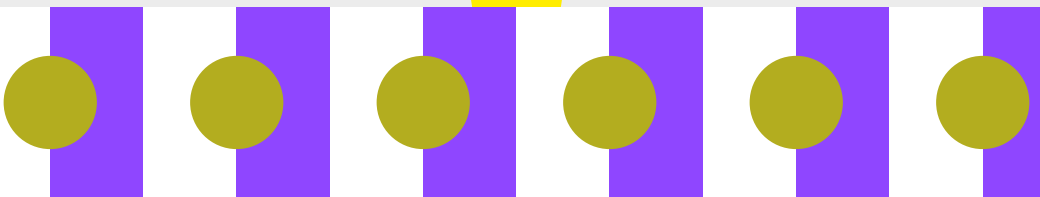


Facilitated by Julius Bär curated by



Berlin Prize **2023** for Young Artists

*#bpfya2023 Finals
March 7, 2023*





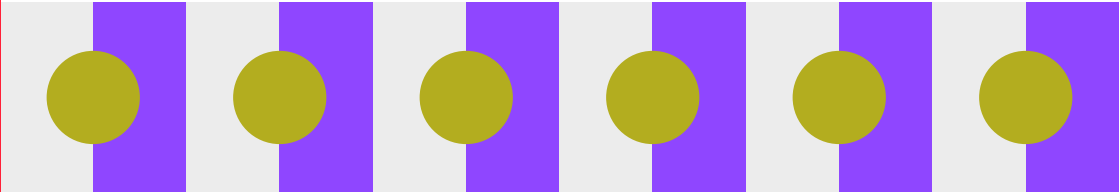
Dear finalists, dear guests,

The death notice for classical music has been published so many times across so many centuries that it's basically a running gag. But, if you are once again overcome by the fear of the genre's extinction, a look at the almost 300 applications we received for the 3rd Berlin Prize for Young Artists could give you new confidence: The future of an art form can clearly not be in bad shape if so many young and talented musicians still choose to express themselves with and in it. Looking through these applications always has something touching for me: There are obviously young people here for whom the power of art is stronger than the desire for a secure career and livelihood.

Instead of just flawless renditions of the standard repertoire, #BPFYA seeks out musicians who create unforgettable musical experiences: cathartic, disturbing, hilarious, revolutionary, enigmatic, and direct, as we say in our call for applications. It's as much about a coherent curatorial idea and a compelling performance on stage as it is about technical ability and musicality. Today, you can hear and see six musicians whose applications particularly impressed us in this respect. We hope to accompany and support each of these six young finalists on their artistic path with the #BPFYA. It is also important for every artist to receive feedback from the public on this path. That is why we are also happy to have you here today. We are delighted to have you and our finalists connect today, onstage and off.

Hartmut Welscher

Founder and Editor-in-Chief, VAN Magazine



Dear finalists, dear guests,

At what point can one speak of a tradition? For the Berlin Prize for Young Artists, which is celebrating its third edition, it's probably a little early. The more interesting question in this case is a different one: What does it take for an event to become a tradition thanks to its success? In my opinion, it's three things.

First, it has to offer something no one else does. In the case of #BPFYA, it is the limitless artistic freedom for the participants. An innovative, challenging and self-developed program is not only desired in this competition, but also a condition to participate.

The second prerequisite is relevance – also undoubtedly the case with this competition. Only when young artists are given platforms to show their most creative side will they continue to pursue their own path. And then they will be able to create works that are so innovative and inspiring that they leave us speechless.

Finally, people and organizations provide the necessary venue. At the #BPFYA, it is the publishers of VAN Magazine that present this event, and Bank Julius Baer, which supports music and emerging musicians in many ways.

I look forward to a great finale – and the creation of a tradition.

