

Ensemble Coexist

People First – United Through Music

Press kit



Music as a living example of coexistence

An international chamber ensemble promoting dialogue, understanding and peace



Ensemble Coexist brings together professional musicians from different religions, cultures and countries of origin. Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druze and secular artists make music together. The members come from countries including Israel, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Turkey and Germany. What unites them is the conviction that music can foster encounters where political, cultural or religious differences tend to divide.

People first – united through music. This phrase encapsulates the ensemble's artistic and human ethos

Core idea:

The focus is not on politics, but on real-life experience: people from communities that are often perceived as opposites listen to one another and make music together.

The origins

What began as musical accompaniment has grown into a concert ensemble in its own right



The idea arose during the musical organisation of interfaith events by BIRD e.V. It became clear there just how much potential lay in the collaboration between the artists. Driven by the desire not to limit this collaboration to individual programme items, the vision of a dedicated ensemble capable of presenting full-length concert evenings took shape.

BIRD e.V. had also been searching for some time for ways to make the message of interfaith coexistence visible and tangible beyond Dresden. The project took on a particular sense of urgency due to the renewed escalation of the Middle East conflict.

Even if music cannot resolve the world's conflicts, it can create spaces where people can meet, overcome prejudices and build trust.



Germany Tour 2025

11 concerts, over 3,000 visitors



11	3.000+	2025
Concerts	Audience	Tour

Stops
Dietzenbach/Offenbach - Munich -
Tübingen - Passau - Cologne - Herford -
Osnabrück - Stuttgart - Frankfurt am Main -
Weimar - Berlin

Concept
The concerts were accompanied by
dialogue sessions and organised in
collaboration with local partners from
Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities,
as well as interfaith initiatives.

Funding
The tour was funded by the Federal
Ministry of the Interior and Homeland
Affairs. Due to the positive response,
further funding for a tour in 2026 has been
secured.

Dialogue and interaction

The concerts don't end with the final note



Music builds trust – and trust facilitates dialogue.

Following the concerts, conversations take place between people of different religions and cultural backgrounds. It is precisely these encounters that are among the project's most lasting effects.

Artistic profile

Traditional instruments, personal stories, a shared musical language



Ensemble Coexist performs with classical instruments and professionally trained singers. Its programmes combine high artistic quality with a repertoire that transcends cultural and religious boundaries.

Repertoire

- European classical and chamber music
- Jewish musical traditions
- Arabic and Middle Eastern folk music
- Sacred music from various religions
- Original compositions and new arrangements

Each programme is developed individually. The ensemble members' personal musical memories feature alongside sacred music, folklore and original compositions such as 'Ave Pax' or 'Shalom Aleikum'

The voices of the ensemble

Singers



Felicia (Fee) Brembeck

[Soprano / Germany](#)

Soprano, cabaret artist, slam poet and author; studied at the Hanns Eisler Academy of Music and the Leipzig University of Music and Theatre. Previously studied theology with a view to becoming a teacher



Shani Oshri

[Soprano / Israel](#)

Israeli soprano, recipient of a scholarship from the Israel-America Cultural Foundation and other funding programmes. Has performed with leading orchestras in Israel



Mert Üstay

[Tenor / Turkey](#)

Tenor from Samsun. Trained in Turkey and at the Hanns Eisler Academy of Music in Berlin; has received scholarships and appeared in opera productions across Europe



Jawad Seif

[Tenor / Syria](#)

A tenor trained in Damascus. He has lived in Dresden since 2015 and is involved in musical projects promoting peaceful coexistence

Instrumentalists

Chamber music, orchestral experience and cultural diversity



Yara Abou Fakher

Violin / Syria

Born in southern Syria, grew up in Damascus. Studied violin in Damascus. Now a violin teacher in Dresden and actively involved in music education projects.



Estelle Akta

Oboe / Israel

Trained in Israel; studied at the Hanns Eisler Academy of Music and the Barenboim-Said Academy. Member of the Academy of the Staatskapelle Dresden 2024–2026



Badee Alhindi

Violin / Palestine/Syria

Palestinian-Syrian violinist. Studied in Damascus and at the Barenboim-Said Academy; concertmaster of the Damascus Baroque Soloists



Danielle Akta

Cello / Israel

An internationally acclaimed cellist who has performed at venues including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Centre; studied under Frans Helmerson

The musicians combine classical training, international concert experience and musical influences from different regions.



Rebecca Fröhlich

[Doublebass / Germany](#)

Rebecca is a freelance musician based in Dresden, working as a bassist and music teacher in various ensembles and projects. Since 2023, she has also served as Vice Chair of Philharmonic Rock e.V., helping to organize several concerts each year.



Angelika Steinbeck

[Viola / Germany](#)

Began violin lessons at the age of 6; at 11, was admitted to the children's class at the 'Hans Eisler' Academy of Music in Berlin, which later became the Special School for Music and Higher Education; switched to the viola from the fourth year of study onwards. Participated in the 1st Viola Competition in Markneukirchen. In addition to 41 years' service in the orchestra of the Komische Oper, he has also performed as a chamber musician and soloist, including on the viola d'amore.

Artistic Director

Sebastian Römisch



Sebastian Römisch works full-time as a musician at the Semperoper Dresden. He is chairman of the association BIRD – Bündnis interreligiöses Deutschland e.V. and director of the Coexist ensemble.

Since 2015, he has been committed to promoting peace between religions. He has written most of the ensemble's arrangements, as well as original compositions such as Shalom aleikum and Ave Pax.

