



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

Patek Philippe,
Arts Benefactor of
Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay,
is proud to welcome
the Dresden Philharmonic
as part of Esplanade's
Classics series.

patek.com



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

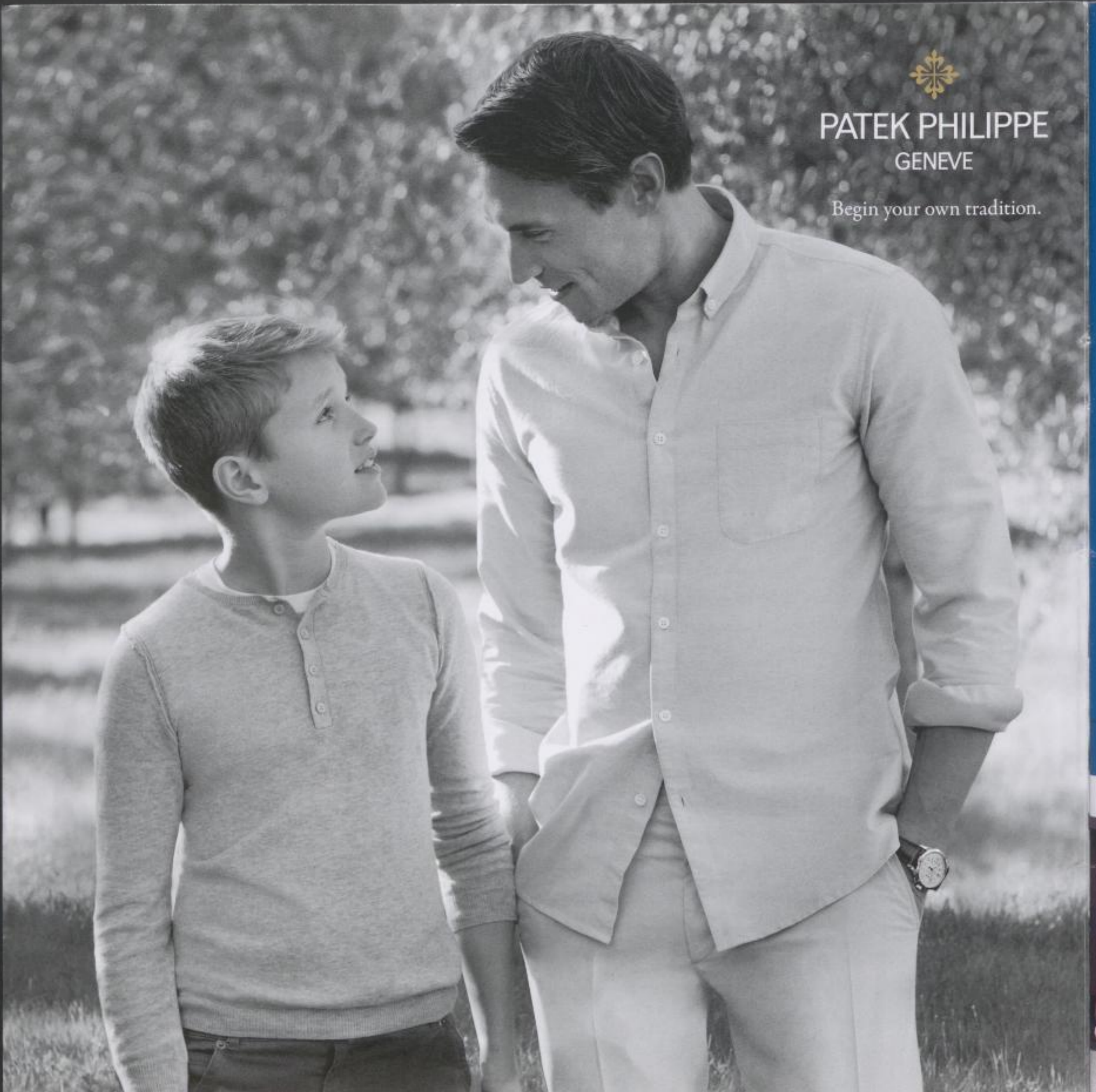


Photo Credit: Marco Borggreve

You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for
the next generation.



Chronograph Ref. 5170R
patek.com



Esplanade
Presents

Classics

DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC

(Germany)

CONDUCTED BY **MICHAEL SANDERLING**

SOLOIST: **DAVID FRAY**, piano

Photo Credit: Marco Borggreve



21 OCT 2016, FRI, 7.30PM
ESPLANADE CONCERT HALL

Arts Benefactor



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE



SLUB
Wir führen Wissen.



Dresdner
Philharmonie

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre and one of the busiest arts centres in the world. Since its opening in 2002, the centre has presented more than 31,000 performances, drawing an audience of 22 million patrons and 84 million visitors. This architectural icon, with its distinctive twin shells, houses world-class performance spaces complemented by a comprehensive range of professional support services. Its two main venues are the 1,600-seat Concert Hall and a Theatre with a capacity of 2,000. In March 2014, Esplanade's Concert Hall was listed as one of the "world's 15 most beautiful concert halls" by Hamburg-based building data company Emporis.

