



PRESS RELEASE

## OPENING CEREMONIES FOR ELBPILHARMONIE HAMBURG

**The opening ceremonies of the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg will take place on 11 and 12 January 2017. As part of the festivities, German Federal President Joachim Gauck, Mayor of Hamburg Olaf Scholz, Jacques Herzog from Herzog & de Meuron, and General and Artistic Director Christoph Lieben-Seutter will be speaking on the evening of 11 January. This will be followed by the first concert in the Grand Hall played by the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester – the orchestra in residence at the Elbphilharmonie – under the baton of Thomas Hengelbrock together with renowned guest soloists. The programme also features the very first performance of the work commissioned specially for the occasion by Wolfgang Rihm titled »Zum Raum wird hier die Zeit« (Here Time Becomes Space). There will be an encore performance of this concert on the evening of 12 January. Both concerts will be accompanied by a one-of-a-kind light display on the facade of the Elbphilharmonie. In the late afternoon of 12 January, the Recital Hall will also welcome its inaugural performance. Ensemble Resonanz, the ensemble in residence in the Recital Hall of the Elbphilharmonie, has dubbed this opening evening »unknown space«. The evening will include, among others, the first performance of a commissioned work by Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Haas, under the direction of Emilio Pomàrico.**

More than a half million visitors over the past eight weeks since the opening of the concert hall have been fortunate enough to behold the awe-inspiring architecture of the Elbphilharmonie. As a viewing platform open to the public at a height of 37 metres above ground level, the Plaza underscores the character of the Elbphilharmonie as a »meeting point for everyone«, and there is a great amount of interest in the music programme of the Elbphilharmonie. There were nearly 500,000 tickets available for the events in the opening six months, all of which have been sold out for weeks now. The same goes for the very wide-ranging music education programme of the Elbphilharmonie which features 1,500 events.

A total of more than 4,500 guests from Germany and abroad will be taking part in the opening concerts in the Grand Hall and Recital Hall. These guests include Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and numerous other high-ranking guests from the worlds of politics and culture, as well as 1,000 visitors who won tickets to the event. Around 220,000 entrants from 73 countries had entered to win the tickets. On both opening nights, the music will also be available outside the building for all to see and hear. The old Kaispeicher warehouse, the glass facade and the Plaza will become the canvas for a fantastic display of light and colour. The music played in the Grand Hall will be transformed into colours and shapes in real time and then be projected onto the building – allowing the Elbphilharmonie and its unique architecture to shine in all their glory.

Initial reactions from around Germany and from around the world to Hamburg's new musical and cultural centre show that, with the concert hall, Hamburg has been given a new landmark that combines artistic excellence with the utmost in openness and accessibility. It stands as a beacon of the confidence with which the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg looks upon the future. Due to its acoustic properties and its unique form, the Grand Hall – which was designed by architects Herzog



& de Meuron in collaboration with Japanese acoustics expert Yasuhisa Toyota – is set to become one of the greatest concert halls in the world.

The first sketches for the concert hall, with its wavy lines on the warehouse foundation, were first put to paper in 2001 by Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron. In 2003, the Hamburg populace were given their first glimpse of the development plans – and they were thrilled. In 2007, the citizens of Hamburg approved the construction, which then began in April 2007. After many problems in the initial phases, the City of Hamburg concluded an agreement for the complete reorganisation of the project at the end of 2012 with construction company Hochtief. The project has progressed on schedule since then. On 31 October 2016, Hochtief handed over the completed Elbphilharmonie to the City of Hamburg.

**Hamburg Mayor Olaf Scholz:** »The heart of the Elbphilharmonie will begin to beat with the first concert in the Grand Hall. With the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg has an unmistakable symbol of the great importance that art and culture have in a free society. The construction of the Elbphilharmonie is also an invitation to the world to come and visit Hamburg, and to see this extraordinary concert hall and experience the true power of music.«

»I am very much looking forward to the opening concerts and the opening festivities to follow, where we will present – in compact form – a few of the brightest facets of our concert programme, in the Grand Hall as well as the Recital Hall,« says **General and Artistic Director Christoph Lieben-Seutter**. »And I am beyond excited for the future in this concert hall as well as in the Laeishalle. You can't blame the rest of the world if it is just a little bit envious of Hamburg's two great concert halls.«

**Joachim Knuth, NDR Radio Programming Director:** »Our orchestra's residency at the Elbphilharmonie is of great cultural importance even far beyond the borders of northern Germany. By the middle of 2017 alone, the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester is planning 70 concerts which will range across the entire musical spectrum. NDR and its orchestra consider the residency a great honour and a challenge – it is a great motivation to our musicians.«

**Tobias Rempe, Manager of Ensemble Resonanz:** »An amazing challenge awaits the Ensemble Resonanz in the form of the residency at the Elbphilharmonie and, after years of extreme anticipation, our musicians are eager to show that they are up to the task. Through a diverse concert programme, the Ensemble hopes to turn the wonderful chamber music hall into a venue for new musical experiences and resonance with the audience. Being allowed to play in two venues in one city which are as different as their own concert space – the resonanzraum in the St Pauli bunker – and the Elbphilharmonie will generate a lot of creative energy among the musicians and demonstrates what is possible in Hamburg – an enormous opportunity for us.«

#### **Further information**

You can find further information on the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg along with numerous images at [www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/press](http://www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/press).

This link contains recent pictures of the opening festivities for the press as well as a published version of the programme booklet with detailed information on the opening concerts.

You can also witness the opening of the Elbphilharmonie live on television, radio and online. NDR



Fernsehen will be broadcasting the festivities as well as the opening concert live on television. All cultural radio channels of Germany's public-service broadcast organisation ARD will be providing live broadcasts, and plenty of other stations will be joining them. The opening can be seen online, including on the websites of the Elbphilharmonie ([www.elbphilharmonie.com](http://www.elbphilharmonie.com)), NDR ([www.ndr.de](http://www.ndr.de)) and Arte ([www.concert.arte.tv/de](http://www.concert.arte.tv/de)), as well as a 360° live stream at [youtube.de/elbphilharmonieHH](http://youtube.de/elbphilharmonieHH).

#### **Tickets for the Elbphilharmonie**

Tickets for the current season of the Elbphilharmonie are already sold out. If tickets for particular events are still available, the events are listed here: [www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/tickets-available](http://www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/tickets-available).

Announcement of the programme for the 2017/18 season is planned for April 2017.

The Elbphilharmonie newsletter will keep you up to date on new ticket sale dates. Sign up for the newsletter at [www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/newsletter](http://www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/newsletter).

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