

NICO Ensemble constantly takes the stage of leading classical and contemporary music venues and festivals across Europe, Asia and the United States, reaching new and young audiences of classical music with their highly attractive, captivating and original performances. NICO concerts are based on the unique blend of classical and pop-rock music culture, reinventing the visual component of music performance and updating it into something entirely new. For those who may think 'new music' means something austere and inaccessible, the experience of NICO Ensemble performing live will prove otherwise.

In recent years, the ensemble has reached new milestones with debuts at prestigious concert halls, including Zurich's Tonhalle (2024), the Grand Théâtre de Provence (2024), and Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall (2023). Additionally, their latest album, *Consonance*, released under the Warner Classics label in 2024, marks another significant chapter in the ensemble's already impressive journey.

NICO began 2025 with a notable performance at a historic event of international importance—when the three Baltic countries, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, disconnected from the Russian electricity grid and successfully synchronized their systems with the continental European synchronous space. The performance was attended by distinguished figures, including European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda, Latvian President Edgaras Rinkevičius, and Polish President Andrzej Duda.

NICO Ensemble (*NICO - the New Ideas Chamber Orchestra*) was founded by one of the most recognised young Baltic composers Gediminas Gelgotas back in 2006 and his music makes up most of the repertoire performed by the ensemble. Gelgotas' mesmerising musical language, based on multiple contemporary influences, a nowadays rare, almost cinematographic mastery of melody and a stunning rhythmic drive, as well as his vision of integrating minimalistic choreographic details into performances while the musicians play music by heart, using non-traditional string instrument techniques and voices is what creates the exciting concert experiences that are reinventing the borders between the experimental, the minimal, the contemporary and more popular, mainstream music forms.

NICO shows also incorporate stunning modern recompositions of most beloved classical works by Bach, Vivaldi, and Mozart, as well as new music of other minimalists and post-minimalists, such as Riley, Glass, Tavener, Pärt, Richter and others. "It is amazing how the group makes their music so accessible and entertaining, turning themselves into the modern classical music equivalent of rock stars. When listening to NICO, you may want to turn inward and meditate, or just get up and dance - the effect is mesmerising, and the result is inspiring to all ages." (Emmy Award Winning Producer Jud Newborn).

Soon celebrating its 19th concert season, the ensemble continues making their appearances at the prestigious concert venues and festivals, including performances in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York, Tonhalle in Zürich, Grand Theatre in Aix En Provence, Lithuanian National Philharmonic and elsewhere. NICO already performed in such concert halls as Leipzig Gewandhaus, St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, Usedomer, Elverum and Vilnius music festivals, collaborated with famous musicians, such as Ole Edvard Antonsen, Sergej Nakariakov, David Geringas, Kristjan Järvi, Mari Samuelsen, Avi Avital, Ksenija Sidorova, Roman Patkolò, Janusz Wawrowski among others. Besides their constant appearances across

Europe, Asia and the United States, throughout latest concert seasons NICO have also performed for His Holiness Dalai Lama and Pope Francis, Her Majesty Queen Sonja of Norway.

The ensemble has also been featured by 'Classic FM' and the 'BBC World Service' and their newest album is scheduled to be released in autumn 2024 by the Warner Classical label. The Ensemble received the title of Vilnius City Ensemble in 2022.

PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

AUGUSTA ZUOKĖ (violin, concertmaster)

JULIJA ANDERSSON (violin, viola)

DALIA SIMASHKA (violin, viola)

AGATA URSUL (violin)

IVETA JANULYTĖ (violin, NICO Scholar)

LIUDVIKAS SILICKAS (cello)

POVILAS PAUKŠTĖ (cello)

AUGUSTINAS SOKALSKI (cello, NICO Scholar)

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GEDIMINAS GELGOTAS (composer, piano, voice)