Esplanade's vision is to be a performing arts centre for everyone and it seeks to enrich the lives of its community through the arts. The centre's programming is guided by its mission – to entertain, engage, educate and inspire. Its year-long arts calendar of about 3,000 performances presented by Esplanade, its collaboration partners and hirers cater to diverse audiences in Singapore and span different cultures, languages and genres including dance, music, theatre, visual arts and more. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are non-ticketed. In May 2015, Esplanade was chosen as one of SG Heart Map's 50 special places.

Esplanade regularly presents world-renowned companies and artists that attract international attention and add to Singapore's cultural vibrancy. The centre is also a popular performance home for arts groups and commercial presenters who hire its venues to stage a wide range of programmes. These carefully curated presentations complement Esplanade's own diverse offerings for audiences.

Esplanade works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. The centre supports the creation of artistic content and develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd, which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character.

Visit www.esplanade.com for more information.

Board Members

Mr Lee Tzu Yang (Chairman)
Mr Benson Puah (Chief Executive Officer)
Mrs Rosa Daniel
Ms Kathy Lai
Dr Jennifer Lee
Mrs Christine Ong
Mr Kenny Powar

Mr Ramlee Bin Buang
Ms Saw Phaik Hwa
Mrs Mildred Tan-Sim Beng Mei
Dr Ming Tan
Mrs Valarie Wilson
Mr Yap Chee Meng
Mr Andre Yeap

Esplanade is a proud member of



ARPPAC

Association of Asia Pacific Performing Art Centres
www.aappac.net



All rights reserved.
UEN: 199205206G Information correct at time of print.
Please note that photographs and videos of patrons may be taken at this event for use in our archival and publicity material.

1 Esplanade Drive, Singapore 038981 Tel: 6828 8222 Fax: 6337 3633
Customer Service Hotline: 6828 8377 SISTIC Hotline: 6348 5555

PROGRAMME

Carl Maria von Weber
Overture to Euryanthe, Op. 81

Robert Schumann
Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54

 Intermission 

Johannes Brahms
Symphony no. 2 in D major, Op. 73

1hr 50mins, including 30min intermission

Photo Credit: Marco Borggreve



CEO Message

Dear Audience,

The Dresden Philharmonic is a torchbearer of a musical legacy that stretches back centuries, and we are honoured to have them grace the Esplanade Concert Hall for their Singapore debut.

They are an orchestra of international critical acclaim, and provide a distinctly German flavour to our *Classics* presentations for this year. With Principal Conductor Michael Sanderling at the helm and guest pianist David Fray, their programme tonight will be a rare treat for classical music lovers.

Our gratitude goes out to our Arts Benefactor, Patek Philippe, who continues to be a valued champion of the arts with Esplanade since 2003. It is their generosity and their belief in the importance of the arts that enable us to regularly present exceptional artists from around the world. Patek Philippe's support this time around also meant that music students in Singapore benefitted from experiencing the orchestra's rehearsal live and from attending a masterclass with David Fray.

And now, it is our turn to benefit from an experience with the Dresden Philharmonic.

Welcome to an evening of longstanding Germanic tradition and distinguished musicianship.

Yours Sincerely,



Benson Puah
Chief Executive Officer
The Esplanade Co Ltd



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.



You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for
the next generation.



Ladies' Annual Calendar Ref. 4947R
patek.com

Welcome Message from Patek Philippe



For over 177 years without interruption, Patek Philippe has been perpetuating the tradition of Genevan watchmaking. As the last family-owned independent watch manufacturer in Geneva and the guardian of ancestral Genevan traditions, Patek Philippe is dedicated to the preservation of artisanal skills that have been directly associated with horology for more than four centuries. We believe that the arts inspire creativity and innovation – the very same qualities found in all Patek Philippe timepieces.

Patek Philippe's partnership with Esplanade marks the same spirit of an ongoing commitment to the arts and to support Esplanade's vision to nurture the arts, artistic tradition and to inspire and evoke the love of the arts in the next generation in Singapore.

Patek Philippe is proud to be the Arts Benefactor of Esplanade and this year, we will be bringing in the Dresden Philharmonic, founded in 1870 and led by Principal Conductor Michael Sanderling since 2011. Born in Berlin, Michael Sanderling, son of legendary conductor, Kurt Sanderling, is one of the few who made their way from being orchestra musicians into the top league of conductors. Sanderling's commitment to music education and nurturing young musicians is similar to Patek Philippe's commitment to the arts and resonates with Patek Philippe's belief of looking after the richness of life for the

next generation - "You never actually own a Patek Philippe, you merely look after it for the next generation." This is the fundamental mantra for which the manufacture stands, in particular from its status as a family business that is also being handed down from father to son – with the ambition to keep building the world's finest watches for future generations.

