

PRESSKIT

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Works for clarinet

Dirk Altmann, bassettclarinet
Ludwig Chamber Players & members of the
SWR Symphonieorchester
Kei Shirai, concertmaster
Masato Suzuki, pianoforte

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Kirchheim u. Teck
total playing time: 68:10

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5.1 multi channel (24/96) layer

SACD- Version:
Order no. 0252-4
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Contains CD-layer (playable in every CD-player),

You will find the booklet, with a informative, enjoyable article
by Katharina Eickhoff, online: „Mozart´s inner voice“
<http://dirkaltmann.com/mozart-booklet/>

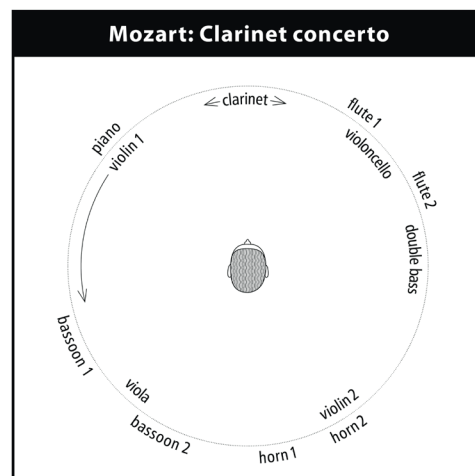
TACET news 10/2019

The clarinet player uses his instrument as billard cue. This little provocation on the cover indicates what is going on. Its common knowledge that Mozart composed these pieces not long before his death. But for Dirk Altmann (and booklet author Katharina Eickhoff) they are not the creations of an angel on the way to heaven but where written in a very earthly environment a part of which was playing billard with his friend and clarinet player Anton Stadler. What happens when the clarinet concerto is played exempt of romantic, nearly religious enhancement? We hear the inspirations of a joyful genius. Surely you want to know more...

Information about this production by Dirk Altmann

In the many years of preparation for this production I kept asking myself, what was everyday life like for a musician in the 18th century? What drove Mozart, what might his relationship with his colleagues have been like? Were there fundamental differences, apart from technological developments, from today's music scene? Mozart's Viennese years from 1781 were characterized by a great spirit of reform arising from the revolutions in America and France, an aspiring bourgeoisie and secularisation, along with numerous social reforms under Emperor Joseph. The Age of Enlightenment reached its peak in 1789 with the Declaration of Human and Civil Rights in the French National Assembly. Mozart understood like no other how to capture this social shift in his compositions. He was the most fashionable artist with the Emperor, at the royal court, in bourgeois salons and amongst street musicians. Neither later composers nor the pop icons of today have achieved such popularity among all levels of society.

With Kei Shirai, our Japanese-Viennese concertmaster, we have tried to make Mozart's euphoria and sense of fun at disrupting traditional ways of making music audible in each bar, with each phrasing and articulation. In the quintet, the clarinet sweeps away the classical phrase introduced by the venerable string quartet right at the beginning with a "Haydnesque joke." After



that, it torments the first violin, makes demands of the other instruments in terms of dynamics and agility, only in the next bar to blend quite naturally with the string sound.

In the concerto, the clarinet takes the place of a small opera ensemble, from lyrical soprano cantilenas, through virtuoso mezzo coloraturas, to a laughing commentary in the bass line. This is really not an end-of-life piece.

We have consciously based the orchestral forces for the concerto on the string strengths passed down to us from the Prague Opera Orchestra. It seemed plausible to us that Stadler's orchestra at the premiere could have been formed of 3 first violins, 3 second violins, 2 violas and a bass group. At that time, continuo playing was still common practice and so we added a pianoforte to the cello and bass. I would like to thank Masato Suzuki for his wonderful ideas and inspiration, which made the recording sessions a real pleasure. On a whim we decided to round off this CD with the two songs K. 523 and K. 524.

