

Staatskapelle Dresden

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Staatskapelle Dresden

Christian Thielemann, Principal Conductor
Myung-Whun Chung, Principal Guest Conductor
Herbert Blomstedt, Conductor Laureate

Founded by Prince Elector Moritz von Sachsen in 1548, the Staatskapelle Dresden is one of the oldest orchestras in the world and steeped in tradition.

Over its long history many distinguished conductors and internationally celebrated instrumentalists have left their mark on this onetime court orchestra. Previous directors include Heinrich Schütz, Johann Adolf Hasse, Carl Maria von Weber and Richard Wagner, who called the ensemble his »miraculous harp«. The list of prominent conductors of the last 100 years includes Ernst von Schuch, Fritz Reiner, Fritz Busch, Karl Böhm, Joseph Keilberth, Rudolf Kempe, Otmar Suitner, Kurt Sanderling, Herbert Blomstedt and Giuseppe Sinopoli. The orchestra was directed by Bernard Haitink from 2002-2004 and most recently by Fabio Luisi from 2007-2010. Principal Conductor since the 2012 / 2013 season has been Christian Thielemann. In May 2016 the former Principal Conductor Herbert Blomstedt received the title Conductor Laureate. This title has only been awarded to Sir Colin Davis before, who held it from 1990 until his death in April 2013. Myung-Whun Chung has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2012 / 2013 season.

Richard Strauss and the Staatskapelle were closely linked for more than sixty years. Nine of the composer's operas were premiered in Dresden, including »Salome«, »Elektra« and »Der Rosenkavalier«, while Strauss's »Alpine Symphony« was dedicated to the orchestra. Countless other famous composers have written works either dedicated to the orchestra or first performed in Dresden. In 2007 the Staatskapelle reaffirmed this tradition by introducing the annual position of »Capell-Compositeur«. Following on from Hans Werner Henze, Wolfgang Rihm and György Kurtág, Sofia Gubaidulina will hold this title once more for the 2016 / 2017 season. As »Capell-Virtuos« the pianist Daniil Trifonov will take part in various concerts.

The Staatskapelle's home is the Semperoper, where it performs around 260 operas and ballets each season. In addition the ensemble presents another 50 symphonic and chamber concerts in the opera house, as well as playing at various musical events in Dresden's Frauenkirche.

As one of the world's most celebrated and popular symphony orchestras, the Staatskapelle regularly travels abroad to the world's leading classical venues. From 2013 the Staatskapelle Dresden is the resident orchestra of the Salzburg Easter Festival, whose Artistic Director is none other than Christian Thielemann.

The Staatskapelle also does valuable work to support the local region: Since October 2008 it has been the patron orchestra of Meetingpoint Music Messiaen (launched on January 15, 2015) in the double city of Görlitz-Zgorzelec. And in September 2010 the orchestra helped found the International Shostakovich Festival in Gohrisch (Saxon Switzerland), which is the only such annual event dedicated to the music and life of Dmitri Shostakovich.

At a ceremony in Brussels in 2007 the Staatskapelle became the first – and so far only – orchestra to be awarded the »European Prize for the Preservation of the World's Musical Heritage«.

Volkswagen's »Die Gläserne Manufaktur« (The Transparent Factory) has been a partner of the Staatskapelle Dresden since 2008.