

BIOGRAPHY

The **Mahler Chamber Orchestra (MCO)** was founded in 1997 based on the shared vision of being a free and international ensemble, dedicated to creating and sharing exceptional experiences in classical music. With 45 members spanning 20 different countries at its core, the MCO works as a nomadic collective of passionate musicians uniting for specific tours in Europe and across the world. The orchestra is constantly on the move: it has, to date, performed in over 40 countries across five continents. It is governed collectively by its management team and orchestra board; decisions are made democratically with the participation of all musicians.

The MCO's sound is characterized by the chamber music style of ensemble playing among its alert and distinct musical personalities. Its core repertoire, ranging from the Viennese classical and early Romantic periods to contemporary pieces and world premieres, reflects the MCO's agility in crossing musical boundaries.

The orchestra received its most significant artistic impulses from its founding mentor, Claudio Abbado, and from *Conductor Laureate* Daniel Harding. The MCO works closely with a network of *Artistic Partners* who inspire and shape the orchestra in long-term collaborations. Current MCO *Artistic Partners* include pianists Mitsuko Uchida and Leif Ove Andsnes, as well as violinist Pekka Kuusisto and conductor Teodor Currentzis. Concertmaster Matthew Truscott leads and directs the orchestra regularly in chamber orchestra repertoire.

MCO musicians all share a strong desire to continually deepen their engagement with audiences. This has inspired a growing number of offstage musical encounters and projects bringing music, learning and creativity to communities across the globe. *Unboxing Mozart* creates a convergence of music, collaborative performance and urban gaming by inviting audiences to participate in the artistic process through sound boxes. Since 2012, *Feel the Music* has opened the world of music to deaf and hard-of-hearing children through interactive workshops in schools and concert halls. MCO musicians are equally committed to sharing their passion and expertise with the next generation of musicians: since 2009, they have, through the MCO Academy, worked with young musicians to provide a high quality orchestral experience and a unique platform for networking and international exchange.

The Mahler Chamber Orchestra's current flagship projects include a five-year partnership with Mitsuko Uchida, centred on Mozart's piano concertos and featured in residencies at Salzburg's Mozartwoche, London's Southbank Centre and New York's Carnegie Hall; *Mozart Momentum 1785/1786*, a four-year performing and recording project with Leif Ove Andsnes – the MCO's first *Artistic Partner* – examining two remarkable years of Mozart's life; and an exploration of musical styles and concert formats with Pekka Kuusisto. A focus on symphonic repertoire characterizes the MCO's longstanding collaboration with conductor Daniele Gatti. After its celebrated premiere of *Written on Skin* at Festival d'Aix-en-Provence in 2012 under the baton of composer George Benjamin, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra continues to regularly bring his works to stages around the world.

The Mahler Chamber Orchestra's 2019/20 season begins with appearances at Spain's major summer music festivals – Donostia-San Sebastián Musical Fortnight and Festival Internacional Santander under Jakub Hrůša, as well as Festival Castell Peralada under Gustavo Dudamel – before the orchestra returns to its annual Lucerne Festival residency. Further fall highlights include a tour to Romania, Germany and Austria with Mitsuko Uchida, the launch of a three-year residency at Beijing Music Festival, an exploration of concert formats with Pekka Kuusisto at the MCO Academy and the continuation of a survey of Central European musical traditions with François-Xavier Roth.