



Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar

The Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar (DNT) is one of Germany's most historically distinguished theatres and its Staatskapelle looks back on a rich tradition as one of the oldest orchestras in the world. During the course of its eventful history, the theatre has been a focal point of artistic and political developments, a place where the avant-garde has collided with tradition, where humanistic ideals have been celebrated and betrayed for propagandistic purposes.

Following Goethe's appointment as theatre director and his productive collaboration with Schiller, the Weimar Court Theatre quickly evolved into one of the foremost theatres of German Classicism around 1800. Famous works including Schiller's historic dramas were shown on its stage for the first time. Around the mid-19th century, the theatre and its orchestra became the centre of German musical life with world premieres of numerous orchestral works and operas, e.g. Wagner's »Lohengrin« and Humperdinck's »Hansel and Gretel«.

The theatre was reconstructed in 1906/07 in the neo-Classical style and was used for political demonstrations in the following years because of its symbolic character. In 1919, the German national assembly convened at the newly renamed »Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar« where it passed Germany's first democratic constitution. Several years later, the National Socialists staged political events at the theatre including their second party convention, during which they laid claim to the »spirit of Weimar« in order to cloak their political aspirations with the »greater glory« of German cultural tradition.

The theatre was destroyed shortly before the end of World War II, but was one of the first German theatres to be completely rebuilt and reopened by 1948. During the years of German division, the theatre was one of East Germany's top-ranking cultural institutions. Despite its use for ideological and cultural political purposes, it continued to stage important classical productions which garnered international acclaim.

To this day, the DNT is a popular and respected cultural venue which attracts audiences from around the region and throughout the country. The Staatskapelle Weimar enjoys an international reputation as a first-class concert orchestra. With its broad repertory of classical and contemporary plays, musical theatre productions and concerts featuring top-rate musicians, the theatre and orchestra strongly contribute to Weimar's event calendar. More than 700 performances at various venues around town take place each year. Contemporary interpretations of the German classics and the romantic repertory play just as an important role as the productions and world premieres of new plays and operas. The DNT also pursues socio-political and historically inspired projects which foster dialogue with the town's residents and examine the current issues and history of Weimar. Its diverse programme includes theatre- and concert-pedagogical events that introduce children and young people to the world of theatre and offer them numerous opportunities to participate in theatre themselves.

The cultural and artistic standing of the Deutsches Nationaltheater and Staatskapelle Weimar is further enhanced by regular invitations to theatre festivals, nominations and prizes, world premieres, and national and international co-productions.