As director of the Coexist ensemble, he combines musical quality with the idea of creating spaces for encounter and trust through concerts

Ensemble Coexist in pictures

Diversity fosters a sense of com



Press and Reactions

United through music

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In der Musik vereint

Ensemble „Coexist“ begeistert in der Nikolakirche

Von Laura Otter

Zu einem interreligiösen Friedenskonzert hatte das Bistum Passau in die Universitätskirche St. Nikola eingeladen, oder, wie Doris Zauner vom Referat für Weltanschauungsfragen sagte, zu einem „Abend der Musik, des Miteinanders und des Friedens“. Das Ensemble „Coexist“ trat mit seiner interkulturellen Besetzung auf. Felicia Brembeck, Sopranistin der Gruppe, nahm das Publikum mit auf eine „Insel des Friedens“, schließlich eine der Glaube an eine höhere Macht alle Konfessionen.

Nach einer einleitenden Darbietung der zweiten Sopranistin, der Israelin Shani Oshri, wies Brembeck darauf hin, dass an diesem Abend allen Emotionen Raum gegeben werden solle – von traurigen bis fröhlichen Stücken. In der Echo-Arie von Bach, gesungen von Christin Brembeck, antwortete Oshri von der gegenüber-

der jüdischen, muslimischen und christlichen Kultur. Aber auch die gegenwärtige politische Lage im Nahen Osten wurde thematisiert – das interkulturelle Ensemble vereint immerhin Musiker aus Syrien, Palästina und Israel. Besonders ergreifend war die Ansprache der Geigerin Yara Abou Fakher. Die Syrerin fand eindrucksvolle Worte über die Bedeutung von Veranstaltungen wie dieser, gefolgt von einer Schweigeminute. Das darauf folgende Lied über eine Utopie in einer Welt ohne Krieg, mit einem Solo der Geigerin, ließ das Publikum sichtlich gerührt zurück. Für heitere Stimmung sorgte dagegen das Stück „Shalom aleikum“, bei dem auch die Zuschauer ermutigt wurden, mitzusingen. Die Menge bewegte sich zur Musik und klatschte im Takt. „Auch wenn man sich oft ohnmächtig in einer Welt mit Krieg und Leiden fühlt, können Abende wie dieser ein Anstoß für ein stärkeres Miteinander sein“, brachte es Brembeck auf den Punkt.

Brachten verschiedene Religionen in der Nikolakirche zusammen: (von links) 1. Geigerin Yara Abou Fakher, Solistin Shani Oshri, Solist Jawad Seif, Solistin Felicia Brembeck und Oboistin Estelle Akta.

– Foto: Otter

liegenden Seite der Kirche. Nicht nur melodisch, sondern auch symbolisch hatte dies große Wirkung. Was im Kern aber alle Religionen vereint: die Botschaft von Frieden, Liebe und Gerechtigkeit. Darüber sang der muslimische Syrer Jawad Seif, der dritte Solist des Ensembles. Um dem Gesungenen besser folgen zu können, wurde eine deutsche Übersetzung der Texte auf eine Leinwand projiziert. Ein besonderes Highlight: Das interreligiöse Stück „Ave pax“, komponiert von Sebastian Römis. Er ist nicht nur Pianist der Musikgruppe, sondern auch derjenige, der das Ensemble in die Welt gerufen hat. Der Abend spannte einen musikalischen Bogen von traditionellen bis hin zu neu interpretierten Stücken aus

Passauer neue Presse:

“Ensemble Coexist captivates the audience at St Nicholas’ Church.”

“The intercultural ensemble brings together musicians from Syria, Palestine and Israel.”

“But what unites all religions at their core is the message of peace, love and justice.”

“Evenings like this can be a catalyst for greater unity.”

Comments from the audience:

“You’ve done more than just play music.”

“I’ve experienced intercultural and interfaith music many times before. But never at this level.”

“A rollercoaster of emotions.”

“Pure goosebumps.”

2026 Tour – an international perspective

From Germany to the world



Already realised in 2026 Forst (Lusatia) -
Berlin (House of One)

Further planned performances
Augsburg - Leipzig - Erfurt - Hanover -
Frankfurt am Main - Cologne - Krefeld

International enquiries and interest

Budapest - Istanbul - Poland - Czech
Republic - Spain, among others

In the long term, Ensemble Coexist aims
to establish collaborations with cultural
institutions, universities, embassies,
foundations and religious communities
in Europe and the Middle East.

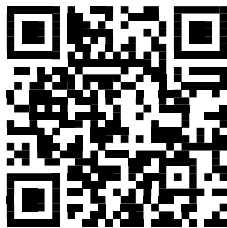
Videos and media



Official trailer

A glimpse into the vision and concert work of Ensemble Coexist

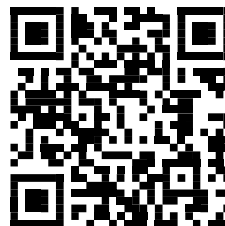
<https://youtu.be/uafA-yauFHc>



Sim Shalom

An interfaith interpretation of a Jewish prayer for peace

<https://youtu.be/XlCKzr3CPaA>



Partners and sponsors

Networks, partnerships and institutional support



The nationwide tour of Germany was sponsored by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and for Home Affairs in cooperation with the Federal Congress of Religious Councils, Forum Dialog and the House of One.

Contact & Bookin

Ensemble Coexist – a project by BIRD e.V.



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Enquiries regarding

Concerts - Festivals - Universities -
Cultural institutions - Interfaith dialogue
centres - Charities - Embassies -
Educational programmes

Formats

Concert – Concert-talk – Conference
presentation – Workshop – Residency –
Meeting format



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Music.Dialogue.Coexistence