THE MUNICH BACH ORCHESTRA

After founding the Munich Bach Choir in 1954, Karl Richter also established the Munich Bach Orchestra and soon brought it to international recognition. The orchestra gained fame around the globe, most notably for performing Bach’s works on many major concert tours: on stages from Paris and Moscow to Tokyo and New York.

This busy concert schedule was complemented by numerous recordings of classical masterpieces from Bach to Beethoven (with Deutsche Grammophon) as well as by television and radio productions – some with outstanding singers and instrumentalists of the 1960s and 1970s (including Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Fritz Wunderlich, Edith Mathis, Hertha Töpper, Aurèle Nicolet, and Maurice André). Before the rise of historically informed performance, the Munich Bach Orchestra was nearly unrivaled in its field.

After Richter’s death in 1981, Hanns-Martin Schneidt took over the baton between 1984 and 2001. Among the many renowned guest conductors before and after his era are Leonard Bernstein, Ralf Otto, Peter Schreier, and Bruno Weil. In 2005 conductor, organist and harpsichordist Hansjörg Albrecht became the new Musical Director of the Munich Bach Orchestra, which continues its artistic activities, inspired by historically informed performance practice, and thus keeps contributing to the creative revival of the great Munich Bach tradition. Its notable artistic partners include the Donlon Dance Company, singers such as Marlis Petersen, Simone Kermes and Klaus Florian Vogt as well as instrumental soloists such as Vilde Frang, Alina Pogostkina, Mirijam Contzen, and Adrian Brendel.

Beyond Munich’s major concert venues, the ensemble has been performing at international music festivals (Europäische Wochen Passau, Musikfestspiele Saar, Quedlinburger Musiksommer), at Festspielhaus Baden-Baden and at the Ottobeuren basilica, and touring in Italy several times in recent years. During their two concert tours to Japan in 2014 and 2017, the Munich Bach Orchestra and Hansjörg Albrecht earned standing ovations for their altogether 26 highly acclaimed concerts.

Their recent albums feature recordings of Händel’s organ concertos, Enjott Schneider’s oratorio »Augustinus«, and a new adaptation of Gustav Mahler’s »Lied von der Erde« for four soloists and chamber orchestra. In 2018 the Munich Bach Orchestra performed at Innbruck’s freshly opened Haus der Musik and at the Great Hall of the Mozarteum Foundation – for the first time since the legendary Salzburg performances under Karl Richter. A third Japan tour is scheduled for 2019.

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