

State Youth Choir of North Rhine Westfalia/ Germany

Artistic Directors: Christiane Zywietz-Godland & Hermann Godland

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Supported by the State Council for Music NRW
and the Minister President of NRW

The choir consists of young singers from over 25 towns in North Rhine Westfalia. Financed and supported by the State Council for Music, it is a special project of the Minister President of NRW. The 50 members of the ensemble are aged between 17 and 27. They are all distinguished by their special gift for singing and their choral experience. They eight six times a year for rehearsals resp. concerts.

The principal task of the choir is to acquire a wide range of choral works from different periods of diverse styles and levels of difficulty. The programme includes both a-cappella literature and pieces for choir and orchestra. At the same time a particular importance is given to voice development.

Established in 1979, the choir has performed many concerts in France as well as Czechoslovakia and Israel. Having played in Dresden in 1991, the ensemble also performed Mozart's „Requiem“ and Haydn's „Nelson Mass“ with the Hessian Chamber Orchestra. In 1993 the choir gave a concert in Rostock and performed Mahler's „Das Klagende Lied“ together with professional choirs and orchestras. In 1994 the choir performed „royal“ music (e.g. Coronation Anthems) by Händel, Haydn and others, working with the Youth Chamber Orchestra of NRW. Works like Händel, „Dixit Dominus“, and „Sorbas Suite“ by M. Theodorakis were played with orchestras of the the State NorthRhine Westphalia and with the Youth Orchestra of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In 1994 the choir travelled to Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1995 the young singers took part in a production of Mahler's 8th Symphony in Rostock as well as in an exchange project with the Brandenburg Youth Choir/ East Germany.

In 1997 the choir toured through England and Scotland, followed by a concert tour to 7 cities in China in 1999, by another concert tour to Poland in 2001 and to Benelux in 2002.

For a journey to Siberia and Moscow in 2003 the ensemble could establish contacts to Kuzbass Philharmonics with a performance of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" (Final movement of the Ninth Symphony. After that the choir performed Verdis "La Traviata" in an International Opera Festival in Southern Germany for the Jeunesses Musicales together with the National Youth Orchestra of Spain under Yakov Kreizberg.

In recent years concert tours took the ensemble to Spain (2005), The Czech Republic (2006) and Northern Italy (2007).

The last important projects were Mozart's Requiem (in the newly renovated beautiful Essen Philharmony), Chichester Psalms by Bernstein and a concert in Cologne Philharmony.

The choir has produced two CDs in the concert hall of the Musical Academy in Cologne with choir music from five centuries and thirteen countries. Recently various radio and TV stations have produced programmes with the choir.

NRW's Youth Choir has been conducted by Christiane Zywietz-Godland and Hermann Godland since 1989.

Christiane Zywietz-Godland, born in 1955, trained to be a music teacher, studied musicology, English and choir conductorship in Essen and Cologne. Has passed various exams with distinctions. Active participation in many international conducting master courses. Studied singing and has been involved with numerous well-known choirs while they were on tour, both nationally and internationally. In addition is responsible for vocal development within these choirs. She is a concert singer in both oratorio and chamber concerts. Has many duties as tutor at vocal development seminars, as well choir and orchestra directorship. She

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gives lectures on singing at Essen University and directs choirs and orchestras in Essen/ Germany.

Hermann Godland, born in 1956, trained to be a music and Latin teacher, also studied orchestra directorship and musical accompaniment at the Musical Academy in Cologne. Active participation in numerous international conducting master courses. Has been involved with various well-known choirs while they were on tour. Frequently plays the piano at song recitals and chamber concerts. Head of the choir at both the School of Music and the Music College in Aachen, Germany. City of Aachen „Förder-„prize winner. Directs choirs and orchestras in Essen and Aachen/ Germany.

The couple was invited to the Blue Mountain Chamber Music Festival in Princeton/ USA and an International Choir Festival in Kemerowo/ Siberia.