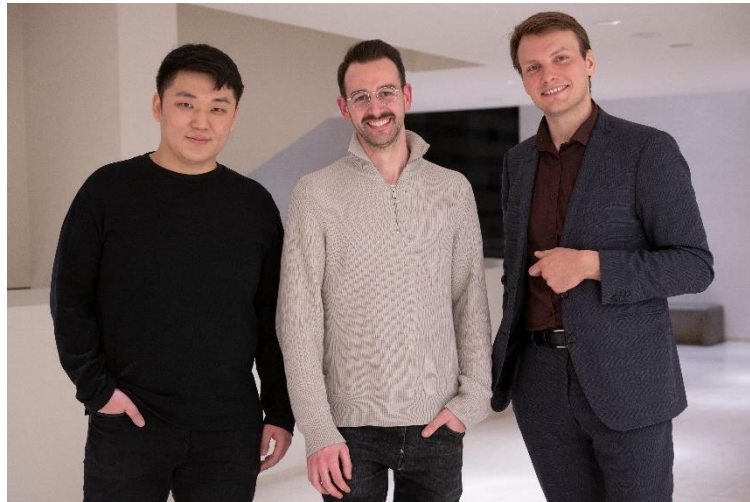


The 2023 Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award

The Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award is an initiative of the Salzburg Festival in cooperation with the Eliente and Herbert von Karajan Institute.



The three finalists of the 2023 Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award: Hankyeol Yoon, Tobias Wögerer and Vitali Alekseenok (left to right) © SF/Jan Friese

The three finalists have been chosen:

Vitali Alekseenok (Belarus), Tobias Wögerer (Austria) and Hankyeol Yoon (South Korea)

Vitali Alekseenok, Tobias Wögerer and Hankyeol Yoon – these three finalists will conduct during the Award Concert Weekend during the 2023 Salzburg Festival, competing for the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award.

Striving for musical quality is a mission enshrined in the founding manifesto of the Salzburg Festival; since that founding, the greatest conductors and leading artists of their times have always worked in Salzburg. Herbert von Karajan, whose name the award bears, was one of them; Manfred Honeck is another.

The Road to the Final Round

Chaired by Manfred Honeck, Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the jury chose eight candidates (two female, six male) in February as semi-finalists for the eleventh edition of the renowned competition, which takes place every two years. This year, there were 323 applications from 54 nations.

The Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Awards is open to conductors from all over the world who are older than 21 and younger than 35.



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The eight young conductors assembled at the Haus für Mozart to prove their abilities. Observed by the jury, they rehearsed works by Arnold Schoenberg, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert with the *œnm. österreichisches ensemble fuer neue musik* and the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg.

At the end of the Rehearsal Day and after extensive discussion, the jury decided that Vitali Alekseenok, Tobias Wögerer and Hankyeol Yoon would be invited to the Award Concert Weekend as finalists.

YCA Award Concert Weekend

During the 2023 Salzburg Festival, the three candidates will conduct one concert each, lasting approximately one hour at the Main Auditorium of the Mozarteum Foundation. The concert programmes will be chosen by the candidates in collaboration with the Salzburg Festival; a special focus is on contemporary compositions. Participants in the Young Singers Project will sing one Mozart concert aria in each of the concerts.

After the last of the three concerts, the jury will present the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award to the winner in a public award ceremony.

Concert 1: Tobias Wögerer – 4 August, 3 pm

Concert 2: Vitali Alekseenok – 5 August, 3 pm

Concert 3: Hankyeol Yoon – 6 August, 3 pm



Vitali Alekseenok, Tobias Wögerer and Hankyeol Yoon (left to right)

YCA Award Winner's Concert

In addition to the cash award of 15,000 Euro, the winner will have the opportunity to conduct a concert with the ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna and a rising young soloist as part of the 2024 Salzburg Festival.

This award winner's concert will be recorded and released on CD as part of the *Salzburg Festival Documents* edition.



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Former winners of the Young Conductors Award have used this opportunity as the launchpad of international careers, which have frequently brought them back to the Salzburg Festival: examples include Lorenzo Viotti and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla as well as Maxime Pascal, the first of the YCA winners to conduct a staged opera production in Salzburg in 2023.