Linda Krajnak

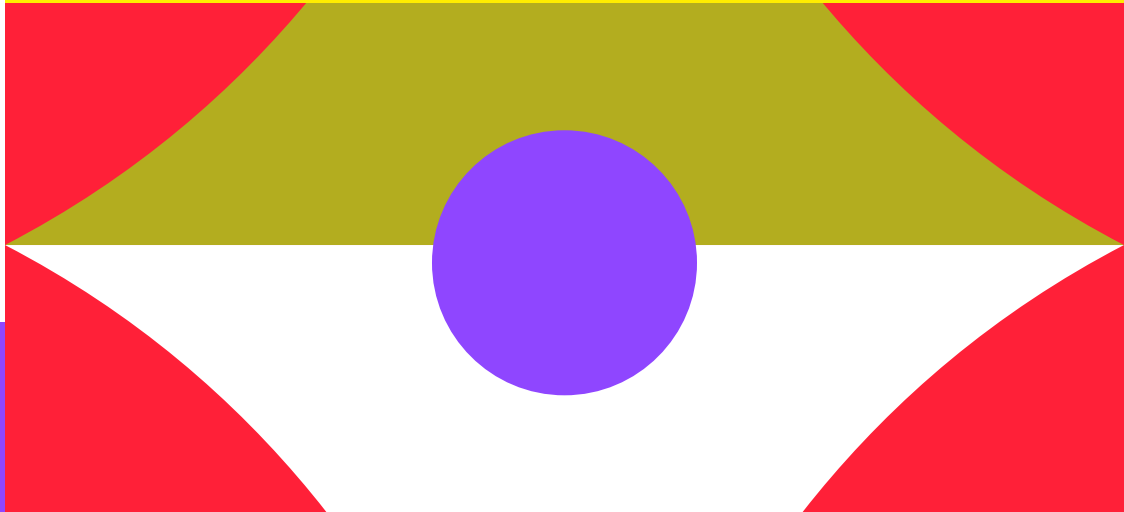
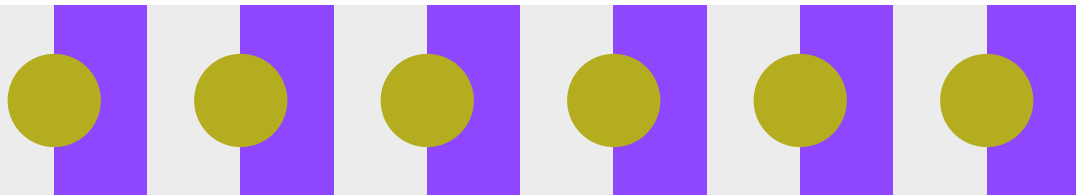
*Global Brand Programs, Partnerships
and Sponsoring, Bank Julius Baer*

Program

- 9:00 a.m. Coffee service
- 9:30 a.m. Welcome
- 9:45 a.m. Performance: Alberto Anhaus
- 10:30 a.m. Performance: Clarissa Bevilacqua
- 11:15 a.m. Break (with coffee service)
- 11:30 a.m. Performance: Dora Donata Sammer
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch break (refreshments provided)
- 1:00 p.m. Performance: Hilda Huang
- 1:45 p.m. Break (with coffee service)
- 2:00 p.m. Performance: Sarah Luisa Wurmer
- 2:45 p.m. Performance: Adam Woodward
- 3:45 p.m. Jury deliberations (*guests are invited to enjoy light refreshments and conversation during this time*)
- 4:30 p.m. Winners are announced
- 5:00 p.m. Post-announcement reception for attendees, jury, and finalists

Host: Susann El Kassar

Susann El Kassar has been an editor and presenter at Deutschlandfunk since 2017, overseeing piano solo, vocal music, and organ programming.



Alberto Anhaus

*1996



**March 7, 2023,
9:45–10:15 a.m.**

In outlining his philosophy of Poor Theater, director Jerzy Grotowski argued that the stage didn't need to compete with the advent of film in terms of sight and spectacle. Instead, it could return to its roots as a direct experience between performer and audience, "a totality of physical and mental reactions" created by both parties opening up rather than retreating inward. Around the same time that Grotowski was developing this theory in Poland, a group of Italian artists was working towards similar ends with the *arte povera* movement. Making works out of humble, ordinary materials still elicited the same depth of response from—and richness of experience for—the viewer.