2016 also happens to be the 20th Anniversary of Patek Philippe's "Generations" campaign which has enjoyed continued and unprecedented success after it was first presented. The campaign depicts how generations share time together and expresses how our customers feel about Patek Philippe and how they relate to their watches – quite apart from the material aspect. Like the Dresden Philharmonic, Patek Philippe has never ceased to extend the boundaries of our art. We are delighted to present the Dresden Philharmonic and hope you will be mesmerized by the beautiful pieces played tonight.

Yours Sincerely,

Deepa Chatrath
General Manager South East Asia
Geneva Master Time Marketing LLP/Patek Philippe

Michael Sanderling

Conductor

Michael Sanderling has been Principal Conductor at the Dresden Philharmonic since 2011. As his contract was prolonged, this extremely successful example of co-operation between the conductor and the orchestra will continue until at least 2019.

At the same time, he is a sought-after guest conductor in the world's greatest music centres and directs renowned orchestras such as the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, the Berlin Konzerthausorchester, the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and Germany's great radio orchestras.

Born in Berlin, Michael Sanderling is one of the few who made their way from being orchestra musicians into the top league of conductors. In 1987, aged 20, he became a cello soloist at the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Kurt Masur, then from 1994 to 2006 he filled the same position at the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a soloist, he gave guest performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris, to name but a few, and as a passionate chamber musician he was a member of the Ex Aequo trio for eight years.

It was at a rehearsal of the Berlin Chamber Orchestra in 2000 that he stood at the conductor's desk for the first time – and was on fire. Familiar with a conductor's work from his childhood as the son of legendary Kurt Sanderling, Michael assumed more and more conducting jobs and was appointed principal conductor and art director of the renowned Kammerakademie Potsdam in 2006. He was successful as an opera conductor with Philip Glass *The Fall of the House of Usher* in Potsdam and with a new production of Sergei Prokofiev's "War and Peace" at Cologne Opera. As a cellist and conductor he has made CD recordings of important works from the repertoire of Dvořák, Schumann, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and others. However, it has been a long time since he last performed as a cellist.