Finalists' Statements

Vitali Alekseenok

“Participating in this competition is a great honour and joy for me. In my youth, I read about Herbert von Karajan’s formative years in Salzburg in his biography. I particularly remember the sentence which supposedly took Karajan from the piano to conducting: ‘The sound of the piano will not be enough for you.’ That inspired me when considering my own conducting career. To me, being a conductor means continuously developing, transforming the interpretation of great works into communication between musicians and audience.”

Tobias Wögerer

“For me personally, the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award is one of the most prestigious awards for conductors. The opportunity to conduct one’s own concert as a finalist at the Salzburg Festival is absolutely unique. The high-carat jury demonstrates that this competition demands the utmost artistic quality from its candidates. To me, the most intriguing and fascinating thing about conducting is the diversity and complexity of this profession. The best feeling for me as a conductor is when I manage to establish a connection with the orchestra which inspires both sides mutually.”

Hankyeol Yoon

“I have been following this competition, named after one of the most important conductors in history and presented by one of the most renowned festivals in the world, for a long time. For many years it has been my goal to participate some day; the list of candidates and winners illustrates its high standard. A conductor should have many different abilities, including that to convince the musicians of his ideas by striking a good balance of technical skills and a friendly, respectful attitude.”

Biographies of the Finalists

VITALI ALEKSEENOK



The Belarusian conductor **Vitali Alekseenok** came to international attention when he won the Arturo Toscanini International Conducting Competition in Parma in 2021. In addition to the first prize, he received the audience award and the prize for the best performance of a Verdi opera. Since 2022/23 he has been kapellmeister at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf. Among the highlights of his guest conducting engagements are his recent debuts at the Teatro

alla Scala, the Beethovenfest in Bonn, the Rossini Festival in Pesaro and at the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele.

As an opera conductor, he led Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at the National Opera of Ukraine in 2021 – the first performance of the work in Ukraine since the country's independence –, worked at the Bavarian State Opera, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Graz Opera, the Odessa National Opera, the Deutsches Nationaltheater in Weimar and the Varna State Opera. In December 2022 he was appointed chief guest conductor of the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania.

As the founder and artistic director of the ensemble paradigm, he dedicates himself to works by composers of the 20th and 21st centuries.

He has conducted orchestras such as the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the MDR Symphony Orchestra, the Staatskapelle Weimar, the Lucerne Festival Strings, the Orchestra del Teatro Comunale di Bologna and the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra. He has assisted Lothar Zagrosek, Oksana Lyniv and Maurizio Barbacini and has participated in master courses with Bernard Haitink, Fabio Luisi, Jorma Panula and Riccardo Muti. He studied at the State Conservatory in St. Petersburg and at the Weimar Academy of Music Franz Liszt. In June 2021 he became artistic director of the Ukrainian festival Kharkiv Music Fest, which has performed concerts during the war in air raid shelters, underground stations and hospitals in Kharkiv.

TOBIAS WÖGERER



The Austrian conductor **Tobias Wögerer** was born in Linz in 1991, won the 10th MDR Conducting Competition and was assistant conductor of the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester from 2019 to 2022. Since September 2022 he has been “conductor in residence” at the Volksoper in Vienna.

He studied with Nicolás Pasquet and Ekhart Wycik at the Weimar Academy of Music Franz Liszt and at the Zurich Academy of the Arts.

During recent years, Tobias Wögerer has received numerous invitations to renowned orchestras such as the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, the Tonkünstler Orchestra of Lower Austria, the Staatskapelle Weimar, the Gulbenkian Orchestra in Lisbon and the Bern Symphony Orchestra.

In February 2019 he made his debut with the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester as part of its Easter tour, also appearing during the 2020 summer tour in several concerts in Italy. His position as assistant conductor enabled him to work closely with such luminaries as Herbert Blomstedt, Teodor Currentzis, Daniele Gatti, Manfred Honeck, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Jonathan Nott. During the past season, he assisted Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla during an opera production at the Bavarian State Opera, was the musical assistant to Teodor Currentzis during the 2022 Salzburg Festival and conducted an opera production at the Weimar National Theatre.

