

AUDI JUGENDCHORAKADEMIE

Talent, a love of music and a willingness to work with the utmost dedication and perseverance – even to the smallest musical detail. That's the secret of the Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy's success. It was a success story right from the start when it was founded in 2007 as part of AUDI AG's commitment to culture. The international awards and unanimous praise it has received from the music and media world alike gives testimony to the quality of this exceptional choir, which has become a fixed part of the annual Audi Summer Concerts. The some 80 young singers are also enthralling audiences outside the region with appearances in Munich, Hamburg, the Berlin Cathedral, Passau and even the Vatican. In 2010, the choir released its first CD, which was recorded with the Bavarian State Orchestra under the direction of Kent Nagano. At about the same time, the choir won its first international music award: a Gold Certificate for exceptional artistic achievement. The Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy was also an award winner during the 2011 "365 Landmarks in the Land of Ideas" competition. The jury of experts praised the Audi young musicians' programme as an outstanding example of the sustainability, courage, commitment and creativity of the people of Germany. In 2012 the Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy was on a celebrated concert tour in Taiwan and Singapore. This year many exciting projects are on the agenda, too. The choir will perform for the third time at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg in May 2020, continuing its outstanding collaboration with Kent Nagano. In addition, the choir is again going to Asia - this time they will perform at Suntory Hall, Tokyo.

The choir meets several times a year over a period of a few days to take part in workshops and rehearsals. Away from everyday distractions, the young singers and staff are able to fully concentrate and dedicate themselves to music. The choir has different projects a year with one or more appearances providing its crowning achievement. Together with a team of music and voice teachers, the choir's director and professor of choral conducting at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Martin Steidler, inspires his group to give its very best. In addition to extensive choir rehearsals, each singer receives individual voice lessons and music instruction. A love of music and singing together with a tremendous amount of talent, and incredible sound and expression is what gives the Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy its special draw. Applications are open to talented young people between the ages of 16 and 27. Currently, the choir is composed of singers from across Germany as well as from neighboring countries.

The landmarks in the choir's short but successful history include the release of a cappella CD in July 2012 and a giant triumph at Berlin with the "Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin", performing Bach's Christmas oratorio at the beginning of 2013. Further they toured to the Emilia Romagna and the Ravello Festival in September 2013.

At the „Vorsprung-Festival“, which Kent Nagano designed as the artistic director for the first time in 2014 as part of the Audi Summer Concerts, the Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy received a predominant role. Under the direction of the renowned conductor the choir performed works by Mahler and Dvorak.

In 2015 the mass for two four-part choirs of Frank Martin in a production by Folkert Uhde, Joseph Haydn's "The Seasons" and Gustav Mahler's Symphony no. 3 were on the agenda. In addition, they recorded their third CD with works by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Strawinsky.

The Choir started a new project in 2016: The ensemble and the „Akademie für Alte Musik“ performed the B Minor Mass by Bach in Berlin and Munich in January 2016. The cooperation with Kent Nagano continued once again very successfully with the project „La passione“ of the Hamburg State Opera: "Nagano could also rely on the perfectly attuned Audi Youth Choir who could muster the required drama at all times almost effortlessly" (Spiegel Online). "Pretty fabulous" (Die Welt) and "impressive ripe" (Neue Zürcher Zeitung) were some of the attributes with which the youth choir has been described by the successful performances.

At the Audi Summer Concerts 2016 the Youth Choir celebrated its premiere as an opera choir at the "Vorsprung-Festival". The choir excelled together with renowned soloists like Christoph Prégardien or Marina Rebeka at the production "Idomeneo", Mozart's favorite opera. Beside the performance with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Youth Choir was seen with the commissioned composition "Four Temperaments", which contrast with Vivaldi's "Four Seasons". The Youth Choir, conducted by Kent Nagano, presented this programme once more successfully in Hamburg in September 2016.

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In January 2017 a big and important event came up: The Youth Choir sang at the opening celebration of the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, another cooperation with Kent Nagano. The world premiere of "ARCHE" by Jörg Widmann turned out to be a huge success, celebrating the choir as "precise and with extraordinary presence" (Abendzeitung).

Together with the exceptional percussionist Simone Rubino, the choir created an extraordinary programme for the Audi Summer Concerts 2017, presenting all the dimensions of percussion as well as the many possibilities of a choir. Together they delighted the audience with contemporary works, including a commissioned composition by the composer Tobias PM Schneid from Neuburg, as well as with Bach's brilliant music. They then presented their multi-faceted programme at the Young Classic Europe Festival in Passau in November 2017. With the idea of "Time and Eternity", the programme with Simone Rubino was recorded on CD in the same year.

On the invitation of Kent Nagano, the singers travelled to Montréal in December 2017, where they performed Camille Saint-Saëns Christmas oratorio, op. 12 together with the Montréal Symphony Orchestra.

The 10th anniversary of the Audi Youth Choir Academy was celebrated with a festive week in Niederalteich in November 2018. The choir sang a cappella works by Brahms, Ešenvalds and Busto. In another concert, the successful cooperation with Akamus was once again demonstrated by the joint re-performance of "The Creation" under the direction of Martin Steidler. Enriched by the soloists Genia Kühmeier, Werner Gura and Matthias Winckler, "The Creation" was also previously part of the Audi Summer Concerts 2018 in Ingolstadt.

In March 2019 the choir travelled to Duisburg to perform Mozart's Requiem with the Duisburg Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Christoph Prégardien. In April the singers performed at the Musiikkitalo Helsinki. In collaboration with the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra and conductor Aapo Häkkinen, J. S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion was performed in two concerts. The singers were convincing with their pure sound as well as with their "enormous homogeneity, the at best very restrained vibrato, the agility and reaction speed, which perfectly matched Bach's instrumental melodic lines" (Passauer Neue Presse).

At the Audi Summer Concerts 2019, the young singers performed on two evenings: Together with Le Cercle de l'Harmonie, they performed "Das Paradies und die Peri" under the direction of Jérémie Rhorer before singing French opera choruses a few days later with Les Siècles under the direction of François-Xavier Roth.

Last December the choir performed together with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin at the Audi Christmas Concert and in the Mozartstadt Augsburg. The programme included Friedrich Handel's "Messiah" (Part 1) as well as C.P.E. Bach's "Magnificat", whereby the choir was awarded "an absolute articulatory precision" and an "immense intonational perfection, an enthusiastic freshness as well as an apparently effortless ease in phrasing" (Donaukurier).

The Audi Young Persons' Choral Academy offers choral work as well as intensive one-to-one lessons and voice training for about 80 singers aged 16 to 27. In the rehearsal periods the young people get professionally prepared for the concerts. Every year interested people can qualify for the choir by taking part in the auditions, which take place in different cities in Germany. At the moment the singers come from all around Germany and Austria as well.

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