Percussionist Alberto Anhaus's #BPFYA2023 program, "Sound and Space," is in the same family as these two disciplines. Part of this curation is pragmatic: Being a percussionist can be an expensive endeavor. "It's really difficult to gather all of the instruments that are required to play the [core] repertoire," he says, adding that it's even more complicated if those instruments are only needed for a piece that lasts a few minutes. While Anhaus is completing his Master's in Classical Performance at Bern's Hochschule der Künste (including a minor in Sound Art and Contemporary Art Practice), he has a range of instruments to play with. In just a few months, he's aware that he will graduate and lose the keys to that kingdom.

This makes a work like Luca Guidarini's "Riflessi. Pistoletto"—inspired by *arte povera* pioneer Michelangelo Pistoletto—both liberating and subversive. It's scored for a collection of metal objects and thunder sheets, controlled by an electronic feedback system. No €45,000 equipment necessary. But his vision for "Sound and Space" isn't solely rooted in economic realities. The curatorial relationship between these three pieces, beyond the equipment they require, is also precise. Paraphrasing his teacher Brian Archinal, Anhaus says, "What you play is as important as how you play it." Form and function are on equal footing, working together to create a deliberately-paced program that will work with the layout of the Villa Elisabeth, allowing both performer and audience to open up and inhabit the full space.

PROGRAM

- Luca Guidarini: "Riflessi. Pistoletto" (2019)
- Zeynep Toraman: "mountains move like clouds" (2019)
- Alberto Anhaus: "Indirect Reflections" (2023)

Clarissa Bevilacqua

*2001



**March 7, 2023,
10:30—11:00 a.m.**

Sei solo. Those two words of incorrect Italian grace the top of J.S. Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin (*sei soli* would be right). But, as Clarissa Bevilacqua points out, small mistakes can be illustrative. "The Italian side of me has always thought this tiny grammar mistake perhaps unintentionally reveals a deeper truth," she writes in her #BPFYA2023 program statement. "'Sei solo'—or in my case as a girl, 'sei sola'—translates to 'you are alone.'" Bevilacqua's program, also titled "Sei Sola," explores the challenges and liberations of being completely solo on the concert stage.

Bevilacqua, who was born in Milan but raised in Chicago, has long been willing to trust her own instincts. Her father had a huge record collection, and when Bevilacqua heard the Sibelius Violin Concerto as a child, she immediately gravitated toward the instrument. "I really want to play this," she said. "You really don't," her dad answered. She didn't give up, and made her concert debut at the age of nine. Since then, she has been pursuing a solo violin path.

Her #BPFYA2023 program is built around the central figure of Bach. "It's a backwards journey through time in the development of virtuosity in violin playing," she says. "Every piece has something to do with each other, it's like a chain." Bevilacqua further divides her programs into pairs of composers who both overlap and contrast: Augusta Read Thomas and Wynton Marsalis show two sides of contemporary American music; Paul Hindemith and Fritz Kreisler, radical and conservative perspectives from fin-de-siècle Vienna; and the towering figures of Eugène Ysaÿe and Bach. "The cool thing is that the Ysaÿe starts the same way as the Bach Preludio does," Bevilacqua observes. Playing alone, Bevilacqua creates a dialogue between composers across the centuries.

After finishing her Master's degree at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, Bevilacqua moved to Berlin, where she is currently studying with Antje Weithaas at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler. Fittingly for the chaotic metropolis, Bevilacqua got the message that she made it to the #BPFYA2023 finals while waiting for her bus ride to continue after an accident. "Everyone was fine, and I got into the finals, so I was very happy," she laughs.

PROGRAM

- Augusta Read Thomas: "Dream Catcher" (2008)
- Wynton Marsalis: "Sidestep Reel" from "Fiddle Dance Suite" (2018)
- Fritz Kreisler: Recitativo and Scherzo-Caprice (1911)
- Paul Hindemith: "Four variations on Mozart's 'Komm, lieber Mai'" from Sonata for Solo Violin, No. 2 (1924)
- Eugène Ysaÿe: Sonata for Solo Violin, No. 2, "Jacques Thibaud" (1923)
- Johann Sebastian Bach: Prelude to Violin Partita No. 3 in E Major (1720)

Dora Donata Sammer

*1997



**March 7, 2023,
11:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.**

When Dora Donata Sammer told her parents, at the age of four, that she wanted to play the flute, they didn't take it especially seriously. But Sammer, who grew up in Graz, Austria, continued to ask for lessons three years later. They finally relented, allowing their daughter to play the *Flöte*. In German, however, that can mean two different instruments: the recorder and the transverse flute. At four, Sammer wasn't aware of the distinction; at seven, she hoped to play the more popular and orchestral instrument. Then, "I started playing the recorder, and I didn't want to stop," she recalls.

