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Sunday, September 29, 2024 | 6 p.m. | Konzerthaus Berlin | Great Hall

120 years of the Berliner Oratorien-Chor (1904-2024)

Anniversary Concert

with Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, Brahms' *Nänie* and Hennig's *Ghasele* (world premiere)

On September 29, 2024, the Berliner Oratorien-Chor (BOC) will set another programmatic highlight in its anniversary year with **Brahms' *Nänie*** and ***Triumphlied***, **Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*** and the **world premiere** of ***Ghasele* by Thomas Hennig** at 6 pm in the Konzerthaus Berlin.

The performers are Vanessa Lindsay Lanch (soprano), Gundula Hintz (alto), Hans-Georg Priese (tenor), Ralf Lukas (bass), the Berliner Oratorien-Chor, Daniel Seeger (organ) and the Konzerthausorchester Berlin. The conductor is Thomas Hennig.

Tickets from 19 euros to 35 euros are available from CTS [Eventim](#), via the [Konzerthaus Berlin](#), at all advance booking offices served by CTS or via www.berliner-oratorienchor.de, tickets@berliner-oratorienchor.de, or the BOC ticket line (030) 547 34 943

Janáček is considered one of the most important Czech choral composers. The ***Glagolitic Mass*** is his late work and also the masterpiece of his choral compositions. First performed in Brno in 1927, it was reworked in significant sections by the composer and published in 1929, after Janáček's death. It is in this 'final' version that the composition, conceived in the old Church Slavonic, is performed.

The concert program also includes Brahms's *Triumphlied* and *Nänie*, a reference to the choir's strong engagement with the choral works of this great German Romantic composer, which the BOC has regularly cultivated in its concert repertoire.

Richard Strauss is another late Romantic composer who has recently played an important role in the choir's concert repertoire and who was clearly inspired by Brahms, particularly when composing for the choir. The BOC premiered *Besinnung*, which was left as a fragment and completed a few years ago, in Berlin in 2021. The *German motet* by Strauss also clearly refers to choral works by Brahms (*Fest- und Gedenksprüche*, *Triumphlied*) and sets the poem from a collection by Friedrich Rückert. Strauss intended to continue the series of settings with the *final song* from the same collection. This plan could no longer be carried out. However, the poem in question is the basis for the ***Ghasele***, which choirmaster Thomas Hennig was commissioned to compose for the choir's birthday.

The BOC's anniversary year closes with the Christmas concert on December 15, 2024 at 4 pm in the Protestant Auenkirche in Wilmersdorf. The program includes "The Birth of Christ" by Heinrich von Herzogenberg.

120 years of the Berliner Oratorien-Chor - one of the oldest amateur choirs in the city

The Berliner Oratorien-Chor (BOC) is one of the oldest amateur choirs in the city, having emerged from the popular theater movement. For 120 years now, it has dedicated itself to choral symphonic music from various eras, alongside well-known and rarely performed works, and in this way always brings interesting finds to the stage.

On 8 February 1904, members of the Berliner Volksbühne founded the "Berliner Volks-Chor" (BVC), which was led by the initiator Dr. Ernst Zander. Contrary to what the name suggests, the focus was not on folk songs but on works for the stage. It was the first choir consisting of working people in Berlin to perform choral symphonies and oratorios with orchestra and soloists. A lack of previous musical knowledge was compensated for by compulsory preparatory courses.

Under the Nazi regime, the choir had to contend with numerous harassments, bans and restrictions. When the BVC's membership of the *Deutscher Arbeiter Sängerbund* was revoked in 1933, the choir joined the *Reichsverband der Gemischten Chöre Deutschlands* in order to be able to continue its work. Dr. Zander had to hand over the leadership to Georg Oskar Schumann in 1937, as he was not a professional musician and was probably not a member of the NSDAP. Due to the war, the choir shrank and performances became rare.

The rebuilding of the BVC after the end of the war was characterized by the then chairman Otto Berndt and (from 1958) by the young conductor Gert Sell. Their work suffered a severe setback when the Berlin Wall was built, as 30 members were suddenly lost and contact with members in the eastern zone was broken off.

The choir was given its current name on October 1, 1974 when it merged with the Berliner Oratorien-Chor, which emerged from the German Philharmonic Choir but only existed from 1945-1963. The BOC now has a firm place in the concert life of the capital and was awarded the Zelter Plaque for the cultivation of choral music in 2004. Thomas Hennig took over as artistic director in 2008. With innovatively designed programmes and high artistic standards, the choir remains a pioneering institution with regular, self-organized performances in the Berlin Philharmonie and the Konzerthaus Berlin, in addition to numerous collaborations and guest appearances. The choir currently consists of 84 active members from a wide range of backgrounds and generations.

Sunday, 29.09.2024 / 6 p.m.

Johannes Brahms: Nänie (1880), Triumphlied, op. 55 (1872)

Thomas Hennig: Ghasele (2024) Commissioned for the BOC's 120th anniversary / **premiere**

Leoš Janáček: Glagolitic Mass (1926)

With: Vanessa Lindsay Lanch (soprano), Gundula Hintz (alto), Hans-Georg Priese (tenor), Ralf Lukas (bass), the Berliner Oratorien-Chor, Daniel Seeger (organ), Konzerthausorchester Berlin.
Conductor: Thomas Hennig

Konzerthaus Berlin, Great Hall, Gendarmenmarkt, 10117 Berlin-Mitte

Admission price: €19-35 (plus ticketing fees if applicable) available at CTS [Eventim](#), [Konzerthaus Berlin](#), at all advance booking offices served by CTS or via www.berliner-oratorienchor.de, tickets@berliner-oratorienchor.de, BOC ticket line (030) 547 34 943. Reduced tickets at €10 are available for schoolchildren, students and wheelchair users on presentation of proof in advance and at the box office.

Outlook: Christmas concert

Sunday, 15.12.2024 / 4 p.m.

Christmas concert: "The Birth of Christ" by Heinrich von Herzogenberg

Berliner Oratorien-Chor, Conductor: Thomas Hennig

Evangelische Auenkirche Berlin, Wilhelmsaue 118a, 10715 Berlin-Wilmersdorf

Reduced advance sale (18 euros) when purchasing anniversary concert tickets by 29.9., regular ticket price 20 euros

Further information on the BOC can be found at <http://berliner-oratorienchor.de/>

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