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Kongresshaus Zürich AG und
Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich AG

Media release: Moving back to the Kongresshaus/Tonhalle Zürich

Ready for the city, ready for the world

Kongresshaus and Tonhalle Zürich restored to former glory

Zurich, 16 June 2021 – **After four years of renovations, the Kongresshaus and Tonhalle Zürich are to be reunited under one roof at their traditional location on Lake Zurich. The Kongresshaus now sets new standards in event technology and climate neutrality, while the Grosse Tonhalle, home of the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, is both a visual and an acoustic feast.**

While Kongresshaus Zürich AG is already operational and will be holding its first major event as soon as August, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich is still performing at its interim venue, the Tonhalle Maag, and will spend August preparing itself and the concert hall for the inaugural concerts to be given at the Grosse Tonhalle in September.

State-of-the-art, climate-neutral technology

Neither occupant of the buildings located on Claridenstrasse and Gotthardstrasse – of which Kongresshausstiftung Zürich is the landlord – could be more excited: «I'm really looking forward to seeing every element of the Kongresshaus in action after all these months of preparation,» says Roger Büchel, Director and CEO of Kongresshaus Zürich AG. «The new Kongresshaus is an architectural icon which, after the renovation, now uniquely combines tradition with modernity – and all this right on the shores of the lake.»

The most striking structural change to the Kongresshaus has been the removal of the Panorama Hall, resulting in an unobstructed view of Lake Zurich and the Alps directly from the concert foyer. This alteration also made possible the construction of the first-floor restaurant, whose terrace – in terms of size – and panoramic views are sure to be unrivalled in Zurich. Furthermore, particular importance was attached to investing in the venue's event technology and digital network. This has resulted in what is arguably Switzerland's most modern event venue, featuring state-of-the-art technology for small-scale functions as well as multi-day international congresses, online conferences or hybrid events.

Kongresshaus Zürich AG has earned the further distinction of being awarded certification as a climate-neutral venue. Roger Büchel is delighted: «We are the first climate-neutral event and congress centre in Switzerland. At our venue, event organisers and guests will leave no carbon footprint.»

Restored splendour

Ilona Schmiel, Director of Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich AG, is also convinced that a cultural and social beacon – a place for everyone – is being created here: «We are also overjoyed to be able to return to the Grosse Tonhalle with a top-class programme, and to lead this atmospheric place into the future. We want to give everyone a chance to experience the concert hall's unique sound and to participate in the city's cultural life.» After a four-year hiatus, for the orchestra and its Music Director Paavo Järvi, this means –

for now – readjusting to the concert hall’s unique acoustics. It also means reconquering the Grosse Tonhalle as an ensemble and carrying its name out into the wider world.

The acoustics specialists of Munich’s BBM-Müller GmbH have already conducted initial tests with the orchestra. These show that the hall’s tonal brilliance was not only maintained during the renovations, but has also been revitalised compared to its previous state. It became clear that the acoustic brilliance of the original hall had diminished over the years. The restoration of the Grosse Tonhalle – one of Switzerland’s largest renovation projects – aimed to return the hall approximately to its original state of 1895. Restoring the genuine gilding, scagliola columns, chandeliers and ceiling paintings on canvas dating from that time has now returned the concert hall to its former glory.

In terms of technology, an audio-visual studio perfectly suited to streaming has also been added.

Furthermore, the Grosse Tonhalle now has a new organ, built in the workshop of the organ-builder Kuhn AG in Männedorf and tailored to the needs of the renovated Tonhalle Zürich. The organ can be used flexibly, both for solo performances and as a superb, modern orchestral instrument – and its sound is a true tribute to the hall.

In preparation for the opening days on 4 and 5 September, Kongresshaus Zürich AG and the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich will breathe new life into the buildings during the summer. Tickets for these dates will be available in several time slots from 4 p.m. on 16 June 2021 on the seeyouamsee.ch website. The Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich will give its inaugural concerts on 15 and 16 September. Advance ticket sales for the Tonhalle Zürich will begin on 23 August.

About the Kongresshaus Zürich

Located directly on Lake Zurich, the Kongresshaus Zürich is one of Switzerland’s largest and most modern event venues, with 5,300 m² of multifunctional event space, 4,500 seats and over 20 rooms. Together with the world-famous Tonhalle, it combines business, culture, art and gastronomy under one roof, and sets new standards in technology, sustainability and flexibility. The Kongresshaus/Tonhalle complex is an icon of Swiss architecture and accordingly of national significance. The Kongresshaus Zürich has been under the management of Director/CEO Roger Büchel since 2019. The building reopened in the summer of 2021 after four years of complete renovation. zurichconventioncenter.com

About the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich

The Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich operates the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, which was founded in 1868, and organises various concert series given by its own orchestra as well as top-class guest ensembles and soloists. The Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich is one of the world’s leading orchestras. It has been led by Music Director Paavo Järvi since the 2019/20 season. For the duration of the renovations at the Tonhalle, the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich built an award-winning interim concert hall, the Tonhalle Maag, in record time and successfully established it as *the* venue for classical music for all of Zurich’s event organisers. The Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich provided 85 percent of the financing for the Tonhalle Maag and operated the concert hall under its own management. After four years in the Zurich-West district, The orchestra and its management team will move back to their home on Lake Zurich in the summer of 2021. Ilona Schmiel has been Director of the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft Zürich since the 2014/15 season. tonhalle-orchester.ch

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