



Press Release The 2020/21 Season



PIERRE BOULEZ
SAAL

THE 2020/21 SEASON

New perspectives: The Pierre Boulez Saal presents over 150 concerts and events

Ole Bækhøj continues his successful work as **Director of the Pierre Boulez Saal**: The Danish cultural manager has extended his contract by five years, until **September 2025**. Since 2015, he has been the director of the chamber music hall in Berlin, which is part of the Barenboim-Said Akademie and was founded by **Daniel Barenboim**. With well over 500 concerts and a continuous occupancy rate of over 90% since its official opening in 2017, the Pierre Boulez Saal has quickly become a central part of the capital's cultural life and the international classical music scene. Ole Bækhøj: "For me, the Pierre Boulez Saal—with its special history—is a place of utopia. The artistic possibilities here are almost unlimited: Chamber Music, Jazz, Arabic and Persian Music, Discussions, Dance and Exhibitions. At the moment I can't imagine a more exciting task than to realize, together with Daniel Barenboim and my team, many more projects 'for the thinking ear'. One of my goals is to transport the intimacy of this extraordinary concert hall even more strongly into digital media within the coming years".

The fifth season of the Pierre Boulez Hall ends later than usual: with a large-scale concert project to mark the **500th anniversary of the death of Josquin des Prez** taking place at the end of August 2021. As part of **Josquin 500**, the **Tallis Scholars** and their musical director **Peter Phillips** will present all of Josquin's masses on four consecutive days in the Pierre Boulez Saal. The Tallis Scholars have set standards in the interpretation and performance of Josquin's music like no other ensemble in the past decades. Parallel to the first cyclical performance of the works, the ensemble is also completing its recording of the masses after more than 30 years.

The **Boulez Ensemble** was founded as a modular ensemble for the Pierre Boulez Saal, which opened its doors in March 2017. A constantly growing number of musicians, flexible and independent of defined formations, are intensively engaged with music of all epochs, genres and origins. In the 2020/21 season, the ensemble will be led by its founder **Daniel Barenboim**, François-Xavier Roth, Lahav Shani, Matthias Pintscher, Thomas Guggeis and—for the first time—**Antonello Manacorda**. In collaboration with the Philharmonie de Paris, the second **Pierre Boulez Biennale** will take place with concerts in Paris and Berlin.

For people aged six years and older, the 2020/21 season offers three programs in which there is much to discover, especially for young visitors. In addition to a revival of Stravinsky's **The Soldier's Tale**, Jörg Widmann's **Jagdquartett** ("Hunt Quartet") portrays a wild chase, with bows almost literally flying through the air. In **Steps** with Kinan Azmeh, Basheer Asli and students of the Barenboim-Said Akademie, musicians from different generations meet at the Pierre Boulez Saal, challenge each other, and leave their musical comfort zones. The extremely popular series of **"Parental Leave" concerts** is aimed at mothers and fathers who would like to experience music together with their babies (0 to 12 months) in a relaxed setting. In seven morning programs, renowned artists perform excerpts of about 45 minutes from their current repertoire.

The Pierre Boulez Saal continues to be a venue for **interdisciplinary projects**: Director **Ofira Henig** will present a piece developed for the Pierre Boulez Saal together with actor-dramaturge **Khalifa Natour**, in which the boundaries between theatre, music and poetry, but also between different cultures, become blurred. **The Queen Commanded Him to Forget** is based on a novel by Lebanese writer Elias Khoury and also draws inspiration from Brecht's *Mother Courage*, Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* and the tale of Hansel and Gretel. The play explores the role of literature in preserving memory and as part of a process that enshrines forgetting.

The series **Improvised Music and Jazz** continues with numerous highlights: **Louis Sclavis**, **Florian Weber & Ensemble Modern** and **Uri Caine** as well as **Charles Lloyd**, **Jakob Bro** and the **Kinan Azmeh CityBand** will perform in the elliptical chamber music hall. In March 2021, the **Chick Corea Trio** will give two concerts in the Pierre Boulez Saal. Chick Corea's 1968 breakout album *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* announced his arrival as a master of the piano trio. He has spent the decades since constantly finding new trio challenges and adventures. In his most recent formation with Carlitos Del Puerto on bass and Marcus Gilmore on drums, the **legendary jazz pianist** presents new standards, tunes from artists he has long admired, and his own original compositions—many of them classics in their own right.

The **Barenboim-Said Music Center in Ramallah** currently provides a comprehensive musical education for 130 young people. Internationally, the institution is represented by the **Filasteen Young Musicians Orchestra**. For the first time the ensemble comes to the

Pierre Boulez Saal and the Barenboim-Said Akademie, where many of its former members are students today. The **West-Eastern Divan Ensemble**—founded in 2019 for the 20th anniversary of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra by its concertmaster **Michael Barenboim**—unites members of the orchestra in an intimate chamber-music formation. Following its inaugural U.S. tour in the spring of 2020, the ensemble now comes to the Pierre Boulez Saal.

As in previous seasons, the students of the **Barenboim-Said Akademie** will introduce themselves to the audience at the Pierre Boulez Saal. The series of **Akademiekonzerte** is part of their curriculum and will give an insight into repertoire that the students are preparing for their graduation. The concert programs will be announced at short notice.

The new concert series **Lied und Lyrik**, conceived by pianist **Julius Drake**, explores the power of poetry in words and music. On three evenings, works of selected poets, read by renowned actors in the original language, will be set to music by composers from different eras. **Mark Padmore**, **Holger Falk** and **Christoph Prégardien** join Julius Drake in the three performances respectively. The **Schubert Week** is taking place for the third time, once again curated by **Thomas Hampson**. In the festival's opening recital, Hampson, together with his long-time collaborator **Wolfram Rieger**, will contrast Schubert's final songs with lesser-known works by composers he drew inspiration from. In addition, Hampson will again lead public workshops with students of the Lied Academy of the Heidelberger Frühling Festival.

Seven leading ensembles, representing all generations of the international string quartet scene, come together for the Pierre Boulez Saal's **Quartet Week**. Approaching its 50th anniversary, the U.S.-based **Kronos Quartet** will be at the center of activity. The ensemble's influence on the development of the string quartet genre and on the music of our time in general can hardly be overstated, and its peerless artistry will be on display in two full-length concerts and other programs.

With the **Edward W. Said Days**, the Barenboim-Said Akademie annually honors the life and work of the Palestinian literary scholar. The third Edward W. Said Days examine the relationship between culture and power through music, lecture, art, and film. Musical performances will explore the binary of resistance and subservience to power in works of German, Soviet, Italian, and American composers.

In a concert cycle that has been running since the opening of the Pierre Boulez Saal, **Sir Andrés Schiff** presents the major keyboard works by Johann Sebastian Bach. The series now comes to a close: on two consecutive days in April, Schiff performs the six **French Suites**. The **English Suites**, written a few years earlier, will be heard in June.

Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic: A **waiting list** will be available for each event on the Pierre Boulez Saal website, **starting June 10 at 2.00 pm**. As soon as the conditions regarding safety measures and seating capacity have been determined, customers will be notified by e-mail. Customers on the waiting list then have a **24-hour purchase option** for the selected events before they go on sale to the general public.

Discover further Highlights in our **Season Brochure** and on our **Website!**

Downloads:

- Daniel Barenboim | Foto: © Silvia Lelli
- Ole Bækhoj | Foto: © Peter Adamik

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