

Dresdner Philharmonie

Press Information
Dresden / 20. December 2023

Sir Donald Runnicles to be appointed as chief conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic

Sir Donald Runnicles will be the new chief conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic in 2025. The draft contract will shortly be submitted to the City Council of the state capital Dresden for approval. Runnicles will take up the post in the 2025/26 season, but will already lead the Dresden Philharmonic as Chief Conductor Designate in the 2024/25 season.

Annekatriin Klepsch, Mayor and Councillor for Culture, Science and Tourism:

"I am delighted that we have been able to recruit Sir Donald Runnicles, an internationally renowned and highly experienced chief conductor, for the Dresden Philharmonic. He is just as much in demand at the Metropolitan Opera in New York as he is at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and many other major opera houses such as those in Vienna, Paris, Milan and London. He stands for the highest level of artistic ability and has a firm foothold in the international music scene. I am convinced that we are presenting the City Council with an artistic personality who will further enhance the excellent quality of this orchestra, strengthen Dresden's reputation as a globally unique city of music and convince audiences of the value and boundlessness of classical music with his work."

Sir Donald Runnicles:

"When I came to the Dresden Philharmonic a year ago, I was immediately captivated by the beauty and outstanding sound of the concert hall. And that continued with the orchestra: I encountered excellent musical quality, great trust and a way of playing together that I had hardly experienced anywhere else before. I am extremely pleased that the ensemble's desire for intensive collaboration arose from this! I am convinced that, together with this enormously committed orchestra, I can develop programmes and realise concert experiences that will further consolidate and expand the outstanding reputation of the Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra. International tours, concert operas and other very special projects will certainly contribute to this. It is already clear that we will be performing Benjamin Britten's "War Requiem" on 13 February 2025 - as a Brit and an admirer of Britten, that is a very important signal for us to remember together."

Frauke Roth, General Manager of the Dresden Philharmonic:

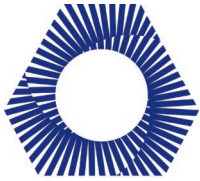
"As general manager, it is always my job to bring our orchestra and new conductors together. I am extremely pleased that this has worked so well with Sir Donald Runnicles and our musicians that it has now become a "matchmaking" and can grow into a sustainable relationship."

And **Robert-Christian Schuster, spokesman for the orchestra board**, adds:

"Finding a new chief conductor is a challenge for any large orchestra. After the excellent collaboration with Marek Janowski, it was important for us to be able to continue working at this enormously high level; that's why we invested a lot of time and reflection in the search and the necessary consultations. From the very first project with Sir Donald Runnicles, we were convinced that in him we had a boss who would work with us in a spirit of trust, mutual respect and, above all, with the highest artistic standards. We were impressed by how attentive and at the same time confident he was in convincing us of his musical ideas - with him, something like a mutual resonance was created that is rarely experienced as an orchestra. We also found Sir Donald to be an approachable and open partner, which is also important for an intensive collaboration. With his expertise and experience, he can build bridges between the traditional and the modern and, together with us, address an even broader audience artistically."

About Sir Donald Runnicles

Scottish Conductor Donald Runnicles is General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Music Director of the Grand Teton Music Festival (USA) since 2006, and Principal Guest Conductor of the



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Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. He was recently named Conductor Emeritus of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, having served as its Chief Conductor from 2009-2016.

Runnicles was born in Edinburgh and was educated there and at Cambridge. He began his career in Mannheim, Germany as a répétiteur, and spent summers assisting in Bayreuth to further immerse his Wagnerian disposition. He spent those early years guest conducting throughout the German repertory theaters and orchestras. In 1988, he made his North American debut conducting Berg's Lulu at the Metropolitan Opera, jumping in for an indisposed James Levine. In 1989 he became General Music Director in Freiburg, Germany where he remained for three seasons.

In 1990, after two Ring cycles at San Francisco Opera, he was asked to be its Music Director, and began the appointment two years later. He held this position from 1992 to 2009. He is a regular guest at leading international opera houses and is recognised as one of the most important conductors of both the symphonic and operatic repertoire. He has conducted at the Bayreuth, Glyndebourne and Salzburg Festivals, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Opéra National de Paris, La Scala in Milan, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, the Cologne Opera, the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, the Hamburg State Opera, the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, the Zurich Opera and the Netherlands Opera. He has a special relationship with the Vienna State Opera, where he regularly conducted the Ring des Nibelungen. He also works regularly with the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden.

In addition to his conducting duties, Donald Runnicles is also a much sought-after pianist and performs in chamber concerts and as a Lied accompanist.

Donald Runnicles has been honoured for his services to music with honorary doctorates in music from the University of Edinburgh, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, as well as the Royal Medal of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. In 2004, Queen Elizabeth II appointed him an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE).

In October 2020, Donald Runnicles was awarded a knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours. In doing so, the Queen recognised the services Sir Donald has rendered to international musical life.

Photos for current reporting can be found here: [Presse - Dresdner Philharmonie](#) (Copyright: Simon Pauly, Robert Kusel, see file names)

Next performances with Sir Donald Runnicles in Dresden:

FR 1. MARCH / SA 2. MARCH 2024

Claude **Debussy**: "La Mer" Three Symphonic Sketches for Orchestra (1905)

Alexander **Scriabin**: "Prométhée: Le poème du feu" for Piano and Orchestra, with choir, organ and "Clavier à Lumières" or "keyboard with lights" (1909/10)

Maurice **Ravel**: Aus den „Miroirs“ for Piano solo: 2. "Oiseaux tristes", 3. "Une Barque sur l'océan"

Maurice **Ravel**: "Daphnis und Chloé" Suite No. 2 (1907/1912))

Sir Donald Runnicles | Conductor, Steven Osborne | Piano
Dresden Philharmonic Choir, Dresden University Choir
Dresden Philharmonic

There will be **opportunities for interviews** with Sir Donald Runnicles as part of his project in **March 2024**. We kindly ask you to refrain from enquiries before then.