and in museums. The series of film symphony concerts (Filmsinfonik) (with the International Film Music Competition in September) will continue, as will the Literature and Music series (Literatur und Musik) conceived in collaboration with the Literaturhaus Zürich. The «Connect» dance project for people with Parkinson's or multiple sclerosis, launched by the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich together with Opernhaus Zürich, the independent performance group The Field and the Dance & Creative Wellness Foundation, will be established following the successful pilot phase. And a new chamber music series for children entitled «Kunterwunderbunt» is being launched in Zurich's community centres (Zürcher Gemeinschaftszentren).

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Focus Artists (Fokus-Künstler*innen) und Creative Chair

Geographically, the concert programme in the 2024/25 season has an Icelandic focus: as a Focus Artist, pianist Víkingur Ólafsson will not only perform the two Brahms concertos, but also the Swiss premiere of a new piano concerto by John Adams. He will also give a recital together with Yuja Wang – a special kind of summit meeting for which the two have chosen just ten concert halls worldwide. Composer Anna Thorvaldsdóttir will come to Zurich as Creative Chair; a total of nine of her works are on the programme, with her orchestral piece «Archora» opening the season. It will be the first time that Paavo Järvi has conducted a work by her: «Her musical language is unmistakably Nordic in a fascinating way and therefore speaks to me directly,» he says. The second Focus Artist is coming to Zurich from a completely different direction: South African soprano Golda Schultz will sing Richard Strauss' «Vier letzten Lieder» and also work on a chamber music programme with orchestral musicians.

25 Years «Right in the middle» («Mittendrin»)

A special project is celebrating its 25th anniversary in November 2024: every year, around 600 second and fifth-graders from the city of Zurich experience classical music under the title «Right in the middle» («Mittendrin»). Orchestra musicians visit them in their classes, they can try out instruments in the Tonhalle Zürich, attend conducting workshops – and work on a concert programme together with the orchestra. «It is very important to us to give children and young people access to classical music,» says Ilona Schmiel, Artistic Director of the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich. «We want them to experience what music can achieve – and what a great orchestra in a fantastic concert hall there is right in their neighbourhood.»

And what else?

The 2024/25 season brings numerous debuts by conductors – including Nathalie Stutzmann, Eva Ollikainen and Tugan Sokhiev – and soloists. The Mahler cycle, which Paavo Järvi and the orchestra opened last season with Symphony No. 5, will continue with performances and recordings of Symphonies Nos. 7 and 1. Another focus is on Shostakovich: Paavo Järvi conducts Symphonies Nos. 6 and 10, while the Jerusalem Quartet launches a two-season cycle of the complete string quartets. Tours will take the orchestra to Spain, the Lucerne Festival and Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, where two concerts will take place. Details of all this and many other highlights can be found in Facts & Figures and in the season programme (see press at tonhalle-orchester.ch).

Translated with DeepL.com

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