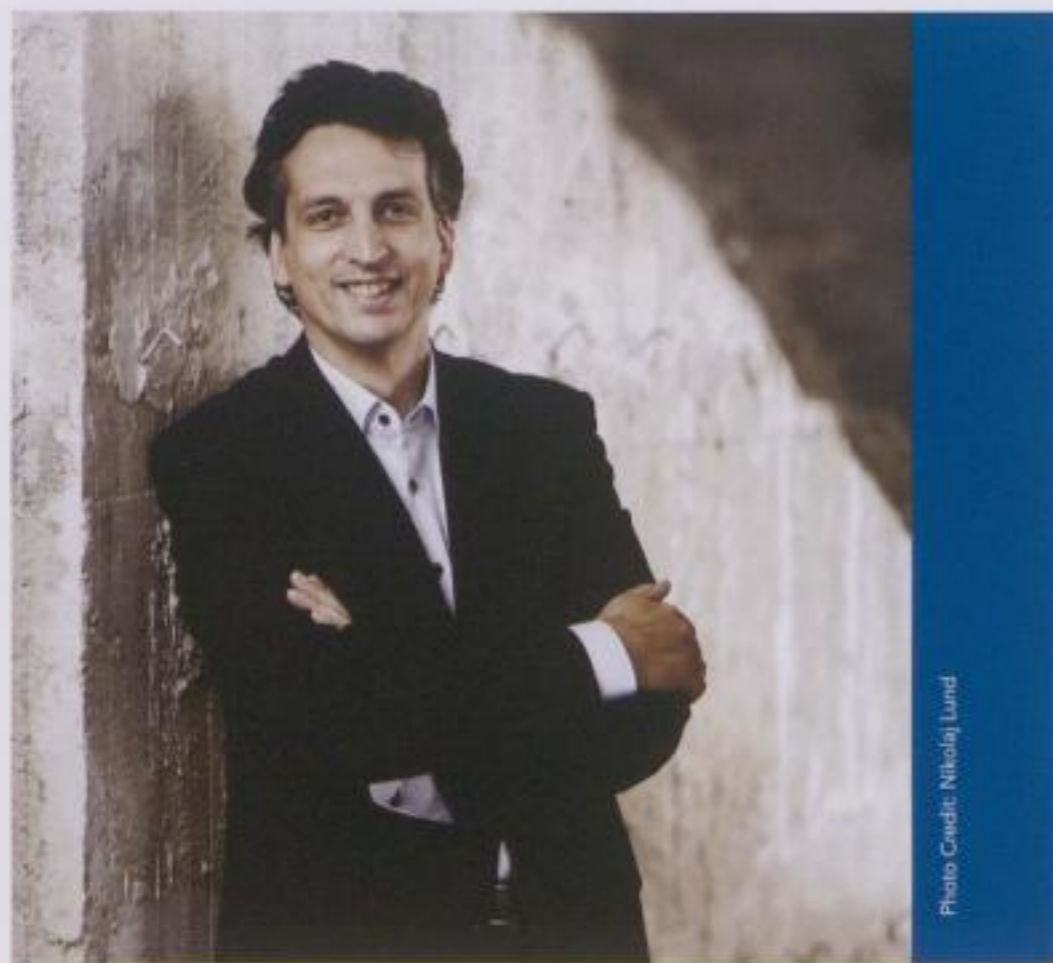


Photo Credit: Nicolaj Lund

What is close to Michael Sanderling's heart is work with young musicians. He teaches as a professor at Frankfurt University for Music and Performing Arts and co-operates regularly with the Bundesjugendorchester, the Jerusalem Weimar Youth Orchestra, the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie and with the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra. From 2003 to 2013 he was associated with the Deutsche Streicherphilharmonie as its principal conductor. Speaking the language of the orchestra musicians, Michael Sanderling is considered to be efficient at rehearsals and yet able to bring out the fire in the musicians during concerts. His musical horizon encompasses Bach and Handel as well as premieres, of which he has conducted many by now, and it is a major concern for him to develop the Dresden Philharmonic's flexibility of sound and style even further.

David Fray

Pianist

© Mondino - Erato / Warner Music



Described as "Perhaps the most inspired, certainly the most original Bach player of his generation," David Fray maintains an active career as a recitalist, soloist and chamber musician worldwide. He has collaborated with leading orchestras and distinguished conductors such as Marin Alsop, Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Christoph Eschenbach, Asher Fisch, Daniele Gatti, Paavo Järvi, Kurt Masur, Riccardo Muti, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Jaap van Zweden. Orchestral highlights have included performances with the Royal Concertgebouw, Bayerische Rundfunk, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, London Philharmonic, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Deutsche Sinfonie Orchester, Salzburg Mozarteum, Orchestra

del Teatro alla Scala, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France and Orchestre de l'Opéra national de Paris, the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Fray starts the 16/17 season with a tour of China accompanied by the Dresden Philharmonic, followed by performances with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, a tour with the Paris Chamber Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Chamber Orchestra, RAI National Symphony and a return engagement with the Philharmonia Orchestra among others. He also gives recitals at the Paris Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Vienna Konzerthaus, Philharmonie Luxembourg, in Stuttgart and Lyon to name a few.

Fray's latest release called *Fantaisie* an album of Schubert's late piano works, was named Gramophone Editor's Choice and has been called "exceptionally thoughtful and touching" and "one of the most appealing listening experiences of present times." Fray records exclusively for Erato/Warner Classics and his first album with works of Bach and Boulez was praised as the "best record of the year" by the *London Times* and *Le Soir*. Fray's other critically acclaimed releases include Mozart piano concerti with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Jaap van Zweden and Bach Partitas Nos. 2 and 6 along with *Toccata in C minor*. In 2008 the TV network ARTE +7 presented a documentary on David Fray directed by the renowned French director Bruno Monsaiegeon. The film *Sing, Swing & Think* was subsequently released on DVD.

Fray holds multiple awards including the prestigious German Echo Klassik Prize for Instrumentalist of the Year and the Young Talent Award from the Ruhr Piano Festival. In 2008 he was named Newcomer of the Year by the BBC Music Magazine. At the 2004 Montreal International Music Competition, he received both the Second Grand Prize and the Prize for the best interpretation of a Canadian work.

David Fray started taking piano lessons at the age of four. He furthered his studies with Jacques Rouvier, who is also featured on his latest Schubert album, at the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris.

David Fray appears by arrangement with IMG artists.



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for
the next generation.



Annual Calendar Ref. 5205G
patek.com



SLUB

Wir führen Wissen.



Dresdner
Philharmonie

DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC

The Dresden Philharmonic is the orchestra of Dresden, the State Capital of Saxony. Since 2011, Michael Sanderling has been its Principal Conductor, following Kurt Masur, Marek Janowski, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and others in this position. The Dresden Philharmonic continues the tradition of the Ratsmusik, the city council's musicians who were first mentioned in the 15th century and had grown into an orchestra by the early 19th century. Since 1870, the year when Dresden got its first great concert hall, the Philharmonic's symphony concerts have been an established part of the city's concert life. The Dresden Philharmonic has ever since been a concert orchestra with regular ventures into the fields of opera concertante and oratorios. It is housed in the Kulturpalast in the middle of the Old Town. The listed shell of the building will be built-in with a new, ultra-modern concert hall by 2017. Until then, the main venues for the Philharmonic's great concerts are the Albertinum and the Schauspielhaus.

