

Press Release



At the Rosengarten in Mannheim:

European Gala Concert — Symphony Orchestra and Big Band Jazz Sharing the Stage for the First Time

- **Works by Hensel-Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Ellington, and Porter**
- **Soloist: SINFONIMA Prize Winner Hannes Wagner (Violin)**
- **World Premiere: “Home” by Thomas Siffling**
- **80 Young Musicians from 17 European Nations**

Mannheim, September 7, 2026 — The closing highlight of the “Young European Music Festival 2026” presented by the European Youth Orchestra Academy (EYOA) is the European Gala Concert on Saturday, September 12, at the Musensaal of the Rosengarten in Mannheim. Around 80 young musicians from 17 European nations will perform a program that unites symphonic music, a solo concerto, and jazz — with a world premiere as its crowning moment. For the first time, the Young European Symphony Orchestra and the Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra will share the same stage.

The evening opens with the European Anthem — the theme from Beethoven’s 9th Symphony — performed by the Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra: a deliberate statement that this Gala Concert is not merely a musical event, but a commitment to European values. The Big Band Jazz Orchestra then performs its full program under Thomas Siffling, taking audiences through the stylistic breadth of jazz — from the Swing era to Latin-influenced sounds. The symphony orchestra under Jan-Paul Reinke follows with the centerpiece of the evening: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35, performed by soloist Hannes Wagner. After intermission, the world premiere of Siffling’s composition “Home” provides the most personal accent of the night — a lyrical, melancholic work on the theme of home, written expressly for this festival. The evening closes with

Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93 — his most charming, witty, and perhaps most underrated symphony.

The Soloist: Hannes Wagner and the 1678 Violin

Hannes Wagner, prize winner of the SINFONIMA Competition of Mannheimer Versicherung, will perform the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto on a violin by Giovanni Battista Rogeri dating from 1678 — an instrument made available to him by the SINFONIMA Foundation. Wagner began playing violin at the age of four and is currently completing his studies at the Hochschule für Musik Trossingen. He gained experience as concertmaster in the World Youth Orchestra and the Baden-Württemberg State Youth Orchestra, and has worked with conductors including Paavo Järvi and Christoph Altstaedt.

The Conductors

Jan-Paul Reinke, director of the Stamitz Orchestra and the Mannheim Municipal Youth Orchestra, leads the Young European Symphony Orchestra through the symphonic portion of the evening. Thomas Siffling — renowned jazz trumpeter, composer, and artistic director of the Ella & Louis Jazz Club in Mannheim — conducts the Big Band Jazz Orchestra. With the world premiere of "Home," he adds a milestone to his ongoing album project: the composition will later appear on his forthcoming quartet album.

Festival Context: Young European Music Festival 2026

The Gala Concert serves as the grand finale of the "Young European Music Festival 2026," presented by EYOA from September 9 to 12 across the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region. Nearly 80 highly talented young musicians from 17 European countries come to Mannheim to spend ten days preparing concert performances under professional guidance, taking part in workshops and cultural tours, and forging connections that last a lifetime. In total, seven concerts will take place at five venues: Schwetzingen, Mannheim, Ludwigshafen, Heidelberg, and Worms.

About the European Youth Orchestra Academy (EYOA)

www.eyoa.de Funded exclusively through private donations, the European Youth Orchestra Academy (EYOA) is a European youth music project based in Mannheim — inspired by the city's historic legacy as home of the Mannheim School. Since 2019, it has brought together approximately 50 to 80 young musicians between the ages of 14 and 18 from across Europe each year, totaling around 400 young people to date. Its mission is to foster cultural exchange, musical excellence, and European values across national borders. Participants are selected by an international jury and develop an ambitious concert program during a ten-day intensive bootcamp, which is then performed at public venues throughout the region. EYOA stands as a musical statement for peace, diversity, collaboration, and European solidarity. It is supported by private members, donors, and regional partners, as well as the European Parliament, the City of Mannheim, and the Europa-Union Baden-Württemberg as official patrons. Additional key supporters include Jeunesses Musicales, the

German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Rotary Club Mannheim-Rhein-Neckar, and the SINFONIMA Foundation. Further information at www.eyoa.de

www.eyoa.de Further information, tickets, donations, press photos: www.eyoa.de

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“Young European Music Festival 2026”:

All Concert Dates and Venues 2026 — Overview

Ticket service: www.eyoa.de

Datum	Veranstaltung	Ensemble	Ort
Mi, 09.09.26	Kammerkonzert	Young European Chamber Music (Streichquartett und Bläserquintett)	Mozartsaal, Schloss Schwetzingen, 20:00 Uhr Eintritt: 29.- €
Do, 10.09.26	Familienkonzert Generalprobe	Young European Symphony Orchestra	Börsensaal, Städt. Musikschule, Mannheim, 15:30 Uhr Eintritt frei
Do, 10.09.26	Jazz Concert	Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra	Gesellschaftshaus der BASF, Ludwigshafen, 20:00 Uhr Eintritt: 29.- €
Do, 10.09.26	Kammerkonzert	Young European Chamber Music (Streichquartett und Bläserquintett)	Kunsthalle Mannheim, 20:00 Uhr Eintritt: 29.- €
Fr, 11.09.26	Sinfoniekonzert	Young European Symphony Orchestra	Brahms-Saal, Städtische Musikschule Heidelberg, 19:30 Uhr Eintritt: 38.- €
Fr, 11.09.26	Jazz Concert (Open Air)	Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra	Andrea Stift, Worms, 20:00 Uhr Eintritt: 29.- €
Sa, 12.09.26	European Gala Concert	Young European Symphony Orchestra & Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra	Musensaal Rosengarten Mannheim, 20:00 Uhr Eintritt: ab 45.- €

“Young European Music Festival 2026”:

Complete Concert Program Overview

Ticket service: www.eyoa.de

Young European Symphony Orchestra

Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn – Concert Overture in C major

Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky – Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35

(Soloist: Hannes Wagner, 2026 SINFONIMA Competition Prize Winner)

Ludwig van Beethoven – Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93

Conductor: Jan-Paul Reinke

Young European Chamber Music

String Quartet

Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga – String Quartet No. 1

Dmitri Shostakovich – String Quartet No. 8, Op. 110

Director: Anne Erdmann-Schiegnitz

Wind Quintet

Jacques Ibert – 3 Pièces Brèves

Jean Françaix – Wind Quintet No. 1

Director: Bernd Ballreich

Young European Big Band Jazz Orchestra

Thomas Siffling (Anticipation, Arr. Chris Perschke), Sammy Nestico (Basie – Straight Ahead), Peter Herbolzheimer (Blues in Latin), Duke Ellington (C Jam Blues, Arr. Dave Wolpe), Gordon Goodwin (Count Bubba), Neal Hefti (Cute), Cole Porter (Easy to Love, Arr. Sammy Nestico), Duke Ellington (In a Mellow Tone, Arr. Oliver Nelson), Sammy Nestico (It's Oh, So Nice), Neal Hefti (Li'l Darlin'), Jason Marshall (Ms. Garvey, Ms. Garvey!!), Michel Camilo (One More Once, Arr. Ed Gent / D. Bacon), Chick Corea (Spain, Arr. Paul Jennings), W. C. Handy (St. Louis Blues, Arr. Sammy Nestico), Sammy Nestico (The Queen Bee), Bert Joris (Walking Tiptoe)

Director: Thomas Siffling