I am also grateful to my colleagues in the SWR Symphony Orchestra. With them I was privileged to go through the "enlightened" school of Sir Roger Norrington, and the foundations of this recording were laid in the many years of his conducting at the Radio Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart. At least you will find a beautifully designed booklet, with an informative, enjoyable article by Katharina Eickhoff. *"Mozart's inner voice"*

playlist:

Quintet A major KV 581 for clarinet, two violins, viola and violoncello

1 | Allegro

2 | Larghetto

3 | Menuetto

4 | Allegretto con Variazioni

Two Songs KV 524 & KV 523 adapted for clarinet and pianoforte

5 | An Chloé

6 | Abendempfindung für Laura

Clarinet concerto A major KV 622

7 | Allegro

8 | Adagio

9 | Rondo allegro

cast:

Ludwig Chamber Players & members of the SWR Symphonieorchester Stuttgart*

Dirk Altmann, bassettclarinet | Kei Shirai (concertmaster) & Emily Körner, violin | Janis Lielbardis, viola | Gen Yokosaka, violoncello

Instrument position for the Quintet (from left): violin 1, violoncello, clarinet, viola, violin 2

additionall members for the concerto*

Gesa Jenne, Stefan Bornscheuer, Silke Meyer-Eggen and Soo-Eun Lee, violin | Chrisian Nas, viola | Ryutaro Hei, bass | Gaby Pas-van Riet and Christina Singer, flute | Eduardo Calzada and Nerea Margarita Saez Guijarro, bassoon | Wolfgang Wipfler and Susanne Wichmann, horn | Masato Suzuki, pianoforte & direction

equipment:

D. Altmann: JOSEF MK 11, bassettclarinet | Play Easy B2 | Ligaphone ligature et reeds.

Pianoforte: Cembalobau Merzdorf (piano replica of a Mozarteum instrument)

texts:

For more than 30 years, **Dirk Altmann** has been a principal solo clarinet with the SWR Symphonie Orchestra in Stuttgart. In addition, he is very active as a soloist, chamber musician, arranger and teacher.

In January 2018 he recorded the clarinet concerto KV 622 and the clarinet quintet KV 581 by W.A. Mozart, with the Ludwig Chamber Players and Masato Suzuki (fortepiano, conductor) for the TACET label (now released). In 2016 he produced his PARIS album with the Japanese pianist and professor Mako Okamoto. Further CDs with works by Charles Koechlin, Robert Schumann and Paul Hindemith have been released with the labels Hänssler classic and TACET. As a soloist Altmann recorded the Première Rhapsody by Claude Debussy with Heinz Holliger and RSO Stuttgart for SWRmusic.

As a chamber musician he plays with the Ludwig Chamber Players (LCP), the STUTTGART WINDS, the ensemble FrAlHöTi and in a duo with Mako Okamoto, piano.

An ensemble version of the "Visions fugitives" by S. Prokofiev (LCP – TACET), which he did for the Ludwig Chamber Players Prokofiev Chamber music CD, was nominated for the International Classical Music Award (ICMA) 2017.

As a soloist, he was a guest at international festivals, In Ferrara, Schwetzingen, Salzburg or the Rheingau Music Festival. With Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Neville Marriner, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Thomas Hengelbrock, Peter Eötvös, Heinz Holliger and Daniel Harding as conductors.

In recent years, Dirk Altmann has repeatedly been invited to master classes in China, Taiwan and Japan. Since 2010 he has been cooperating with the Japanese woodwind instrument manufacturer JOSEF Woodwind Manufacture (Okinawa).

Kei Shirai is a prize winner in several international competitions and is very active as a soloist and chamber musician. He is a regular guest concertmaster with the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo. Kei Shirai lives in Tokyo and Vienna.

Masato Suzuki, born in 1981, works as a conductor, composer, pianist, organist, harpsichordist and producer. He is vice president of the Bach Collegium Japan and festival director of the Cho-fu International Music Festival. He is a sought-after chamber music partner in Europe, with, for example, the violist Antoine Tamestit.

The **Ludwig Chamber Players** (LCP) are known for their enthusiastic playing coupled with a captivating virtuosity. Their various musical influences (the musicians come from 7 different nations) contribute to the ensemble's outstanding interpretations. In addition to this Mozart CD, recordings of chamber music by Sergei Prokofiev as well as a CD of Ludwig van Beethoven's Septet have been released on the TACET label.

The **SWR Symphonieorchester's** profile includes, in addition to new music, symphonic orchestral literature from the preceding eras as well as interpretative approaches drawn from historically informed performance practice. Sharing quality music across all age groups is also an important part of their work.

LINKS:

TACET: www.tacet.de

Dirk Altmann: www.dirkaltmann.de

Ludwig Chamber Players: www.ludwigchamberplayers.com

Masato Suzuki: suzukimasato.com

JOSEF woodwindmanufacture: www.josef-oboe.com

Cembalobau Merzdorg: www.merzdorf.de

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