The Dresden Philharmonic offers great musical and stylistic variety. On the one hand, the orchestra has been able to retain its very own "German" sound in the Romantic repertoire. On the other hand, it has developed flexibility of sound and style for Baroque and Viennese Classic music as well as for modern works. Renowned conductors and composers headed the orchestra early on, from

Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák and Richard Strauss to Erich Kleiber and Knappertsbusch, Previn and Marriner, to Andris Nelsons and Kristjan Järvi. Premieres remain an important part of the orchestra's programme today. The Dresden Philharmonic joins the Dresden Kreuzchor for the Christmas and Easter Bach performances at the Kreuzkirche. For the great choral symphonies the orchestra can rely on the Dresden Philharmonic Choir as an excellent partner. Another important tradition is chamber music and chamber symphonies performed by the Dresden Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, all of whose musicians come from the Dresden Philharmonic.

Not only does the Dresden Philharmonic enjoy an extraordinarily large number of regular subscribers; with its family programmes, film music concerts etc. it does a great job in introducing classical music to new groups of listeners. Guest performances all over the world are testimony to the high renown the Dresden Philharmonic enjoys in the world of classical music. Another remarkable aspect is the Philharmonic's impressive discography which started to develop in 1937. A new paired cycle of symphonies of Dmitri Shostakovich and Ludwig van Beethoven under the direction of Principal Conductor Michael Sanderling has been recorded. Sony Classical has released the debut album of the fascinating combination of the *Symphonies No. 6* in November 2015.

Tour Presenter: CCM Classic Concerts Management www.ccm-international.de

Musician List

Principal Conductor: Michael Sanderling

First Violin

Prof. Ralf-Carsten Brömsel*
Prof. Wolfgang Hentrich*
Dalia Richter
Christoph Lindemann
Ute Kelemen
Antje Becker
Johannes Groth
Annegret Teichmann
Juliane Ketschau
Thomas Otto
Deborah Jungnickel
Xianbo Wen
Marcus Gottwald
Joseph de Valle
Jan Paul Kussmaul
Serge Verheylewegen**

Second Violin

Markus Gundermann*
Reinhard Krauß* **
Adela-Maria Bratu
Denise Nittel
Reinhard Lohmann
Steffen Gaitzsch
Heiko Seifert
Andreas Hoene
Andrea Dittrich
Constanze Sandmann
Jörn Hettfleisch
Susanne Herberg
Christiane Liskowsky
Markolf Ehrig*

Viola

Christina Biwank*
Matan Gilitchensky*
Beate Müller
Steffen Seifert
Steffen Neumann
Heiko Mürbe
Andreas Kuhlmann
Tilman Baubkus
Harald Hufnagel
Henriette Mittag*
Thomas Oepen*
Martin Vollmer*

Violoncello

Prof. Matthias Bräutigam*
Ulf Prella*
Victor Meister
Petra Willmann
Thomas Bätz
Rainer Promnitz
Clemens Krieger
Alexander Will
Bruno Borralhinho
Dorothea Plans Casal

Double bass

Prof. Benedikt Hübner*
Razvan Popescu*
Tobias Glöckler
Olaf Kindel
Norbert Schuster
Thilo Ermold
Donatus Bergemann
Matthias Bohrig

Flute

Mareike Thrun*
Eric Kirchhoff* **
Claudia Rose
Jérémie Abergel*

Oboe

Johannes Pfeiffer*
Undine Röhner-Stolle*
Prof. Guido Titze
Jens Prasse

Clarinet

Prof. Fabian Dirr*
Jochen Tschabrun* **
Dittmar Trebeljahr
Klaus Jopp

Bassoon

Daniel Bätz*
Christian Hengel*
Robert-Christian Schuster
Mario Hendel

Horn

Michael Schneider*
Tino Bölk* **
Torsten Gottschalk
Johannes Max
Dietrich Schlät
Carsten Gießmann

Trumpet

Christian Höcherl*
Csaba Kelemen
Nikolaus von Tippelskirch

Trombone

Matthias Franz*
Stefan Langbein*
Dietmar Pester
Peter Conrad

Tuba

Prof. Jörg Wachsmuth*

Timpani

Stefan Kittlaus*
Oliver Mills

*Principal

**Substitute

Dresden Philharmonic Administration

Frauke Roth: General Director
Martin Bülow: Production Director
Almut Placke: Orchestra Operations
Alexandra MacDonald: Assistant to the Principal Conductor
Matthias Richter: Stage Crew
Gerd Krems: Stage Crew
Rico Löwe: Stage Crew

The 19th century rejected the precepts of order, harmony and balance to emphasise the individual, the irrational and the imaginative. By the early 1800s, rationalism was going out of fashion. Slowly fading away was the Age of Enlightenment where intellect, reason and science were valued above all. Beethoven started it, with his unkempt hair, his temperament, rudeness, slovenliness, and disregard for society and culture. He was the unruly one in a balanced, ordered society, a "mad genius" whose later music teemed with dissonances—in it he personified heroes, triumph, a violent tempest, and even "fate knocking on the door".¹ People were wary of him, yet they very much admired his music. He was looked up to because he had struggled to overcome deafness and the challenges with it, composing great music for posterity. Beethoven was seen as a hero, a true artist who suffered for his art, and the first great Romantic who, in Berlioz's words, "opened a new world" to them all.² The artist was seen as a visionary, an exceptional figure, an "idol" who, through passions and inner struggles, creates morally uplifting and beautiful works to inspire audiences.

