

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA HEILBRONN

Driven by the inspiration and passion of its musicians, the name Württemberg Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn (WCO) stands for a musical style that is both energetic and subtle, a special homogeneity, great flexibility of sound and outstanding expertise in orchestral accompaniment.

In 2025 the WCO celebrated its 65th anniversary with an unrivalled success story. The WCO is the life's work of conductor Jörg Faerber who founded the orchestra in 1960 and led it to international renown, succeeded by Ruben Gazarian and Case Scaglione.

Since 2024/25, Estonian Risto Joost has been Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Chamber Orchestra Heilbronn focussing on contemporary Baltic repertoire, modernism and romanticism in his first season.

Since 2020, the WCO has been working with a special musical personality as Artistic Partner for a specific period of time in addition to the chief conductor. This began in 2020 with the conductor and violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian. Since 2023, pianist, conductor and percussionist Frank Dupree has been the WCO's Artistic Partner.

With a roster of first-class guest musicians, the WCO increasingly performs symphonic repertoire in extended formations. Openness and interest in new formats as well as cultural synergies characterise the orchestra's unique profile.

Around 80 concerts per season take the WCO to renowned concert venues such as the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Queen Elisabeth Hall Antwerp, Konzerthaus Berlin, Philharmonie Köln, Tonhalle Düsseldorf, Kurhaus Wiesbaden, Frauenkirche Dresden and to festivals such as Rheingau Music Festival. In 2022, the WCO undertook a highly successful tour of South Korea under Case Scaglione. In autumn 2025, the orchestra gave a guest performance in Estonia.

Collaboration with international soloists has always been a defining feature. The list of soloists with whom the WCO has performed on stage reads like a Who's Who of music history. Recently, the WCO has performed with artists such as Ray Chen, Julia Fischer, Gautier Capuçon, Sabine Meyer, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Herbert Schuch, Johannes Moser, Sharon Kam, Daniel Müller-Schott, Asya Fateyeva, Alisa Weilerstein, Isabelle van Keulen, Lena Neudauer, Arabella Steinbacher, Emmanuel Tjeknavorian, Bomsori Kim, Michael Barenboim and Daniel Ottensamer.

In addition to its extensive concert activities, the WCO Heilbronn shapes the musical events of its region with its own subscription series in Heilbronn and Ulm, opera productions with the Heilbronn Theatre and the annual Klassik Open Air in Heilbronn, which was initiated by the orchestra. In addition to innovative concert formats, the WCO presents an imaginative educational programme for children and young people of all ages, as well as a chamber music series conceived by the orchestra members themselves.

The orchestra has recorded countless albums for Deutsche Grammophon, Teldec and EMI with renowned soloists, many of which have been honoured with international awards.

In May 2026, the orchestra's latest album *Kiss of Fire*, featuring the Ensemble Spark, was released on Berlin Classics. The recording of *works by Nikolai Kapustin*, featuring pianist Frank Dupree, was awarded the prestigious ICMA in 2022. The album of *works by Frank Martin* made it onto the shortlist for the German Record Critics' Award.