On the other hand, the recorder is more a family of instruments than a single instrument. In her #BPFYA2023 program, titled "From Imitations to Illusions," Sammer plays the alto recorder, but also a gigantic, amplified contrabass recorder, both solo and accompanied by electronics. "I like the fact that there are so many different sizes, and that you have to master so many different instruments," she says. "You can always change, depending on the mood and the situation." Her seemingly modest instrument is capable of summoning entire worlds.

As a recorder player, Sammer naturally focuses on the baroque and contemporary repertoire. Her program features composers born in both the 1590s and the 1950s. But beyond the juxtaposition of old and new, she has curated a series of pieces that display her instrument's uncanny imitative ability. She will sound variously like the south wind, like a duet, like the human voice, like the sea, and like a nightingale, illusions which demonstrate the transportive ability of sound combined with perception.

Sammer is currently studying for her Master's in recorder performance under Dorothee Oberlinger at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg. But she is based in Vienna, where she recently completed her Bachelor's in piano performance at the University of Music and Performing Arts. Why did she decide to apply for the Berlin Prize on recorder and not piano? "Because I had a program for the recorder," she says, "where I thought, 'Yes, this is what I want to show.'"

PROGRAM

- Giorgio Tedde: "Austro" for alto recorder and electronics (1991)
- Johann Sebastian Bach: Allemande and Courante from Partita in A Minor (1723)
- Luciano Berio: "Gesti" for alto or tenor recorder (1966)
- Fausto Romitelli: "Seascape" for amplified contrabass recorder (1994)
- Jacob van Eyck: "Engels Nachtegaeltje" from "Der Fluyten Lust-hof" (1644)

Hilda Huang

*1996



**March 7, 2023,
1:00—1:30 p.m.**

At the undergraduate level, Yale doesn't offer a major in music performance. So Hilda Huang majored in chemistry, owing to a fascination with empirical study. Not the first thing that comes to mind for a musician whose #BPFYA2023 program—in her own words—“draws on Christian traditions” and “meditates on music's capacity to vivify spirit.” Faith, spirit, and religion of any denomination are about as far as one can get from the verifiable evidence of empirical research.

On the other hand, the direct experience of empiricism is in its own way an act of faith. What we encounter, what we bear witness to, can confirm and reinforce our beliefs. It's rare for someone to hold a genuine spiritual belief that isn't informed by some form of empirical evidence. As one of Huang's mentors said recently of the Liszt piece on her program, “St. François d'Assise: La prédication aux oiseaux” from “Deux légendes,” it's a work “that represents where spirituality meets the imagination.” For Huang, this observation is a credo—not just as a musician, but, as she puts it, “as somebody who relates to an audience.”

Bridging the divide between faith and fact is the added element of birdsong that accompanies Huang's program. A symbol of Christianity—from Noah's doves to the audience of St. Francis of Assisi's sermon—there is also something concrete in the study of ornithology (of which Messiaen was especially fond).

Congenital for Huang is a connection to Bach, whose music was a bulwark for her early musical studies (on the piano as well as on harpsichord and organ). In her #BPFYA2023 application, however, Huang spoke of the composer's works as more than just longtime traveling companions, writing: “His Pietist musicianship is the homestead in which I feel the most authentically free to be absorbed in creative engagement with the world.” Works like his Toccata in D Major are liturgical in both their familiarity and the space they offer to grow and nurture a distinct musical voice. “There's a bit in this program about what it's like to have a spirit live in music as opposed to yourself,” she adds. “There's an element of me that lives in Bach's music.”

