The National Youth Orchestra of Germany – Play. Promote. Inspire.

The National Youth Orchestra of Germany is Germany's youngest major orchestra, founded by the German Music Council in 1969 and made up of the country's finest young musicians between the ages of 14 and 19. Distinguished conductors such as Andris Nelsons, Ingo Metzmacher, and Kirill Petrenko have led the orchestra; soloists have included Christian Tetzlaff, Tabea Zimmermann, Wiebke Lehmkuhl, and Sting. Since 2018, Sir Simon Rattle is Conductor Laureate of the National Youth Orchestra: "What an enormous pleasure to meet this wonderful next generation of colleagues! I think the future of orchestras is safe in your hands." (Sir Simon Rattle)

The young musicians qualify by auditioning for a jury of professionals. During intensive work phases, they prepare significant orchestral works from all periods; contemporary music and premieres of new compositions are an integral part of the repertoire. Tours have taken the group throughout Europe, as well as to Asia, Africa, and North and South America. The orchestra has participated in numerous projects of historical significance, including a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift with Kurt Masur in New York. It accompanied the founding of the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, took the "Embrace Our Rivers" project as an opportunity to draw attention to the climate conditions in India and supported musical education in the South African township of Soweto. In 2024, it toured together with the World Youth Choir and the Oscar and Grammy award-winning composer and conductor Tan Dun to celebrate the anniversary of the composition of Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the world premiere of Tan Dun's "Choral Concerto: Nine". With concerts in London, Manchester, Birmingham and Edinburgh in January 2025, the orchestra intensified its youth work with the UK five years after Brexit. In 2026, the orchestra travelled to Georgia and delighted audiences with concerts and an educational programme in Tbilisi and Kutaisi, playing to sold-out venues. The visit forged musical friendships, introduced the young musicians to issues of politics and democracy, and continued in the form of a special collaborative project with Deutsche Welle, during which they were reunited with their Georgian friends for joint concerts at the Beethovenfest in Bonn and Berlin.

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