Overture to Euryanthe, Op. 81 by Carl Maria von Weber

Our story today begins in Dresden, just slightly less than 50 years before the Dresden Philharmonic orchestra was formed. **Carl Maria von Weber (1786 – 1826)** had just settled in Dresden after an eventful life of holding various positions around Germany (in which he was poisoned, joined a secret [music] society, charged with embezzlement and corruption, and banished from Wüttemberg). In 1821, he composed *Der Freischütz*, a German opera with spoken dialogue that propelled him to international fame. Soon after, in the wake of

its success, he was commissioned by the director of Vienna's Kärntnertor Theatre to write another opera, in the style of *Der Freischütz*.

Weber wanted to set out in a new direction and take the operatic form even further by eliminating spoken text and having continuous music throughout. He began work on the opera *Euryanthe* in May 1822, selecting a text by Helmina von Chézy, a poor tale of suspected infidelity involving a poison ring and visitors from the spirit world, which he soon came to regret. Schubert, who admired his earlier opera *Der Freischütz*, lamented about the "formlessness" of *Euryanthe*, commenting that "whenever a scrap of tune appears, it is crushed like a mouse in a trap by weighty orchestration."³

Weber arrived in Vienna in early October 1823 to prepare for the premiere of *Euryanthe*, and managed to squeeze in a visit to Beethoven, who was effusive in his praise for *Der Freischütz*. *Euryanthe* was well-received during the premiere, but because of the weakness of the plot, the overture outlived the opera.

The overture that we hear today translates the opera's drama into a work that can stand alone. Weber uses the technique of the "leitmotif"—giving musical motifs or tunes to characters and feelings—that German composer Richard Wagner later fully developed. Opening with a grand, heroic introductory flourish, one then hears the theme from main character Adolar's aria introduced by the winds, which is later elaborated. The second, more lyrical theme played by the strings is taken from yet another of Adolar's songs. Horn calls segue into an eerie passage scored for eight muted violins; this provides a sense of foreboding before the appearance of a ghost. The first theme soon returns, and all is well again.

¹ Schindler, Anton, *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven*, Münster: Aschendorff, 1860.

² Berlioz, Hector, *Memoirs*, trans. Holmes, Rachel and Holmes, Eleanor. London: Macmillan and Co, 1884.

³ Warrack, John, *Carl Maria Von Weber*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.

Weber died in London three years later, where he had gone to oversee the premiere of his newest opera. Wagner had revered Weber's music, and felt that Weber's remains ought to rightfully be in Dresden, where he had settled. In 1844, Wagner arranged to have Weber's remains transported to Dresden, and arranged themes from *Euryanthe* into a funeral march to accompany the cortege through the streets.

Robert Schumann, composer, pianist and music critic, wrote later that the music from *Euryanthe* was "[Weber's] heart's blood, the noblest that he had... [and] a chain of sparkling jewels from beginning to end—all brilliant and flawless."⁴

Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 by Robert Schumann

In 1839, Clara Wieck wrote to her then lover who would later be her husband, "Robert, I really wish you would write a piece for orchestra. Your imagination and your mind are too great for a mere piano. Find out if you can do it, won't you? I happen to be convinced that you must be a second Beethoven."⁵

Clara Wieck was a child prodigy and studied music under her father, Friedrich Wieck. She was, from a young age, considered one of the best pianists of her time, with many composers writing works for her to premiere. **Robert Schumann (1810 – 1856)** came to study music under Friedrich Wieck in 1830, and fell in love with Clara soon after. He was a talented pianist whose performing career was derailed because of a hand injury. He then focused his energies on other things such as composition and music criticism, and co-founded the periodical *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik (New Journal for Music)* with a close friend and Friedrich Wieck.

Schumann asked for Clara's hand in marriage in 1837, but the elder Wieck objected because she was 18 and he was nine years older. After a difficult period of courtship where they had to overcome financial, psychological, familial and legal obstacles, they finally got married in 1840. Over the first three years of their marriage they kept a joint diary, where they wrote in turns about their feelings, music, and artistic encounters.

Schumann wrote in the diary in November 1840 that he "should like to write a Piano Concerto and a Symphony" as he had "composed enough songs".⁶ He then attempted in the subsequent years to write four piano concertos, but they were never completed.

The concerto performed today was the only one that he completed, and it started as a fantasy (*Phantasie*) for piano and orchestra in 1841. Because he could not interest publishers or orchestras in a one-movement work, he later expanded it into a full-length, three-movement concerto that was first premiered with Clara as the soloist in Dresden on 4 December, 1845.

