

Consistently Exemplary The Violinist Antje Weithaas' 2016/17 Season

For many years, Antje Weithaas has impressed us “with her incredible technique and an unparalleled musical superiority and understanding”, according to the Berliner Zeitung two years ago. She naturally creates music “from the deepest core” and is always exemplary. In the 2016/17 season, the Professor of the Berlin College will complete both of her two already celebrated CD projects. For her 50th Birthday the virtuoso will be giving a concert at the Berlin Concert Hall with the Camerata Bern, with herself conducting, where the programme will include a first performance of a Cyrill Schürch piece, among others. Further highlights of this passionate artist's anniversary year are a tour of Norway with the ensemble in January 2017, as well as numerous chamber concerts, including a performance from a piano trio.

Putting ego to one side in her work at the Hans Eissler College of Music, she says: “My students should never do anything that they don't believe in ... They should play their own selves.” Technical perfection for its own sake simply produces “bores, straight-laced monkeys and soulless people,” she complained in a recent interview. And, in any case, she has always been dubious of the One Woman Show on the concert stage. Modest and sometimes self-deprecating too, the Violin Professor Antje Weithaas is evenly balanced, having already seen through the workings of the music business (“If it's loud and fast, you'll always be successful.”) and freed herself from it. At the zenith of her own solo career she resolutely strives for one goal in her art: “To make people happy; to lift up a sphere for them that they cannot explain.”

Since 2009, the Brandenburg-born Weithaas has been Artistic Director of the Camerata Bern, a chamber orchestra without a fixed ensemble of musicians or a permanent conductor that has received worldwide recognition for its subtle, homogeneous sound culture, freshness and extraordinary stylistic confidence. On 21. November 2016, the official Weithaas birthday concert from the Swiss ensemble in Berlin awaits with a unique programme of works: Beethoven's “Kreutzer Sonata” op. 47 in an adaptation for Violin and String Orchestra by Richard Tognetti, Mussorgsky's “Pictures from an Exhibition” in an arrangement for string orchestra by Jorma Harkonen, as well as the first ever performance worldwide of “Diagonale” from the Swiss composer Cyrill Schürch, a piece commissioned by the Camerata Bern. This programme will already have been performed the day before at The Hague (20.11.) and will go on to perform at Groningen (22.11.) and Tilburg (23.11.) where it will be broadcast on the radio.

After the chamber orchestra's Norway tour from the 26. to 30. January 2017, there are a further two Camerata dates deserving of special attention: Firstly, on the 14. May in Bern, there will be another first performance of David Philip Hefti's “Chiaroscuro” which can be heard alongside Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 101, arranged for string orchestra by Martin Merker. Secondly, on 17. June in Eisenach, Weithaas and the Camerata Bern will be a guest performer at a Wartburg Concert in co-operation with Deutschlandradio Kultur (German Culture Radio).

Antje Weithaas also has numerous bookings as a guest soloist for the symphony concert circuit in the 2016/17 season. Here in this part of the world she has been booked by NDR Radio Philharmonia led by Andrew Manze, then twice at one time with the Brahmsian Double Concert op. 102 with Maximilian Hornung (9.3. in Hanover, 10.3. in Braunschweig) as well as Robert Schumann's orchestral “Schwanengesang”, the Violin Concert in D-minor (12.3. in Hanover). And, accompanied by the Orchestra of the Mannheim National Theatre, she will interpret Alban Berg's revolutionary violin concert “To the Memory of an Angel” (3.4. and 4.4.) At the end of the season, Antje Weithaas will perform W. A. Mozart's Violin Concert Nr. 1 B-major KV 207 with the SWR Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antonello Manacorda (22.7.2017).

Just as important to Antje Weithaas is the reduction of sound, the small form, the intimate act of listening-in and performing with chamber musicians. As such, in the coming months she will be performing regularly with a trio: On the 13. January 2017 along with Marie Luise Neunecker (Horn) and Silke Avenhaus (Piano) she will play a programme of Schumann and Brahms in the Beethoven House, Bonn, going on to perform with the same musicians and a slightly different programme in Baden-Baden (21.5.) and Nürtingen (22.5.)

As part of an original piano trio, the self-confessed “instinctive violinist” will perform at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg (25.4) together with Marie-Elisabeth Hecker (Vc.) and Martin Helmchen (P.) as well as at the Schwetzing Festival (1.5.). Further chamber music programmes – with viola player Nils Mönkemeyer and cellist Maximilian Hornung at the Augsburg Mozart Festival, for example (26.5.2016.) - demonstrates her great passion for a small ensemble, an ensemble which Antje Weithaas has reduced to the absolute minimum in her current CD project.

Now, after completing her recording of Max Bruch's complete orchestral works for violin and orchestra with the publication of Volume 3 with record label cpo, we await the completion of her Bach/Ysaÿe Trilogy with the CAvi-music label in the autumn, in which the 1988 Leipzig Bach Competition winner has dedicated herself to all solo sonatas and partitas by these two composers.

The Belgian musician Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931) is known as the first modern violinist and was named “Tsar of the Violin” by his colleague Nathan Milstein. Taking into account the critical reception of the first 2 CDs of the series, the success of Antje Weithaas' ambitious solo project, a milestone of recording history, can hardly be doubted. Here, according to Fono Forum, she comes across “as a confident, tonally beautiful and superb contextualising interpreter” (about Vol. 1) who in every way “fully and violinistically thoughtfully brings together: intensity, precision, intelligence in the formation of each phrase, astute articulation, depth of feeling”, according to the Süddeutsche Zeitung (about Vol. 2). However, the best praise came from Gramophone's Caroline Grills who said of Antje Weithaas that you could “hear her complex thoughts”. There is no more unique or self-reflective way of simply performing music or communicating music to the listener.

For any press enquiries, please contact:

Schimmer PR
Bettina Schimmer
Gocher Str 19a, 50733 Cologne
fon +49-(0)221-16879623 // mob +49-(0)172-2148185
bettina.schimmer@schimmer-pr.de
www.schimmer-pr.de