



## Nightingale Award („Nachtigall“) & Honorary Awards 2025

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**Berlin, 2 December 2024.** Today, the German Record Critics' Award announces its **three Honorary Awards** and the **Nightingale of the Year Award („Nachtigall“)** for 2025. The jurors of the PdSK e.V. award honorary prizes to personalities from the music world who have set new standards in their respective fields, representing the recorded medium as a cultural asset.

The PdSK awards the Nachtigall (Nightingale) – a bronze sculpture created by the artist Daniel Richter – to honour outstanding artists who have made a lasting impact on our musical life, changing it for the better. Past Nightingale award winners include Nina Hagen, Murray Perahia, Leonard Cohen, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Christian Gerhaher, Brigitte Fassbaender, the RIAS Chamber Choir and jazz pianist Irène Schweizer.

This year's awards go to: the founder of a contemporary jazz institution, **Patrik Landolt**, for his enthusiasm for music without stylistic boundaries and for freedom of aesthetics; **Wolfgang Niedecken**, an authentic ambassador of his hometown of Cologne and its musical language, for his social commitment, which is inextricably linked to his musical work; the Swiss singer-songwriter **Sophie Hunger**, for her economical urgency, hypnotic and compelling. The PdSK honours the violinist **Sigiswald Kuijken as the Nightingale winner** for revolutionising our appreciation of early music and exploring period instruments and performance techniques with fearless virtuosity.

The awards will be presented at a ceremony attended by the public. The PdSK will announce the time and location in due course.

Please find the jury statements below:

### „Nachtigall“ (Nightingale) 2025

#### **Sigiswald Kuijken**

Through his fearless and virtuosic exploration of period instruments and performance techniques, Sigiswald Kuijken has helped to revolutionise our understanding and appreciation of early music. His innovative approach to violin technique, dispensing with modern aids in favour of historical authenticity, has challenged and inspired performers worldwide, as have his pioneering work with his ensemble La Petite Bande and his teaching at renowned

conservatories. Kuijken has influenced more than one generation of musicians. His artistic vision, which he shares with his equally talented brothers, has resulted in numerous benchmark recordings of chamber music and orchestral works from the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as of operas and sacred music from the same periods, impressively demonstrating the versatility and depth of his musical output.

*(For the annual committee: Carsten Niemann)*

## **Honorary Awards 2025**

### **Sophie Hunger**

„Finde mich (Find Me)“. The title of the song from the German-English album *Hallucinations* describes the work of Swiss artist Sophie Hunger with surprising precision. For years she has been an almost ghost-like presence in a broad range of music industry categories: pop, rock, indie, singer-songwriter. She is never dull. When she sings quiet ballads in Swiss German, such as „D’Red“ from her second studio album *1983*, she touches our hearts with economical urgency, startling in its directness. The Bern-born singer, songwriter and film composer is a careful observer of human conditions. She plays guitar and piano; she is a columnist and an author. Since 2008, she has released eight albums: hypnotic, independent and outrageous in turn. Her live performances are extraordinary. Despite all her inventiveness, she provides us with familiar references that we can grasp, such as chanson or electronic space-pop sounds. She once left her native mountains for the USA, but soon returned. Thank you, Sophie!

*(For the annual committee: Petra Rieß)*

### **Wolfgang Niedecken**

Wolfgang Niedecken writes and composes his poetic songs in his everyday dialect, Kölsch, focussing on people, their relationships, thoughts and feelings. He is an authentic ambassador for his home town and its musical language. Like few others, he is able to present big topics in small, personal stories, expressing them in honest language. Rather than avoiding problematic topics in his songs, the songwriter addresses them in a nuanced manner, but with a clear stance. His great social commitment, as in „Arsch huh“ or various aid projects in Africa, is inextricably linked with his musical work. Wolfgang Niedecken is a living legend, not only for the people of Cologne. A down-to-earth person and outstanding musician.

*(For the annual committee: Sabrina Palm)*

### **Patrik Landolt**

It all began at the Taktlos Festival in Zurich in 1984, with a concert recording by pianist Irène Schweizer for which no label could be found. Patrik Landolt – initially a philosophy student and event organiser, then a journalist – took matters into his own hands and released the recording two years later. It marked the launch of Intakt Records, an internationally-respected forum for contemporary improvised music. Patrik Landolt ran the label for 36 years until January 2022, initially on a voluntary basis and then as head of a creative team that never lost sight of artistic independence. Numerous artists from Zurich to Berlin and New York have benefited from his enthusiasm for music without stylistic boundaries, from the freedom of aesthetics, which Intakt, as a label run in a similar way to a publishing house, has continued to

promote with great commitment to this day. Without Patrik Landolt, this institution of contemporary jazz would never have come into being, grown and flourished. It is his passion that has made so much great art possible.

*(For the annual committee: Ralf Dombrowski)*

***The following critics/jurors worked in the annual committee: Laura Aha, Tim Caspar Boehme (both Jury Club and Dance), Ralf Dombrowski (Jury Pop), Julia Kaiser (Jury Lieder and Vocal Recital), Kai Luehrs-Kaiser (Jury Opera I), Carsten Niemann (Jury Early Music), Sabrina Palm (Jury Folk and Singer/Songwriter), Petra Rieß (Jury R&B, Soul and HipHop) and Albrecht Thiemann (Jury Lieder and Vocal Recital).***

*The „Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik“ e.V. is an independent association of German-speaking critics. The association is recognized as a non-profit organization; it is financed by donations and welcomes any support. The PdSK is funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien) and by the Society for the exploitation of ancillary copyrights (Gesellschaft zur Verwertung von Leistungsschutzrechten, GVL).*

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