

Project

Signals

Signals – from the shrill shriek of fright in prehistoric times to the inaudible electrical impulse of today’s technological world – signals are deeply rooted in the repertoire of our communication. Signals warn, they protect, they arouse fear. They indicate departure and herald homecomings. They mark the domains of gods and emperors, command humans and animals alike, and they accompany us through life and in death. Since ages, there is an archaic amplifier for signals: the horn. None of the other instruments is so closely and inseparably connected with signals as is this symbol of great power in the animal kingdom.

In six steps, the concert demonstrates, how signals developed from one single note to a distinctive musical metaphor. Conch shells, Jewish shofars and French hunting horns will take the audience back into an archaic world of sounds from four millennia. In combination with works from the Classical period, they will experience how the sound of the horn found its special place in art music, which allowed Robert Schumann to aptly describe it as the “soul of the orchestra”. The miniature arrangements composed exclusively for this concert further trace the path of the signal in the Romantic period, in film soundtracks and on into the present.

Instrumentation

2 flutes, 4 horns, 2 violins, viola, violoncello, double-bass

Prehistoric signals

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Antic signals

Joseph Haydn

Baroque signals

Romantic signals

Joseph Haydn

Modern signals

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Contemporary signals

Shells

Symphony Nr. 21 in A major KV 134

Animal horns

Cassation in D major Hob. II:D22

Hunting horns

--- Pause ---

Citations from symphonies

Divertimento in D major Hob. II:8

Film music

Symphony Nr. 18 in F major KV 130

Technics