

GÜRZENICH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA COLOGNE

"Enchanting diversity of sound", "intimate and sensitive ensemble playing", and "top class", are just some of the many positive press reviews of concerts given by the Gürzenich Chamber Orchestra Cologne (GCO).

The origin of the GCO stems from the Gürzenich Orchester Cologne, the symphony orchestra of Cologne, one of the top orchestras in Germany and Europe, with a rich tradition spanning 150 years. Many oeuvres of important composers such as Johannes Brahms, Gustav Mahler or Richard Strauss were debuted by the Gürzenich Orchester Cologne. It is the residence orchestra at the Cologne Philharmonic Hall and has collaborated with numerous distinguished conductors such as Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Richard Strauss, Hermann Abendroth, Kurt Masur, Günther Wand, Istvan Kertesz, Marek Janowski, James Conlon, or Gustavo Dudamel. The present chief conductor is Francois-Xavier Roth. The orchestra has been awarded a number of important prizes for recordings in recent years.

Just as other famous orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic or the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig members of the Gürzenich Orchester founded a chamber orchestra lead by the concert master. The uniqueness of this ensemble is to perform chamber orchestra repertoire predominantly without conductor. The nucleus of the ensemble is a group of fifteen string players, with Torsten Janicke, the first concertmaster of the Gürzenich Orchester as leader. The musically exquisite and distinctively fascinating interpretations are a result of the specific way of working, i.e. making artistic decisions together.

After its formation, engagements for the GCO followed quickly - from charity concerts for UNICEF or the famous 'Cologne Triennale' with soloists such as Frank Peter Zimmerman, Bernd Glemser, or Michaela Petri.

Since then, the GCO has been playing regularly in the subscription concert series of the Cologne and Essen Philharmony, and makes guest appearances in various cities all over Germany, where the critics praise the spirit and brilliance of its string-players.

Following the great success of its tours to Spain in May 2006 and autumn 2009, the GCO came back for a tour in May 2016. In May 2019 the GCO is invited to the Storioni-festival in Eindhoven NL.