

Magical encounter

Lena Neudauer, Marcus Bosch and the Cappella Aquileia give glowing performances of Beethoven's works for violin and orchestra



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Violin Concerto op. 61 in D major

[1] ALLEGRO MA NON TROPPO

[2] LARGHETTO

[3] RONDO

[4] Violin Romance op. 40 in G major

[5] Violin Romance op. 50 in F major

Lena Neudauer *Violin*

Cappella Aquileia

Marcus Bosch *Conductor*

cpo 777 759-2 // Release: December 6, 2019

When musicians naturally share the same fiery passion, it results in especially exciting and authentic experiences for the listeners. And that is the case here with the recording of Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto and two Romances for violin and orchestra by Lena Neudauer and the Cappella Aquileia under the baton of Marcus Bosch. This album, issued by the cpo label a month before the start of the celebratory Beethoven year in 2020, is a radiant start to a series of recordings by the Cappella Aquileia that is to be continued with all the composer's overtures, his sometimes lesser-known incidental music and his ballet music for Prometheus.

"The encounter with Marcus Bosch and the Cappella Aquileia was magical! Everything felt right – as if our ideas had always just waited to meet up at last," says an enthusiastic Lena Neubauer about this CD production, which also included a concert in Heidenheim in May 2018. Marcus Bosch is equally impressed by the shared artistic approach during the project: "The concert and the recording with Lena were a great joy. She plays Beethoven exactly the way I feel it and fits in wonderfully with the sound the Cappella tries for."

It is particularly vital for the interpretation of Beethoven's only violin concerto for all the artists involved to have an empathetic understanding of each other, because the solo part, despite its virtuosic demands, does not stand out as an elaborate showpiece but is closely woven with the orchestra. The mood in the three movements shifts between the dramatic and the lyrical, and the solo violin and the orchestra take turns in the leading role. For the cadenza in the first movement, Lena Neudauer drew on Beethoven's version from his arrangement of the work for piano, and was thus able to include the tympani part that pervades the Allegro from the very start.

In comparison with the almost 45-minute-long Violin Concerto, Beethoven's two Romances for violin are miniatures, but they demand the same considerate give-and-take between the solo instrument and the orchestra as the longer work. The lyrical themes played by the violin are involved in a constant

dialogue with the orchestral parts. In keeping with their genre, the Romances mostly radiate a cheerful melodiousness.

Beethoven's works are in the performers' artistic DNA. Marcus Bosch is one of the most prominent figures in Germany's conducting scene. He set out on the traditional German career path of "kapellmeister" early on, before beginning an international career that has taken him to more than 100 orchestras throughout the world. His innovative projects regularly create a stir and he is always curious about the unusual, rediscoveries and daring new approaches. Since 2010, he has been the Artistic Director of the Heidenheim Opera Festival, where he initiated the founding of the festival orchestra, Cappella Aquileia. This ensemble, whose chamber-symphony size is based on the original proportions of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, performs mostly operas and key works of the Classical and Romantic eras. Hand-picked musicians from all over Germany and beyond come together regularly for its projects, creating an impressive, very individual sound that reflects their shared ideas about the repertoire they are performing.

When Lena Neudauer made her first guest appearance in a "Meisterkonzert" with Marcus Bosch and the Cappella Aquileia in Heidenheim in 2016, it was quickly clear to all involved that this collaboration should bear further fruit. This gave rise to the idea of this recording of the Beethoven Violin Concerto, with which the violinist adds another milestone of the violin literature to a discography that already includes works by Schumann, Ravel, Mozart and Mendelssohn, among others. This work has accompanied her since her youth. Among other things, she studied it with her teacher Thomas Zehetmair, who had a formative influence on her: "In this concerto, I feel as though I am part of something much bigger, which is a very uplifting emotion. But at the same time, I am in great awe of the perfection and beauty of the whole work."

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