

Christian Benning Percussion Group

Christian Benning

Acclaimed by the press as a "rhythmic genius" (*Die ZEIT*), multi-percussionist Christian Benning's performances garner worldwide attention. His exuberant joy in performing and virtuosic technique have rapidly propelled his international career to the forefront of the new generation of percussionists.

His captivating performances—both as a soloist and with the Christian Benning Percussion Group—have taken place in renowned concert halls across the globe, including the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Glocke Bremen, Munich's Prinzregententheater and Herkulessaal, Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Musikverein Graz, and the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris. Furthermore, Christian Benning has performed at venues such as the Sagrada Família and the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona, Milan Cathedral, Borusan Music House in Istanbul, and the George Enescu Hall in Bucharest. He has also appeared in Jerusalem, Cairo, Muscat, San Diego, Baltimore, Boston, and Washington D.C. (on behalf of the European Union), as well as at the Venice Biennale Musica and the United Nations in New York. In 2025, his engagements include performances in Japan (Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe, and the Osaka Expo), Hong Kong, and Peru.

The debut album by his percussion group is set for release in 2027, coinciding with a tour of China.

Christian Benning is endorsed by Meinl Cymbals, Meinl Percussion, Meinl Stick&Brush, SchlagZu, AlternateMode, and vanLaack, and has been a Yamaha Artist since 2023.

Patrick Stapleton (b. 1993) studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich (HMT) under Adel Shalaby, Peter Sadlo, and Alexej Gerassimez. As a percussionist, he is a regular guest with world-renowned ensembles—including the Hamburg production of *The Lion King*, the Munich Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the SWR Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, and the Gärtnerplatztheater, Residenztheater, and Volkstheater in Munich. He is also a member of successful bands such as MEUTE and the Jazzrausch Bigband, and a founding member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group, with whom he has realized numerous international projects.

Concert tours have taken him to 29 countries, with performances at venues and events including the Venice Biennale, Expo Osaka, Berlin Atonal, Sziget Festival (Budapest), Sagrada Família (Barcelona), Suntory Hall (Tokyo), Isarphilharmonie (Munich), Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg), the Philharmonie halls in Cologne and Paris, the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Konzerthaus Berlin, opera houses in Riyadh, Muscat, and Cairo, the Moulin Rouge (Paris), and Brixton Academy (London).

He has won multiple awards at international music competitions. Most recently, Patrick Stapleton received the Music Advancement Award from the Konzertverein Ingolstadt and First Prize at the 2020 Gasteig Music Prize competition (Kulturkreis Gasteig).

Godwin Schmid was born in Landsberg am Lech in 1996. He began taking drum lessons from his father at the age of three and piano lessons at six. In 2014, he received the Cultural Advancement Award from the district of Landsberg am Lech. During the 2013/14 academic year, he attended the Vocational School for Music in Krumbach. From 2014 onwards, he studied at the University of Music and Theatre Munich under Franz Bach, Claudio Estay, and Professor Raymond Curfs, completing his master's degree in 2024.

This versatile percussionist is a regular guest performer with orchestras such as the Bavarian State

Opera, the Augsburg Philharmonic, and the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, among others. He is also a member of Ensemble Classique and the Christian Benning Percussion Group.

Felix Kolb (born 1993 in Nuremberg) is a freelance drummer, percussionist, and composer based in Munich. He received his academic training from Raymond Curfs and Adel Shalaby at the Munich University of Music and Theatre (timpani/percussion) and through the Academy of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, as well as from Stephan Maass (percussion) and Andreas Weixler (computer composition) at the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz. He regularly performs with internationally renowned orchestras such as the Munich Philharmonic, the SWR Symphony Orchestra, the Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne, and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, with whom he has made numerous recordings.

Felix Kolb has worked with composers including Wolfgang Rihm, Steve Reich, and Samir Odeh-Tamimi; performed chamber music with Kolja Blacher, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and Jens Peter Maintz; and appeared at festivals such as the Biennale Musica di Venezia, Berlin Atonal, and the BBC Proms. He also performs as a guest artist with the Hamburg-based band Meute and the Munich-based Jazzrausch Bigband. He has been a member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group since 2016 and a "Bergson Artist" (at Bergson Kunstkraftwerk in Munich) since 2024.

Marcel Kentaro Morikawa (born 1992 in Cologne) began his percussion studies in 2006 with Robert Schäfer (Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne) and piano studies with Susanna Cizmarovic. After spending a year abroad at the music high school in Bucharest in 2008, he began his bachelor's degree under Carlos Tarcha at the Cologne University of Music and Dance, during which time he completed two Erasmus semesters at the National University of Music Bucharest with Alexandru Matei. In 2014, he moved to the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich to pursue a master's degree under Peter Sadlo.

Marcel Kentaro Morikawa held an internship with the Hof Symphony Orchestra and began a fixed-term contract with the ensemble in 2019. In 2018, he won second prize at the ItalyPAS Vibraphone Competition; in 2022, he completed his master's degree in New Music in Munich under Raymond Curfs. He has been a member of the Christian Benning Percussion Group since 2015, performing in cities such as Barcelona, Venice, and Osaka; since 2023, he has played in the Utopia Orchestra under Teodor Currentzis.

From 2022 to 2025, Morikawa served as a lecturer at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich. He has been teaching at the Music School Grünwald since 2021.

Season 2026/27