

BEETHOVEN FEST BONN

6.9. - 29.9.2019

PRESS RELEASE

For Beethoven's **250th birthday celebration** in 2020, Beethovenfest Bonn will present – in addition to its traditional fall festival – an additional spring concert series featuring prominent orchestras.

Every year, Beethovenfest Bonn under the artistic direction of Nike Wagner invites audiences to enjoy its three-week program of outstanding music featuring Beethoven works along with music and art – both classical and contemporary – imbued with the spirit of Beethoven. With its lineup of internationally renowned artists, ensembles and productions, Beethovenfest transforms the city of Bonn into a meeting place for music fans from around the world.

March 13 - 22, 2020

Symphony Cycle:

In March 2020, the exceptional Greek-Russian conductor will present a cycle of all of Ludwig van Beethoven's nine symphonies in Bonn together with "his" musicAeterna orchestra of the Perm Opera, which Currentzis has led since 2011. "All nine" will be performed over the course of five evenings, but by no means in chronological order. Currentzis presents the revolutionary Third together with the equally groundbreaking First; the straightforward Second reveals its classical character juxtaposed to the exuberant pathos of the Fifth; the idyllic Fourth cushions the blow of the unfettered power of the Pastoral; while the buoyant Eighth seems inseparable from the rhythmic Seventh. Finally, the pioneering Ninth is presented all by itself together with outstanding soloists.

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European Cycle:

Five of today's major European composers were asked to compose a new piece based on a Beethoven work of their choice, resulting in five exemplary works, each created with Beethoven in the back of the composers' minds. These new works form a cycle of their own, while also informing on the state of composing in Europe today.

As part of the 2020 anniversary celebration, the five works will be performed in close succession by five different orchestras from the respective home countries of the composers – major ensembles from Austria, France, Italy, Germany and Russia. Because the five works will be included in our new spring season – and because March marks the anniversary of Beethoven's death – we will add several later works of the "old" masters for each country. These include Mozart with his last two symphonies; the epic Romantic poem of Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*; Verdi's choral cycle *Quattro Pezzi Sacri* dedicated to our "ultimate concerns"; and the final symphonies of Brahms and Tchaikovsky – both expressions of deep reverence for their musical hero Beethoven, the revolutionary genius from Bonn.

Special concert in the Cologne Cathedral:

A very special concert on August 21, 2020 in the Cologne Cathedral will feature **Kent Nagano** and **Concerto Köln** performing Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* Op. 123, along with the GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE by Karlheinz Stockhausen.

September 4 - 27, 2020

For symphonic highlights, Beethovenfest Bonn 2020 has invited renowned orchestras such as the **Bayreuth Festival Orchestra**, the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** with **Anne-Sophie Mutter**, the **Basel Chamber Orchestra**, the **Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra** and the **Academia di Santa Cecilia** with **Antonio Papano** and **Igor Levit**.

A core theme of the 2020 festival will be the "Leonore" operas. Along with a Theater Bonn production of **Fidelio**, audiences can look forward to three operas by Beethoven contemporaries **Pierre Gaveaux**, **Fernando Paër** and **Johann Simon Mayr**, who also wrote Leonore operas. The **Salzburg Marionette Theatre** complements the opera series with its "Fidelio en miniature".

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The complete set of Franz Liszt's Beethoven Symphonies will provide a very special counterpoint to the Symphony Cycle performed in March during the spring festival. As part of the September 2020 festival, Beethovenfest Bonn will host a summit meeting of four piano virtuosos, who will divide Liszt's nine transcriptions for solo piano among themselves: **Boris Bloch**, born in Odessa and now living in his adoptive country Germany; Russian **Konstantin Scherbakov**, who rose to fame as winner of Poland's International Chopin Piano Competition; four-time prize winner from Germany **Hinrich Alpers**; and the French-Cyprian pianist **Cyprien Katsaris** whose repertoire has always included a special place for Liszt.

Press inquiries:

Barbara Dallheimer | presse@beethovenfest.de | +49 (0) 228-20 10 340 | www.beethovenfest.de