

## **Biography NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra**

As Orchestra in Residence at Hamburg's new landmark Elbphilharmonie, the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra plays a major role in shaping this world-famous concert hall's musical profile through its concert programme. Impressions of the orchestra's home, which opened in 2017, are widespread throughout Germany and internationally due to the concert broadcastings by NDR, amongst others.

In addition to its various concert formats in Hamburg, the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra holds its own concert series in Lübeck and Kiel and plays a leading role at the major festivals in Northern Germany. Its international standing is reflected by regular tours throughout Europe, to North and South America, and Asia. The orchestra also engages in education and promoting young talent.

The NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra was founded in 1945 as the orchestra of the NWDR (Northwest German Radio) as part of the cultural and intellectual rebuilding process after the Second World War. From 1956-2016 it was known as the NDR Symphony Orchestra (NDR Sinfonieorchester). Its first Principal Conductor was Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, who shaped the orchestra's artistic profile for more than a quarter of a century. Later on, a 20-year period of close collaboration with Günter Wand was similarly significant. Wand, who served as Principal Conductor from 1982 and was awarded the role of lifetime Honorary Conductor in 1987, cemented the orchestra's international reputation. Especially his reference interpretations of the symphonies of Brahms and Bruckner became the artistic calling card of the ensemble. Christoph Eschenbach was appointed as Principal Conductor in 1998, and in 2004, Christoph von Dohnányi continued the line of renowned Principal Conductors. From 2011 to 2018, Principal Conductor Thomas Hengelbrock further shaped the history of the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra with his unconventional programme planning and his delight in experimenting with his interpretations.

The young Polish conductor Krzysztof Urbanski has been Principal Guest Conductor since 2015. With the beginning of the 2019/2020 season Alan Gilbert will be the new Principal Conductor.