



## PRESS INFORMATION

# THE ELBPILHARMONIE HAMBURG

## SPECTACULAR ARCHITECTURE FOR A BOUNDLESS MUSIC EXPERIENCE

**The opening of the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg will take place on 11 and 12 January 2017. In the flow of the Elbe and surrounded on three sides by water, the new concert hall will become the centre of attraction for all who live in Hamburg as well as for visitors from all over the world. The spectacular building houses three concert halls, a large music education area, a range of places to eat and drink, a hotel and the public Plaza, which offers visitors an unparalleled panoramic view over the whole city. Artistic quality, variety and accessibility shape the musical programme of Hamburg's new cultural landmark.**

The Elbphilharmonie was designed by the renowned Swiss firm of architects Herzog & Meuron. Perched on top of a brick warehouse foundation, – the former Kaispeicher A, which was built at the port between 1963 and 1966 and then used for storing tea, tobacco and cocoa – the glass structure with its wave-like top rises up 110 metres high into the sky. Constructed at the western point of the modern Hafencity, Europe's largest inner-city urban development project, in direct proximity to the Speicherstadt warehouse district – a UNESCO World Heritage site – and the Kontorhaus business district with the Chilehaus, the Elbphilharmonie serves as a symbol of the city's past, present and future. It stands for Hamburg's self-image of building on tradition to create something new, as well as for the many contrasts that coincide within the city and make up Hamburg's character.

### **The Plaza: Experience the city from 37 metres above the ground**

The Plaza is the central meeting place in the Elbphilharmonie and forms the link between the warehouse and the new structure. The viewing platform here is open to the public. Even getting to it is an experience: an 82-metre-long, slightly curved escalator transports visitors through the building. From the Plaza, 37 metres above the ground, a stunning panoramic view over the city and port opens up before the viewer. An outside walkway leads around the entire building. Inside, there is the hotel lobby, the Elbphilharmonie shop, a dining area and the stairways to the concert halls. The Elbphilharmonie Plaza extends an equally warm welcome to all residents of Hamburg and to visitors from near and far, whether or not they have come to enjoy a concert.

### **The concert area: The heart of the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg**

The heart of the Elbphilharmonie is the Grand Concert Hall. The 2,100 seats are arranged around a centrally located stage, a staging that is reminiscent of terraced vineyards. No member of the audience is seated more than 30 metres from the conductor. Being so unusually close to the action turns this new acoustic space into a place of unforgettable musical encounters. In order to achieve the optimum acoustics, the architects developed a special wall and roof structure together with internationally renowned acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota – the »White Skin«. 10,000 individually shaped gypsum fibre panels cut with millimetre precision ensure targeted sound distribution that reaches every corner. For the Grand Hall, the Bonn-based organ building company Klais developed an extraordinary concert hall organ with 4,765 pipes that are located in, next to and behind the audience stands.



The upper part of the Elbphilharmonie building also houses the Recital Hall. In this intimate and versatile space, elegantly shaped wood panelling ensures perfect acoustics. With seating for 550 people, it is the ideal venue for chamber music, lieder recitals and solo recitals, as well as jazz and world music concerts. The flexible seating means that the space can be used for a wide variety of purposes.

The »Kaistudios« in the former Kaispeicher harbour the Elbphilharmonie's music education area. Here, in the various rooms, music becomes a proactive experience – day after day, from early until late, and for people of all ages. The »Kaistudios« are also home to the new »Elbphilharmonie World of Instruments«: diverse workshops in which children and adults can try out instruments from all over the world.

### **A boundless music experience for everyone**

The task of making music accessible, approachable and something that everyone can experience was, as it were, written into the Elbphilharmonie's DNA. The concerts are therefore bursting with musical colour and contrast, and the programming is devoid of any 'blinkered' artistic style. The broad musical spectrum includes orchestral concerts and operatic performances with the best orchestras in the world; piano, string quartet and lieder recitals; as well as world music, electronic and pop music. International stars have an impact on the musical heartbeat of the concert hall, as do the artists and ensembles within the city. The NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, along with its chief conductor Thomas Hengelbrock, has taken its place as the Elbphilharmonie's orchestra in residence, while the Recital Hall provides the Ensemble Resonanz with a new space for its excellent concert programme, which is dedicated to contemporary music in particular.

As a gateway to the world of music, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg is therefore more than purely a classical concert hall: its extensive music education programme, featuring concerts for children and families, projects to get involved in, and workshops for all ages, transforms it into a vibrant platform for all kinds of musical encounters.

The Elbphilharmonie was built in a city that draws on a long musical tradition and a multifaceted cultural scene. Famous composers such as Johannes Brahms and Gustav Mahler still influence Hamburg's character today; internationally renowned orchestras feel at home here. The State Opera House, the Laeiszhalle, a multitude of festivals, popular musicals and an unparalleled club scene all offer an incredible wealth of musical variety and testify to a creative, vibrant musical landscape that finds its highly visible crystallisation point here in the Elbphilharmonie.

Spectacular architecture, musical diversity, openness and accessibility to all – from January 2017, the Elbphilharmonie will become the new place to meet, a place uniting all the multifaceted aspects Hamburg has to offer and that helps broaden the view through Hamburg as a gateway to the world, as the city has prided itself on doing for generations.