PROGRAM

- Johann Sebastian Bach: Prelude and Fugue in A Major from “The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I” (1722)
- Franz Liszt: “St. François d'Assise: La prédication aux oiseaux” from “Deux légendes” (1863)
- Olivier Messiaen: “La Grive musicienne (turdus ericetorum)” from “Petites esquisses d'oiseaux” (1985)
- Bach (arr. Hilda Huang): Sonatina from “Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit” (1707)
- Arvo Pärt: “Für Alina” (1976)
- Bach: Toccata in D Major (ca. 1705)

Sarah Luisa Wurmer

*2002



**March 7, 2023,
2:00–2:30 p.m.**

When Sarah Luisa Wurmer was eight years old, she heard the sound of the zither for the first time. The string instrument dates back to Greek Antiquity and is popular in Central European folk music. But that first zither concert Wurmer heard was of classical repertoire, an experience that proved decisive. “The sound caught me, it was fascinating,” Wurmer says. She and her parents approached the zither player, who became Wurmer’s first teacher.

Wurmer’s parents are not musicians, but she feels an acute artistic kinship with her grandfather, who was a sculptor. “For my part, I like to be at the intersection of different forms of art,” Wurmer says. “I don’t just see music in isolation.” It’s a philosophy that bears itself out in Wurmer’s program for the #BPFYA2023. Titled “LIGHTstice”—a portmanteau with “solstice”—the concert bears an epigraph from the famous poem by Dylan Thomas: “Do not go gentle into that good night. / Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” Those lines are the “thread” that connects the four musical works, performed on the discant zither and its lower cousin, the bass zither.

Wurmer makes little distinction between the early music and the contemporary compositions that, taken together, form the core of her repertoire. “It’s logical and necessary that they come together,” she says. Her curation emphasizes moments of overlap. While the pieces in her #BPFYA2023 program progress in chronological order, from the melodies of Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger’s (1580–1651) Toccata I to the noise techniques of Minlu Li’s “Witjastief” (completed in the summer of 2022), they resonate in myriad other ways, from motivic and tonal similarities to what Wurmer describes as “walking through darkness” while “searching [for] and finding points of light.”

Wurmer is currently studying for her Bachelor’s degree at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Munich. A native of the city, Wurmer didn’t have much choice for where to pursue her zither studies—Munich has Germany’s only conservatory-level zither class. (She would have studied there anyway, she says.) By participating in the final of the Berlin Prize, Wurmer is serving as an ambassador for her instrument while enjoying the unusual opportunity to combine curation with performance. “For me, it’s a huge opportunity,” she says, “to realize my concept and bring it to the Berlin stage.”

PROGRAM

- Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger: Toccata I from “Intavolatura di lauto,” Book I (1611)
- Peter Kiesewetter: “Im Auge des Wirbelsturms” op. 67 No. 45 (1998)
- Alan Bern: “Gedanken” (2019), arr. for Zither by Sarah Luisa Wurmer (2022)
- Minlu Li: “Witjastief” (2022) for bass zither and electronics
- Text: Dylan Thomas: “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” (Recording: Torbjørn Heide Arnesen [voice], Sarah Luisa Wurmer [editing])

Adam Woodward

*1995



**March 7, 2023,
2:45–3:15 p.m.**

Choosing a career in classical music is full of uncertainty; choosing a career as a violinist carries at least a few certainties. Chief among them: Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. For Adam Woodward, there is nothing wrong with the works of these composers. But, reflecting on the legacy of his instrument and the way that legacy plays into curating concerts and recitals today, he kept coming back to one question: *What do current violin programs really want to say?*

Growing up in a suburb of Minneapolis, Woodward had plenty of exposure to the legacy of classical music. Some of his earliest teachers were members of the Minnesota Orchestra. But his oldest brother, a pianist and composer, also influenced his listening from a contemporary perspective. “At some point I realized there was more music than we were talking about in a normal classical education,” he says.

Studying at Brigham Young University afforded Woodward the opportunity to pursue more of that repertoire without feeling beholden to the traditional conservatory setting or the pressures that come with it. That capaciousness also helped to shape Woodward’s interest in contemporary music, a path he followed to Houston’s Rice University and, ultimately, the Internationale Ensemble Modern Akademie in Frankfurt.