Off the piano goes, in a swirling cascade of chords after the orchestra fires off the first note of the *Allegro affettuoso*, a single unison E. This opening is said to have influenced Grieg to begin his piano concerto the same way, and Grieg in turn, influenced Rachmaninoff. Immediately contrasting the opening is the lyrical passage by the oboe, accompanied by winds. The piano then enters, playing the theme the oboe introduced.

Perhaps Schumann intended for Clara's name to be encoded in the music, albeit spelt in the Italian way "Chiara" or "Chiarina" as he wrote in their diary. As

⁴ Schumann, Robert, "Weber", *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Wolff, Konrad, trans. Rosenfield, Paul. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946.

⁵ Schumann, Robert, Schumann, Clara, *The Complete Correspondence of Clara and Robert Schumann*, ed. Weissweiler, Eva, trans. Fritsch, Hildegard and Crawford, Ronald. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.

⁶ Schumann, Eugenie, and Pidcock, G.D.H, "The Diary of Robert and Clara Schumann" in *Music & Letters*, Vol 15 No. 4, Leipzig: Koehler und Amelang, 1931.

Germans refer to B-natural as H, the oboe theme C/B-natural/A/A, could be taken to spell CHiArA. This theme dominates the entire movement, first turning into an intimate, poetic exchange between the clarinet and piano, perhaps a tribute to Clara's lovely singing tone, then shifting into a quasi-improvisational cadenza, and finally ending with a quick march with off-beat accents.

The impassioned first movement gives way to an *Intermezzo*, an interlude that leads on toward the finale. Beginning with a demure conversation between piano and orchestra, it transforms into a passionate love song teeming with yearning, before the piano and orchestra continue their conversation. An interruption occurs in the winds, announcing the "Chiara" theme first in a major version (C#/B/A/A), then the original, to effect the transition into the finale.

The finale is joyful and energetic, and also abounds in rhythmic ambiguities. The music is swept along by a dancing triple rhythm, although sometimes, with Schumann's manipulation by shifting accents in the score, it can sound as if it is in a duple rhythm instead. A buoyant waltz closes the movement, and previous material is brought back before finally ending off with a long timpani roll and a large orchestral chord.

Although written in a span of four years, the concerto is remarkably coherent in style, with themes from the second and third movement evolving out of those from the first. Clara remarked in her diary about the first movement when it was still the *Phantasie* that "the piano is most skilfully interwoven with the orchestra; it is impossible to think of one without the other".⁷ Indeed, this applies to the entire concerto where the piano is not always the most

important but very much essential as accompanist and chamber musician as well. From the intricate harmonies to the treatment of rhythm found in the third movement, this concerto was later to influence the compositional style of Johannes Brahms.

Symphony no. 2 in D major, Op. 73 by Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897) was a regular visitor at the Schumann household, and a close friend of the Schumanns. He first visited their home in Dusseldorf as a 20 year old, and played some of his own compositions, impressing both Robert and Clara. Robert then propelled Brahms to fame by way of a famous article that praised the young Brahms and predicted great things in his future. All his life, Brahms remained a close friend to the Schumanns, supporting Clara following Robert's suicide attempt and his last few years spent in an asylum.

Just as Schumann put off writing a piano concerto for a long time, Brahms' first symphony took 20 years in genesis because he was overshadowed by Beethoven's legacy. Writing to his friend Hermann Levi in 1870, he lamented, "You have no idea how it is for the likes of us to feel the tread of a giant like him behind us!"⁸

However, as much as he was soul-searching and struggling to compose his first, the second came more easily in a matter of months after, while he was holidaying in the picturesque Austrian village of Pörschach by the Wörthersee in the summer of 1877. After completing the score, he sent it off to his close friends Clara Schumann and Theodore Billroth, a surgeon and amateur musician.

⁷ Nauhaus, Gerd, *The Marriage Diaries of Robert and Clara Schumann*, trans. Ostwald, Peter, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993.

⁸ Bozarth, George, "A Modern of the Moderns": Brahms's First Symphony in New York and Boston', in *Brahms and his World*, ed. Frisch, W., and Karnes, K. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

The beauty of Pörtschach is so apparent in the music that both wrote back with praises for it. Clara Schumann guessed that it would be better received than his stormy first symphony, and Billroth, after playing it, described, "It is all rippling streams, blue sky, sunshine, and cool green shadows. How beautiful it must be at Pörtschach."⁹ Later, in another letter, he wrote, "a happy, cheerful mood permeates the whole work".¹⁰ *The Second Symphony* went down in history as Brahms' "Pastoral" symphony, and was often compared and put as equivalent to *Beethoven's 6th Symphony "Pastoral"*.

