

Kolja Blacher
Conductor / Violin

Kolja Blacher, born in Berlin, went to New York at the age of 15, to study violin in the Juilliard School with Dorothy DeLay, and later with Sándor Végh in Salzburg.

He has performed as soloist worldwide with leading orchestras such as the Berlin and Munich Philharmonic, the NDR Symphony Orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, Yomiuri Tokio, KBS Seoul, the Orchestra di Santa Cecilia, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with renowned conductors including Claudio Abbado, Kirill Petrenko, Vladimir Jurowski, Dmitry Kitayenko, Mariss Jansons, Joseph Swensen K.H-Steffens and Simone Young.

His repertoire spans from the great violin concertos of the classical and romantic repertoire to the repertoire of the 20. century for violin and orchestra (e.g. by Magnus Lindberg, Boris Blacher, Paul Hindemith, Arnold Schönberg, Kurt Weill, Hans Werner Henze, and Bernd Alois Zimmermann).

A major focus of his artistic activity over the past fifteen has been the „Play-Conduct“ Concerts-being soloist, leader and conductor in one person- with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Taiwan National Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the Dresden Philharmonic, the Bochum Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Komische Oper Berlin.

In the past years he has concentrated his activities intensively on conducting.

He regularly conducts orchestras such as the Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, Carlo Felice Genova, Orchestra Toscanini Parma, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Taiwan National Symphony, Osaka Philharmonic, Kanagawa Philharmonic Orchestra, Bochum Symphony Orchestra, Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Kuopio Symphony Orchestra, among many others.

Starting in 2026, the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra is planning several CD productions under Kolja Blacher's direction.

Kolja Blacher is „First Guest Conductor“ of the Kuopio Symphony Orchestra.

Kolja Blacher has released numerous award-winning recordings (including the Diapason d'Or), among them collaborations with Claudio Abbado, with whom he shared a longstanding artistic partnership from their time together with the Berlin Philharmonic and the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, whose 1. Concertmaster he was.

His recording of Schönberg's Violin Concerto with the Gürzenich Orchestra under Markus Stenz was released, and it promptly topped the German Record Critics 'Award's Quarterly Critics 'Choice 3/2015 in the "Orchestral Music" category.

Following his professorship in Hamburg, he accepted a position at the Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" in Berlin. Educating a young generation of violinists, many of them have gained excellent positions as concertmasters, solo, orchestra or chamber musicians, was always a great passion of his.

Kolja Blacher plays a 1730 Stradivarius violin, generously loaned to him by Mrs. Kimiko Powers. He lives with his family in Berlin.

2026

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