

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

2024-25 season

Since its creation by Ernest Ansermet in 1918, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande has seen over 700 musicians contribute to its history. Currently led by Musical and Artistic Director Jonathan Nott, the OSR is made up of 112 permanent musicians represented by 22 different nationalities. It performs over 80 concerts every year, including 20 abroad. In addition to subscription concerts in Geneva and Lausanne, it performs symphonic programmes for the City of Geneva and the annual United Nations Day concert and accompanies operatic performances at the Grand Théâtre of Geneva. Over the decades, the OSR has built up an international reputation thanks to its historic recordings and its interpretation of the 20th-century French and Russian repertoires.

The British conductor Jonathan Nott has served as the OSR's Music and Artistic Director since January 2017, following in the steps of the OSR's founding head and successive music directors: Paul Kletzki (1967-1970), Wolfgang Sawallisch (1970-1980), Horst Stein (1980-1985), Armin Jordan (1985-1997), Fabio Luisi (1997-2002), Pinchas Steinberg (2002-2005), Marek Janowski (2005-2012), Neeme Järvi (2012-2015), and its principal guest conductor Kazuki Yamada (2012-2017). The OSR has continually pursued the promotion and performance of new symphonic music, especially by Swiss composers, as one of its important missions. Under their guidance, the world-renowned OSR has actively contributed to the history of music through the discovery and support of contemporary composers. Works by Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, Frank Martin, André-François Marescotti, Benjamin Britten, Witold Lutosławski, Heinz Holliger, William Blank, Peter Eötvös, James Macmillan, Pascal Dusapin and Michael Jarrell constitute just some of the OSR's world premières.

The launch of the artist in residence programme in 2019 promotes the artistic development of the orchestra, and the holder of the position is invited to work with the orchestra at numerous occasions during the season. Previous artists include composers Yann Robin and Michael Jarrell, pianists Francesco Piemontesi and Marc Perrenoud, violinist Frank Peter Zimmermann, clarinettist Martin Fröst and Daniel Harding as conductor in residence. The OSR has appointed saxophonist Valentine Michaud for 2024-25 season.

In 2022, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande created the position of assistant conductor to give young talent the opportunity to work in close proximity with the musical and artistic director and the orchestra to prepare the programme of concerts, recordings, operas as well as tours, and to acquire a precious experience in the management of an orchestra. Since 2024, the OSR has decided to reserve the position of assistant conductor for talented women only. Zofia Kiniorska has been appointed assistant conductor for 2024-25 season.

In 1954, the OSR made the very first stereophonic symphonic recording, under the baton of its titular conductor and founder Ernest Ansermet, making the Orchestra a pioneer in the field. 70 years later, the Orchestra is continuing to experiment with new means of broadcasting with the development of the first consumer virtual reality mobile application,

enabling total immersion at the heart of a symphony orchestra. Scheduled for release in January 2025, this world-exclusive application not only marks a milestone in the field of ArtTech, but also redefines the way in which we experience music.

In close collaboration with Radio-Television Switzerland since its creation, the OSRs broadcasts over the airwaves date back to its early days, to the benefit of millions of listeners throughout the world. The OSR has recorded over 100 discs in partnership with Decca, giving rise to truly legendary recordings and enhancing its position on the international music scene. The orchestra has made prize-winning recordings for around a dozen international labels.

The OSR's international tours have taken it to the leading concert halls in Europe (Berlin, London, Vienna, Salzburg, Paris, Amsterdam, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Madrid) and Asia (Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, Bombay), as well as key cities in the Americas (Boston, New York, San Francisco, Washington, São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Montevideo).

The OSR is highly sought after by the most prestigious festivals, and since 2000 has played at the Budapest Spring Festival, the Chorégies d'Orange, the Festival de Música de Canarias, the festival de Pâques, the Lucerne Festival, the Nuits Romantiques (Aix-les-Bains), the Festival de Radio France et Montpellier, the Gstaad Menuhin Festival, the Septembre Musical de Montreux, the Festival International de Santander, the Robeco Zomerconcerten in Amsterdam, the Grafenegg Festival in Austria and the BBC Proms of London. The OSR has also attracted thousands of concertgoers to its own festival on the shores of Lake Geneva; since the first edition in summer 2020 guest artists have included Yoav Levanon, Marzena Diakun, the Sirba Octet, Francesco Piemontesi and singer Matt Dusk.

One of the key missions of the OSR is to promote symphonic music amongst the young people who will become tomorrow's audience and offer them a wide range of activities. These include notably a series of workshops forming an educational programme to prepare children for concerts, the interactive "Concerts pour petites oreilles" allowing younger children to try out instruments, the Family Concert series at the Victoria Hall, concerts for schools, and rehearsals open to schools in collaboration with the Department for Education. The Orchestra tours French-speaking Switzerland every year to enable schoolchildren in all the cantons to hear it.

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is supported by the City of Geneva, the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the Canton of Vaud, Radio-Television Switzerland, the Geneva and Lausanne Friends of the Orchestra, and many other sponsors and patrons.