

Director Ole Bækhøj on the artistic vision of the opening season in the Pierre Boulez Saal

The opening season of the Pierre Boulez Saal reflects a remarkable range and variety of music – with different styles, genres, and nationalities standing side by side. A concert with the extraordinary Iraqi oud player Naseer Shamma performing his own compositions inspired by Arab musical traditions may be followed by Sir András Schiff hosting a lecture concert of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. An evening of jazz with John McLaughlin can meet Schubert's *Winterreise* with Christian Gerhaher and Daniel Barenboim. An open house featuring a full day of music by Elliott Carter can follow right on the heels of a concert of Persian music with the Ensemble Shiraz. All together, it's a celebration of this new space and of the limitless possibilities of great music.

I believe that the Pierre Boulez Saal has the potential to become a reference against which future chamber music halls are measured – especially considering intimate concerts such as solo recitals or string quartets. We are putting both of these into special focus with a cycle of Schubert's piano sonatas performed by Daniel Barenboim in March and a Quartet Festival over the course of a week in April.

The Pierre Boulez Saal's unique architecture offers an ideal setting for artists and audiences to share musical expression and sensual impression. It's a space that almost symbolically brings people together around a common experience rather than dividing them into performers and listeners. Each of the hall's 683 seats offers an opportunity to enjoy music and music-making up close.

The program lineup includes some of the finest artists of our time – from the worlds of classical Western music, jazz, Arab, or Persian music. But we will also offer insights and learning opportunities through lectures, lecture concerts, and performances of students and faculty of the Barenboim-Said Akademie. The Pierre Boulez Saal is a new destination in Berlin's cultural center for Berliners and visitors alike to explore art and to be enriched by knowledge – a space offering "Music for the Thinking Ear."

In our first full season in 2017–18 we aim to push the boundaries of what you might expect to hear and see in the Pierre Boulez Saal even further and explore more ways of using this new space for music and thoughts.

Ole Bækhøj
Director – Pierre Boulez Saal

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