Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra

Soon after it was **founded by Eugen Jochum in 1949**, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra (BRSO) developed into an internationally renowned orchestra, its fame continuously expanded and fortified by its intensive touring activities. Jochum, who held the position of chief conductor until 1960, was followed by Rafael Kubelík (1961–1979), Sir Colin Davis (1983–1992), Lorin Maazel (1993–2002) and Mariss Jansons (2003–2019). Sir Simon Rattle has been the orchestra's chief conductor since the 2023/2024 season. The orchestra owes its extraordinarily wide ranging repertoire and sound spectrum to the programme preferences of its previous chief conductors as well as to the great flexibility and solid stylistic security of each individual musician.

Fostering new music has an especially long tradition at the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra with appearances in conjunction with the *musica viva* series, founded in 1945 by Karl Amadeus Hartmann, as one of the orchestra's main assignments right from the start. At these concerts, Munich audiences have witnessed legendary performances of contemporary works at which the composers themselves generally stood on the podium of the orchestra. These included Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, Bruno Maderna, Pierre Boulez, Hans Werner Henze, Witold Lutosławski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Cristóbal Halffter, Heinz Holliger, Hans Zender, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Mauricio Kagel, Luciano Berio as well as, more recently, Peter Eötvös.

The Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra was the only German orchestra with which Leonard Bernstein regularly collaborated for many years. In general, **many renowned guest conductors**, such as Clemens Krauss, Erich and Carlos Kleiber, Charles Munch, Ferenc Fricsay, Otto Klemperer, Karl Böhm, Günter Wand, Sir Georg Solti, Carlo Maria Giulini, Kurt Sanderling, Wolfgang Sawallisch and Bernard Haitink have left indelible imprints on the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in the past.

Today, Herbert Blomstedt, Franz Welser-Möst, Daniel Harding, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jakub Hrůša and Iván Fischer number amongst the significant partners who regularly mount the podium in Munich.

For many years, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra has also pursued approaches to early music and now collaborates regularly with such experts in historical performance practice as Giovanni Antonini, Thomas Hengelbrock, Ton Koopman and Reinhard Goebel. Since the 2024/2025 season, the BRSO has significantly intensified its engagement with this repertoire and the special performance practice under the label BRSO barock.

Besides the many performances and recordings in Munich and other cities in the station's broadcast range, extensive **concert tours** are central components in the everyday life of the orchestra today. Tours have taken the orchestra to virtually every European country, to Asia as well as to North and South America. It makes regular appearances in New York's Carnegie Hall and in the renowned concert halls in Japan's musical capitals. From 2004 to 2019, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra was the orchestra in residence at the Easter Festival in Lucerne.

The BRSO has received many awards for its **extensive recording activities**, such as the Grammy, the Diapason d'or and the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. Even before taking up his post, Simon Rattle had already added important milestones to the discography, including works by Mahler and Wagner.

A further special feature is the **encouragement of up-and-coming young musicians**. In conjunction with the ARD International Music Competition, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra accompanies young musicians both in the final rounds as well as in the symphonic closing concert featuring the prize winners. Since October of 2001 the BRSO Academy has been doing valuable educational work by preparing young musicians for their later careers and thus building a solid bridge between education and professional activity. Beyond this, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra maintains an encouragement programme for young people ("BRSO und du" / "BRSO and you") with many activities designed toward the worthy goal of bringing the younger generation closer together with classical music.

In a ranking of the ten best orchestras in the world published by the online magazine *Bachtrack* and compiled by the world's leading music journalists, the BRSO recently came third.

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