

The Deutsche Radio Philharmonie is one of the largest radio symphony orchestras of ARD, the German association of public service broadcasters. It plays a major role on the music scene in South West Germany, especially around its home sites in Saarbrücken and Kaiserslautern, as well as in nearby France and in Mannheim, Mainz and Karlsruhe. Recent tours include Poland, China and South Korea. This season it is invited to the Bruckner Festival Linz and to give a concert in the basilica at Ottobeuren Abbey.

Finnish conductor Pietari Inkinen has been Chief Conductor of the DRP since 2017. His contract has been renewed until 2025. His work with the orchestra focuses on the great symphonic masterpieces, in particular those of Antonín Dvořák and Sergei Prokofiev, with recordings of their complete cycles, as well as the symphonies of his fellow countryman Sibelius and, beginning this season, Anton Bruckner.

In addition to music from the Classical and Romantic eras, the DRP's repertoire focuses on the discovery or rediscovery of composers such as French-German symphonist Louis Théodore Gouvy, the multi-talented and charismatic Polish composer Ignacy Jan Paderewski (Berlin Classics recording) and Clement, Romberg and Eybler, who were contemporaries of Ludwig van Beethoven (Sony Classical). The DRP also attaches great importance to new and contemporary music, which it performs mainly at concerts during its "Mouvements" series and at the "Saarbrücker Komponistenwerkstatt", a workshop for young composers. Rolf Riehm, Philippe Manoury, Thierry Pécou and Jakub Sarwas have composed orchestral pieces commissioned by the DRP. Film music, live-to-picture concerts and music from the realm where classical meets jazz also feature regularly in the orchestra's programmes. The DRP's Artist in Residence for the 2020-21 season is Austrian mezzo-soprano Elisabeth Kulman. The orchestra has introduced a number of highly innovative concert formats, with programmes like "Hin und Hör!" (masterpieces with commentary), "DRP-Allez!" (groups of DRP musicians performing in pubs) and "DRP PUR" (concerts without a conductor). Its concert series for young audiences ("Musik für junge Ohren", "Orchesterspielplatz") and family Christmas concerts are very popular.

The DRP's founding chief conductor Christoph Poppen (2007-2011) brought a visionary energy and many ground-breaking programme ideas. His successor, British conductor Karel Mark Chichon (2011-2017), concentrated on the orchestra's unique sound profile. The DRP also had an honorary conductor, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, who died in 2017. The Deutsche Radio Philharmonie was formed in 2007 by merging two orchestras: the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSO) and the SWR Kaiserslautern Radio Orchestra. While the RSO had been shaped by its successive chief conductors, Hans Zender, Myung Whun Chung, Marcello Viotti and Günther Herbig, the SWR Kaiserslautern Radio Orchestra was characterised by its longstanding ties with its chief conductor, Emmerich Smola.