



The Philharmonia of the Nations – A symbol of peace

In 1995, Justus Frantz founded a unique orchestra: the Philharmonia of the Nations. He formed a multicultural philharmonic orchestra out of highly talented young musicians from over 40 countries and five continents. Chinese play here with Americans and Syrians with Israelis. Their common language is music. Leonard Bernstein's dream of an international, young, professional orchestra was Justus Frantz's incentive to found the Philharmonia of the Nations. Bernstein's credo 'Let's make music as friends' is the motto and the inspiration for the activities and existence of the orchestra.

Musical cosmopolitans: At home all over the world

The Philharmonia is a springboard for the young musicians in many ways, allowing them to gather experience beyond international and cultural borders. The orchestra does not have a permanent location, its home is the music. In the meantime, the musicians have performed over 1000 concerts around the world and will continue to travel around the world - of course, their artistic talent remains with their home countries. In 1996, they accompanied the German Federal President on a state visit to China to provide the official cultural program. Along with many other performances at festivals, the annual DAVIDOFF FRIENDSHIP TOUR is now part of the orchestra's standard program. In 1998, the Philharmonia of the Nations has been the official orchestra for the Operalia, the choral competition organized by star tenor Placido Domingo. Other musical highlights were, for instance, a performance to mark the 'United Nations Day', on October 23rd, 1998, at the invitation of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the United Nations in New York. In 1999, the Philharmonia of the Nations performed during a papal audience in Rome. Following the invitation of the German Federal President Johannes Rau and Mrs. Friede Springer, the Philharmonia of the Nations stood up against rightwing radicalism in Germany with their concert in the cupola of the Berlin Reichstag. In July 2001 the Philharmonia had the Honour to give a private concert for the Pope Johannes Paul II, in his summer residence Castel Gandolfo. Two days after September 11th the orchestra gave a concert in favour of the tragedy's victims, in the church of St. Michael in Hamburg.

In Spring 2002 the Philharmonia of the Nations went on Tour across several Mediterranean Cities, such as Istanbul, Athens, Naples, Catania and many others, with huge acclamation. In winter 2002 a Dutch Tour performed by the orchestra, including a concert in the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Philharmonia has been celebrated by the critics as an orchestra with "Unique precision combined with musical devotion".

In January 2003 the Philharmonia of the Nations had the honour to perform the world's probably most important, influential and well-known work in the history of music at the official ceremony celebrating the nomination of the original manuscript score of Ludwig van Beethoven's 9th Symphony as part of UNESCO's "Memory of the World" register. With the nomination of the Beethoven manuscript score, almost fully in the possession of the Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage, UNESCO is acknowledging the unique significance of the 9th Symphony – the idea of joy and worldwide fraternity that brings people together. An idea that guides the Philharmonia of the Nations.

The DAVIDOFF FRIENDSHIP TOUR – A sign of understanding and mutual respect

In the year 2001, already the seventh big world tour, the DAVIDOFF FRIENDSHIP TOUR, took place. The orchestra performed in Kiev, Budapest, Moscow, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Kuala Lumpur und Beirut. In autumn 2000 the Philharmonia of the Nations returned from an other DAVIDOFF FRIENDSHIP TOUR, where the success of the concerts was not only documented by sold-out concert halls but also by an enthusiastic audience. The former foreign minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, put the basic intention of the orchestra and its founder, Justus Frantz, in a nutshell. He said: "The DAVIDOFF FRIENDSHIP TOUR unites people worldwide in important cultural and social events. This fosters understanding and mutual respect."

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