Horn calls and woodwind chords open the first movement *Allegro non troppo*, preparing the listener for the green meadows and sunny skies. One tune leads to another, and despite the fair weather, a timpani roll suggests distant thunder and one can almost imagine dark clouds gathering. A tune that resembles Brahms' famous lullaby makes an appearance in fragments, at first cheerful but turns poignant. Later, trombones and tuba whisper a strange, shadowy chorale, as if harbingers of fate. These dark shadows hover throughout the whole symphony, providing an apparent contrast between shadow and light, serenity and melancholy. An acquaintance and conductor Vincenz Lachner lamented about "the gloomy lugubrious tones of the trombones" in the work, to which Brahms' replied, "I am... a severely melancholic person, that black wings [of death] are constantly flapping above us", and that his "little essay about the great "Why" (*Op. 74 motet Warum ist das Licht gegeben, or Wherefore is the light given to them that toil*) casts the necessary shadow on this serene symphony and perhaps accounts for those timpani and trombones."¹¹

Dark and nebulous, the second movement *Adagio non troppo* opens with the cellos stating the theme. It is then passed on to the flute and violins, accompanied by the rest of the orchestra. A prominent feature in this work is the use of counterpoint (two different melodies juxtaposed against each other), not in the baroque way but in Brahms' own harmonic language. The *Allegretto Grazioso* offers a respite from the intensity of the *Adagio*, and here we see Brahms in one of his lighthearted moods. The shortest movement of the symphony, a simple, rustic opening tune from the oboe alternates with more assertive sections in the strings and winds. As with all of his music, he later works the material into a multi-layered narrative with sudden shifts of rhythm and meter that cleverly disguises the main theme.

Although the last movement opens with hushed strings, it soon explodes into an exuberant dance. The principal theme of the finale *Allegro con spirito* is based on two melodies introduced at the beginning of the first movement, although it is disguised by the different meters (three beats in the bar for the first, but two beats a bar in the second). These two melodies are blended together to create an organic melody, steadfast and agile. Here, Brahms uses trombones as heralds of joy overcoming suffering and fate, rounding off the work with a boisterous coda that ends with a dazzling display from the brasses.

Programme notes by Natalie Ng

⁹ Billroth, Theodor, and Johannes Brahms. *Billroth und Brahms in Briefwechsel: Mit Einleitung, Anmerkungen und Bildtafeln*. Berlin and Wien: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1935.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ quoted in Frisch, Walter, *Brahms: The Four Symphonies*. New York: Schirmer Books, Inc., 1996.

Photo credit: Bernie Ng (Sylvie Guillem, Life in Progress, d:ms festival 2015)



E & ME

Your access to
the arts begins
with Esplanade.

Sign up to enjoy:

- Savings of up to 15% on shows at Esplanade
- Exclusive invites to events, workshops and tours
- Discounts and privileges at selected merchants

White card: \$50, Black card: \$500

AT FIRST ART IMITATES LIFE. THEN LIFE WILL IMITATE ART.
THEN LIFE WILL FIND ITS VERY EXISTENCE FROM THE ARTS.

— Dostoyevsky

Save more. Enjoy more.

esplanade.com/e-and-me





Esplanade
Presents

Classics



ROYAL CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA AMSTERDAM

CONDUCTED BY

DANIELE GATTI

23 JAN 2017, MON, 7.30PM
ESPLANADE CONCERT HALL

◆◆◆
“The world’s no.1 orchestra.”

– Gramophone



In Singapore for the first time at the Esplanade Concert Hall, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra is one of the very best orchestras in the world. Its unique sound has been lauded by critics time and time again. Consisting of over 100 musicians from over 25 countries, the orchestra, led by chief conductor Daniele Gatti, presents a selection of Impressionist and Romantic symphonic works.

(2hrs, with a 30min intermission)

\$420[^], \$360[^], \$280, \$220, \$160*, \$80*

*Limited concessions for students, NSFs & senior citizens: \$110, \$50



[^] Save up to 10% with your *EsplanadeMe* card.
Sign up now at www.esplanade.com

PROGRAMME

DEBUSSY

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun
(*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*)

DEBUSSY

The Sea, three symphonic sketches for orchestra
(*La Mer, trois esquisses symphoniques pour orchestra*)

BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 4 in E flat major

BOOK NOW! www.esplanade.com/RCO

Tickets from Esplanade Box Office and SISTIC authorised agents. SISTIC hotline: 6348 5555. Group bookings of 20 or more: 6828 8389. Terms and conditions apply. Latecomers will only be admitted during suitable breaks if any. No admission for infants-in-arm and children below six years old.

Classics

www.esplanade.com

[EsplanadeSG](https://www.facebook.com/EsplanadeSG)

[EsplanadeSingapore](https://www.instagram.com/EsplanadeSingapore)
[#esplanade](https://twitter.com/esplanade)

UEN: 198205208G Information correct at time of print.



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for
the next generation.



Twenty-4® Ref. 4910/11R
patek.com



SLUB
Wir führen Wissen.



Dresdner
Philharmonie



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.



Annual Calendar Ref. 5396R

Patek Philippe/Geneva Master Time Marketing LLP
501 Orchard Road, #16-01/02 Wheelock Place
Singapore 238880
Tel : +65 6801 2100

patek.com