“You don’t have to like it,” Woodward says of his attraction to contemporary violin literature. “And I think part of any great art is not necessarily understanding it, but just experiencing it; and then understanding comes from maybe the processing of that.” The not knowing or not understanding, in the meantime, can offer a sense of wonder. Woodward taps into that sense with a program that originated in Liza Lim’s “The Su Song Star Map,” inspired by the eponymous Song Dynasty polymath and the celestial atlas he compiled in the 11th century. Woodward drew a connection between Lim’s piece and the work of John Cage, who used star charts as the sources for his “Freeman Etudes.”

Enamored of the violin in all its “expressive weirdness,” Woodward’s #BPFYA2023 program explores the voices of composers who themselves are not violinists, and who don’t immediately credit Bach with their inspiration. Charting this constellation gives audiences another perspective on the universe of sound contained within the instrument.

PROGRAM

- Liza Lim: “The Su Song Star Map” (2018)
- John Cage: “Freeman Etude” No. 14 (1980)
- Iannis Xenakis: “Mikka ‘S’” (1976)
- Bahar Royae: “a hair on the skin of the water on the lake” for amplified violin (2020)

The Jury



Barbara Lebitsch

Barbara Lebitsch has been director of artistic planning at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg since 2018. After earning degrees in theater studies, musicology, psychology, and journalism, she served as an artistic planner and director of production at the Konzerthaus in Vienna and for the Wien Modern festival from 2002 to 2012. From 2012 to 2015, she was assistant to the artistic director at the Berlin Philharmonic Foundation. She joined the Elbphilharmonie in 2015 as lead dramaturge.



Hanni Liang

Hanni Liang is a pianist, concert creator, researcher, lecturer at the University of Music and Theatre Munich and founder of the TONALiSTEN Collective with which she is searching for the future of classical concert life. Alongside concerts in the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Piano Festival Ruhr or Kurhaus Wiesbaden, she curates social-artistic and participative concerts at festivals like Heidelberger Frühling, Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, Reeperbahn Festival or Mozartfest Würzburg.



Eric Lamb

Flutist Eric Lamb was a core member of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and is currently a member of Ensemble Reconsil, Synchronos Ensemble, Quasars Ensemble, as well as co-artistic director of ensemble paladino. A versatile performer, he has premiered over 200 new works. He teaches flute at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.



Hugh Morris

Hugh Morris is a writer and editor, who contributes to the *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Pitchfork*, *Jazzwise*, *Private Eye*, and *The Face Magazine*. He is also an editor at *VAN Magazine*. Born in County Durham, he studied in Manchester, and now lives in London.



Matan Porat

Matan Porat is a pianist and composer known for his narrative-based programming. His repertoire ranges from Bach to Schubert to Ligeti, and has been heard at the Berlin Philharmonie, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra (among others). His compositions have been commissioned and performed by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Andreas Scholl, Avi Avital, and Vladimir Jurowski.



Julian Steckel

Julian Steckel studied cello in Berlin and Vienna. Recent performances include the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He also performs as a chamber artist with partners including Lars Vogt, Janine Jansen, Christian Tetzlaff, and the Ébène, Armida, and Modigliani string quartets. He lives and teaches in Munich.



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VAN Magazine

Founded in 2014 and based in Berlin, VAN is an independent online classical music magazine, published weekly in English and German, covering everything from the first documented music to the latest world premieres. VAN is a fanzine, written for music lovers and professionals by music lovers and professionals. The magazine is fueled by over 100 writers who blend serious knowledge with a sense of humor, and isn't afraid of the weird, wonderful, or just plain wrong. Oh, and the name comes from van Beethoven.

Bank Julius Baer

Bank Julius Baer became a development partner for VAN Magazine in 2019, supporting culture journalism in an international, digital format.

Supporting art and music has been integral to bank Julius Baer's philosophy for decades. An interest in visual art dates back to the early 1930s when the Baer family began its private art collection. As a result, the family maintained an intensive contact with the art scene in Zurich, Paris and New York. In the early 1980s, bank Julius Baer founded its corporate art collection. The purpose was—and still is—to support artists who, at the time of a first purchase, are not yet firmly established, but clearly show great potential. Nearly two decades later, the bank has built on its legacy of artistic support by sponsoring concert halls, festivals, and museums.

Today, Julius Baer supports renowned cultural institutions, competitions and digital platforms worldwide.

The Berlin Prize for Young Artists would not be possible without the generous support of:

- Bank Julius Baer
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