

Discovering Ysaÿe through a love of Bach Antje Weithaas releases the third and final album of her Bach-Ysaÿe trilogy



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

SONATA NO. 3 FOR SOLO VIOLIN BWV 1005

[1] Adagio [2] Fuga [3] Largo [4] Allegro assai

Eugène Ysaÿe (1858 – 1931)

SONATA NO. IN E MAJOR FOR SOLO VIOLIN OP. 27 MANUEL QUIROGA

[5] Allegro giusto non troppo vivo

SONATA NO. 4 IN E MINOR FOR SOLO VIOLIN OP. 27 FRITZ KREISLER

[6] Allemande: Lento maestoso

[7] Sarabande: Quasi lento

[8] Finale: Presto ma non troppo

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

PARTITA NO. 1 IN B MINOR FOR SOLO VIOLIN BWV 1002

[9] Allemande [10] Double [11] Corrente [12] Double [13] Sarabande [14] Double
[15] Tempo di Borea [16] Double

Antje Weithaas *violine*

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With this CD, the violinist Antje Weithaas concludes her recording of all the sonatas and partitas for solo violin by Johann Sebastian Bach and Eugène Ysaÿe. It greatly surprises her that no one has previously brought these two cycles together as systematically as she has done here, even though such an idea seems rather obvious: “The relationships are so strong! Now, I always combine these two composers in my solo recitals. It’s a completely new experience for the audience as well. They mostly come because they love Bach. And then they discover Ysaÿe. After Bach, their ears are opened for Ysaÿe’s subtleties – and after that, they hear more in Bach’s works than they did at the beginning.” Critics have been enthusiastic from the very outset: “Her always technically flawless and musically intelligent and fascinating [Bach] interpretation is simply unassailable. But this Ysaÿe fills me with enthusiasm. Here, a new level is added to the technical and musical virtuosity of the violinist: that of tone colour. There is only a mere breath between luminous brilliance and shadowy *sotto voce*, between lyrical *cantabile* and screaming *furioso* – Weithaas switches from one to the other with lightning speed, turning Ysaÿe into an Expressionist painting in the process” (SWR2 about Vol. 1). And the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* wrote about the second CD: “A splendid Bach-Ysaÿe edition”.

The Partita No. 1 in B Minor, BWV 1002, featured now on this third CD, follows the idea of a French suite containing four dances. In this partita, Bach once more calls for a kind of polyphony that can barely be realised on a violin. “I really thought about this for a long time: how can I musically convey this architecture, this polyphony?” says Antje Weithaas. The Sonata No. 3 in C Major, BWV 1005, is also pervaded by the same kind of polyphonic writing. Bach’s solo works inspired the Belgian violinist and composer Eugène Ysaÿe to write his Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, op. 27. Each of them bears a dedication to a different great violinist of his time. The three-movement Sonata No. 4 in E Minor is dedicated to Fritz Kreisler, who left behind several adaptations of Baroque works. Ysaÿe thus turned here to the form of the dance suite, popular in the Baroque era, just as Bach did in his Partita No. 1. And the sixth sonata, in just one movement, is “the most virtuosic of all”, Antje Weithaas says. Ysaÿe tailored this sonata to suit his pupil Manuel Quiroga, who was considered the best Spanish violinist of his time.

Antje Weithaas started her three-album Bach-Ysaÿe project in 2012. “I am very grateful to have been able to spend so much time working intensively on these two important *œuvres* for solo violin for so many years. Who would normally have such a privilege?!”

For any press enquiries, please contact:

Schimmer PR, Bettina Schimmer

Gocher Str 19a, 50733 Köln // phone +49-(0)221-16879623, mobile +49-(0)172-2148185
bettina.schimmer@schimmer-pr.de // www.schimmer-pr.de