



Honorary Awards 2026

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Berlin, 1 December 2025. It's time to celebrate! Today, the German Record Critics' Award Association announces its **three honorary award winners** for 2026. The PdSK e.V. jury awards honorary prizes to groups and individuals from the music world who have set new standards in their respective fields with their recordings.

In this spirit, the following awards will be presented: the **Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin**, which has set benchmarks in historical performance practice, for its consistently infectious curiosity about Baroque repertoire; **Anouar Brahem**, who crosses borders and defies conventional categories like world music or jazz with his explorations on the oud and lets the magic of the moment happen; „angry woman“ **Jennifer Weist**, who uses her exceptionally versatile and powerful singing voice to speak out against sexualised violence and patriarchy in her lyrics about unyielding (female) anger, self-determination and, yes, vulnerability.

The awards will be presented in a festive setting with an audience. The PdSK e.V. will announce the time and place in due course.

The following explanations have been given by the annual committee:

Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin

It all began with an attic find in the GDR, where historical instruments were almost impossible to come by. The newly-founded Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin was made up of musicians from the East Berlin opera houses and the former Berliner Sinfonie-Orchester, and gave its first concert in 1982 in the Köpenick Castle Church. It must have been a big bang – because it is not only today's Berlin baroque music scene that benefits from the founding of AKAMUS. The ensemble has moved fans from Tokyo to Buenos Aires, New York and London with its infectious desire to illuminate the greatest masterpieces of the Baroque in hitherto unimagined depth and to reflect them through rediscovered scores, freshly recovered from the archives. With over a hundred recordings, AKAMUS has set many internationally-acclaimed milestones. The walls of its ivory tower are porous for listeners who follow the academic philosophy of AKAMUS and allow themselves to be drawn into the ensemble's endlessly joyous playing.

(For the Annual Committee: Julia Kaiser)

Anouar Brahem

Anouar Brahem's art unfolds in many ways: when he plays the short-necked oud, which originates from the Middle East, as a soloist or in harmony with other musicians, and in his encounters with non-European cultures. The Tunisian-born artist collaborates with leading representatives of a wide variety of styles, demonstrating impressively just how well the sound of the oud can blend with other instruments to create a harmonious whole. Brahem's work crosses borders and defies conventional categories such as world music, ethnic music or jazz. He always follows his own idiosyncratic, experimental path, where Arabic and European sounds meet with improvisational influences from jazz. His music never sounds forced or dramatic, but rather calm and meditative – it thrives on the magic of the moment. Anouar Brahem tirelessly interrogates the expressive possibilities of his instrument – in haunting explorations that we hope to hear from him for a long time to come.

(For the Annual Committee: Helge Grünwald)

Jennifer Weist

Jennifer Weist, alias Yaenniver, stands for the courage to be loud with her music where silence would be more convenient (for perpetrators). As an „angry woman“, she fights against abuse of power and sexism in the music industry, against sexualised violence and against the patriarchy. In an industry that often rewards complacency and suppresses dissenting voices, Jennifer Weist remains unwaveringly clear. Even though she never wanted to be one, she is a feminist role model. In her lyrics, she unflinchingly addresses (female) anger, self-determination and, yes, vulnerability. Her exceptionally versatile and powerful singing voice, her stage presence and her clear stance against nationalism – all these things make Jennifer Weist one of the most important German-speaking singers. Many years ago, as the lead singer of the band Jennifer Rostock, she sang in the song „Himalaya“: „And I'm still here.“ That continues to hold true. Fortunately.

(For the Annual Committee: Nastassja von der Weiden)

The following critics served on the 2025 Annual Committee: Helge Grünwald (Music Film Jury), Julia Kaiser (Lieder and Vocal Recital Jury), Kai Luehrs-Kaiser (Opera I Jury), Joachim Mischke (Film Music Jury), Regine Müller (Choir and Vocal Ensemble Jury), Carsten Niemann (Early Music Jury), Sabrina Palm (Folk and Singer/Songwriter Jury), Petra Rieß (R&B, Soul and Hip-Hop Jury), Nastassja von der Weiden (Club and Dance Jury)

The German Record Critics' Award (Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik) is an independent association of German-speaking critics. The association is recognised as a non-profit organisation, is financed by donations, and welcomes any support. The PdSK is supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media and by the Society for the Administration of Neighbouring Rights (GVL).

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