

# DANIEL HARDING

I was surprised and amazed to hear about the plans to close the music highschoools in South Tyrol (Alto Adige)! I have been lucky enough to participate over many years in the wonderful musical life of your region thanks to my appearances in the series of Meran and Toblach. I also think of the numerous friends and colleagues, professional musicians and music lovers, I have from the region who have done so much to enrich my life and those of so many.

Music education is something precious for countless young people, some of whom will go on to be professional musicians but also many of whom will take the musical and human skills they have learned into other related fields. It is, I firmly believe, dangerously short sighted to look at music education and judge it's importance and relevance based on criteria that apply to other fields. The role that music plays in our society goes far beyond the concert hall. The skills of interaction required for music making and the understanding of what it is to strive for unattainable perfection are hugely important in the development of young people, they are skills and experiences that enrich our communities in countless ways. The musical tradition, and it's role in the community, in South Tyrol is something precious, unique and necessarily fragile.

It has been built and cared for over hundreds of years!

Education is at the heart of the continuation of this wonderful and proud tradition, to dismantle that now would be an act of tragic cultural violence.

Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra  
Music Director of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra  
Principal Conductor of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra