

In the 1940s, music student Edmond de Stoutz used his free time to regularly meet with a number of friends and make music together. The joy of pursuing their creative ideals and the group's shared passion for chamber music gave rise to the desire of forming a chamber orchestra. This led to the first public concert in Zurich in 1945.

77 years later the Zurich Chamber Orchestra is one of the leading ensembles of its kind. For over 50 years, Edmond de Stoutz was inspiring and holding together the orchestra community. With his charismatic spirit he excited musicians and audience alike and helped establish a large supporting network around the orchestra. After his era, the conductors Howard Griffiths, Muhai Tang and Sir Roger Norrington shaped the sound and musical ideas of the ZCO. Since 2016, the orchestra is playing without a permanent conductor. Instead, Music Director Daniel Hope is leading the orchestra from his instrument, thereby following the dynamic principle of «Play & Conduct».

The ZCO is a well traveled orchestra. A few years after its foundation, the ZCO already started giving concerts abroad. Today, the ZCO regularly visits international festivals such as the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, the Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the Rheingau Musik Festival, the Gstaad Menuhin Festival or Odessa Classics. Guest performances in leading concert halls, tours through European countries, America, Asia and South Africa as well as numerous critically acclaimed CD releases testify to the worldwide renown of the Zurich Chamber Orchestra.

The repertoire is broadly based, extending from the Baroque through the Classical and Romantic eras to the present day. The orchestra is also notable for its work with musicians from other fields such as jazz, folk music and popular entertainment. The family concerts, outreach work with children and young people and encouragement of young instrumentalists are in every way as important to the Zurich Chamber Orchestra as its close and continuing collaboration with world-renowned soloists.