In his function as “conductor in residence” at the Volksoper in Vienna, Wögerer has conducted opera and operetta, ballet and music performances since September 2022.

HANKYEOL YOON



The South Korean conductor **Hankyeol Yoon** was the youngest winner of the Neeme Järvi Prize at the 2019 Gstaad Menuhin Festival; this was followed by invitations to the Basel Chamber Orchestra and the Basel and Bern Symphony Orchestras. Among the highlights of the 2022/23 season were his debuts with the Bern Symphony Orchestra and the Busan Philharmonic Orchestra and a return to the KBS Symphony Orchestra for concerts in Tokyo. In

addition, he assisted Simon Rattle during the 2023 European tour of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. Previous highlights include concerts with the Munich Symphony Orchestra, the Basel Chamber Orchestra and the Korean National Symphony Orchestra. He has worked as an assistant conductor at the Nürnberg State Theatre, the Grand Théâtre de



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Genève and the Heidenheim Opera Festival; as part of a fellowship, he worked with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding and at the Lucerne Festival under Thomas Adès. In 2021 he received the second prize and the audience prize during the first competition of the KSO International Conducting Competition in Seoul. He was also among the finalists for the 2020 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition and the 2021 German Conductors Award.

Hankyeol Yoon has also received accolades as a composer. In December 2021 his most recent work, *Grande Hipab*, was given its world premiere by Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt. From 2019 to 2021 he was a fellow in the mentoring programme of the Eötvös Foundation for Contemporary Music in Budapest, where George Benjamin was his mentor, while Peter Eötvös himself performed his compositions. He made his debut as a conductor and composer at the Tongyeong International Music Festival under Unsuk Chin's leadership.

Jury



The three finalists of the 2023 Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award with YCA jury members © SF/Jan Friese

Chairman of the Jury:

Manfred Honeck, music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Jury Members:

Peter Alward – former director of the Salzburg Easter Festival

Gary Hanson – former managing director of the Cleveland Orchestra

Markus Hinterhäuser – artistic director of the Salzburg Festival

Brian McMaster – former director of the Edinburgh International Festival

Alexander Meraviglia-Crivelli – artistic director of the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester

Pamela Rosenberg – former artistic director of the Berlin Philharmonic

Florian Wiegand – director of concerts and media of the Salzburg Festival

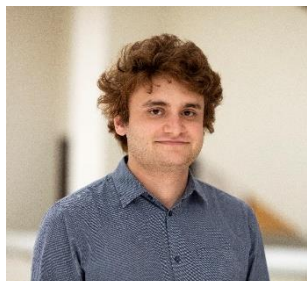
Biographies of the jury members are available here:

<https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/yca>



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Previous Winners:



Joel Sandelson
WINNER 2021,
GREAT BRITAIN



Gábor Káli
WINNER 2018,
HUNGARY



Kerem Hasan
WINNER 2017,
GREAT BRITAIN
CHIEF CONDUCTOR OF THE TYROLEAN SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA INNSBRUCK



Aziz Shokhaimov
WINNER 2016,
UZBEKISTAN
MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE ORCHESTRE
PHILHARMONIQUE DE STRASBOURG



Lorenzo Viotti
WINNER 2015,
SWITZERLAND
CHIEF CONDUCTOR OF THE DUTCH NATIONAL OPERA



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Maxime Pascal
WINNER 2014,
FRANCE
MUSIC DIRECTOR, LE BALCON



Ben Gernon
WINNER 2013,
GREAT BRITAIN



Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla
WINNER 2012,
LITHUANIA
CHIEF GUEST CONDUCTOR OF THE CITY OF
BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Ainars Rubikis
WINNER 2011,
LATVIA



David Afkham
WINNER 2010,
GERMANY
CHIEF CONDUCTOR OF THE ORQUESTRA Y CORO
NACIONAL DE ESPAÑA



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Further information on the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award and biographies of its previous winners can be found here:

<https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/yca>

The Festival is grateful to Rolex, one of the great enablers of the art scene. Thanks to Rolex, the Salzburg Festival is able to implement projects that are artistically important to its mission. Rolex is one of the Festival's Main Sponsors; Rolex supports the Salzburg Whitsun Festival and has supported the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award since 2021.