



BEETHOVENFEST BONN

Bonn, 2 October 2009

Beethoven Symphonies with Paavo Järvi and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen as multimedia climax

Beethovenfest Bonn 2009 achieves a ticket uptake of 90 percent

The Beethovenfest Bonn 2009 was held under the patronage of chancellor Angela Merkel from 4 September to 3 October in 29 venues in the Beethoven's native city and the surrounding district. Tomorrow evening the Beethovenfest Bonn 2009 will end. It can boast a ticket uptake of 90 percent and 44 concerts that were completely sold out, out of a total of 75 in the main programme. The number of tickets available was considerably larger than last year. For the 75 events, 48,500 tickets were on sale, compared with 38,500 for 60 events in 2008.

The "Path of Democracy" alone comprised 14 one-hour concerts. It was held on 6 September in six politically significant venues in the former federal capital, each representing in music one decade of the Federal Republic of Germany, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. Politicians who have experienced and helped to shape these 60 years each described their personal impressions of one of the decades: Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, Count Otto Lambsdorff, Ursula Lehr, Volker Busse, Rudolf Seiters and Andrea Fischer. The "Path of Democracy" was documented by WDR Television, and the one-hour film will be shown on that channel at 11.15 pm on 3 November.

Another event captured on film was the **Beethoven symphony cycle performed by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen conducted by Paavo Järvi**. The performance of all nine Beethoven symphonies on four consecutive evenings was recorded live on film by DW-TV in co-operation with Unitel Classica Live for a DVD production. Alongside recordings of the concerts themselves, a 90-minute music documentary was also made, entitled "The Beethoven Project". The documentation of the Beethoven symphony cycle is the outcome of the five-year residency of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen at the Beethovenfest, in which the performance of all the symphonies was prepared as the culmination. The film and excerpts from the recordings will be broadcast in 2010 on DW-TV and Premiere classica, while the DVD is planned for release in April 2010. The symphony cycle inspired enthusiasm worldwide: fans were able to see and hear the concerts not only in the Beethovenhalle, which was sold out, but in cinemas all across

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Europe and as live-stream on the internet, which was followed by 16,500 people around the world. The outdoor public screening of the Eighth and Ninth Symphonies enticed 4,500 on to the Bonner Marktplatz.

For the first time and exclusively at the Beethovenfest, on eight evenings six fortepiano specialists played **all 32 of Beethoven's piano sonatas on reproductions of historical fortepianos** and on one original instrument built by Michael Rosenberger in 1800. The musicians in question were Andreas Staier, Christine Schornsheim, Mari Kodama, Ronald Brautigam, Alexander Melnikov and Andrea Lucchesini. Four of these outstanding recitals on historical instruments represented first appearances at the Beethovenfest by the respective artists: Christine Schornsheim, Mari Kodama, Ronald Brautigam and Alexander Melnikov had not played here before.

At the closing concert tomorrow in the sold-out Beethovenhalle, Kent Nagano will be conducting the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in a symphonic concert for the first time. The concert will round off a festival that was held under the motto "In the Limelight: the Romantic Apotheosis of the Artist". This theme was chosen in the light of Beethoven's role as the first "Romantic" composer, and the final concert once more clearly demonstrates Beethoven's influence on the Romantic movement: Brahms looked on Beethoven's symphonies as almost inimitable role models and was 43 before he could bring himself to complete one of his own. At its first performance it was hailed by the musical community as "Beethoven's Tenth".

Another first appearance at the Beethovenfest Bonn was made by the Latvian Andris Nelsons, who, at the age of just 30, is already being fêted worldwide as one of the stars among the new generation of conductors. He impressively demonstrated that, in his first year as chief conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, he built up an unusual and musically creative relationship with the orchestra, which came to prominence through its association with Sir Simon Rattle. Nelsons and his orchestra demonstrated their pleasure in playing by giving us a programme, reflecting the motto of this year's festival, of music by Elgar, Beethoven and Britten. Sol Gabetta was a brilliant partner in the performance of Elgar's Cello Concerto.

Even younger than Andris Nelsons is Gustavo Dudamel, who this year played at the Beethovenfest Bonn for the fourth time. He too combined works by Beethoven with music by Romantic composers: Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 was followed by Gustav Mahler's five "Rückert Lieder", memorably sung by Anna Larsson. The 28-year-old Gustavo Dudamel and Göteborgs Symfoniker, whose chief conductor he has been since the 2007/2008 season, then went on to enthuse the audience with Carl Nielsen's Symphony No. 4. This concert was the only one on their German tour to be recorded by Deutschlandfunk and Deutsche Welle.

A further 28 concerts were recorded by the festival's **media partners**, namely Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Deutsche Welle and Deutschlandfunk/Deutschlandradio Kultur, and broadcast either live or later. These included concerts by celebrities such as Valery Gergiev, who performed Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Bruckner's Symphony No. 9 with the London Symphony Orchestra and the pianist Alexei Volodin, and also the concert by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under its chief conductor Manfred Honeck with Viktoria Mullova's interpretation of Beethoven's violin concerto.

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Among the **stars** who placed the Beethovenfest Bonn 2009 “**in the light**” were also the pianist Maurizio Pollini and the conductors John Eliot Gardiner, Thomas Hengelbrock and Ingo Metzmacher. The latter opened the festival on 4 September with the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin. For the opening concert, Moritz Eggert composed “Number Nine VIII: Zeitarbeit” for soloist and orchestra, a commission by the Beethovenfest, performing himself on the piano and the sampler. In this new composition, Eggert undertook a twelve-minute trip through the history of the Federal Republic.

Peter Ludwig’s commissioned piece “BRD Song – Kanzlerwahl – VS-str.geh.” was also dedicated to 60 years of the Federal Republic. It was inaugurated by the voice artist Salome Kammer on the “Path of Democracy”, accompanied by the composer on the piano.

We heard three further **first performances** at the Beethovenfest Bonn 2009. The festival had commissioned the German composer Frank Zabel to compose two pieces for the Raschèr Saxophone Orchestra. A further work was commissioned by Deutsche Welle from the young Vietnamese composer Trần Manh Hùng for the 2009 **Orchestra Campus**. The invitation extended to the orchestra of the National Academy of Music in Hanoi was a politically topical act on the part of the Beethovenfest: the two concerts in Bonn formed the official start of celebrations to mark the 35th anniversary of relations between the Federal Republic and Vietnam in the coming year. The 60 young musicians from the Vietnam National Academy of Music, aged between 16 and 24, showed that they had come from one of the best musical training establishments in Asia.

The promotion of new musical blood is also on the festival’s mind in its **educational programme** known as the “Young Beethovenfest”. For four years now, it has provided a service for school students from Bonn to spend a day backstage in order to find out what is involved in organizing and implementing a festival. The programme “Wie kommt’s?” [“How’s it done?”] allows a face-to-face meeting with star performers. This year, Sol Gabetta was one of those to make a school visit and answer questions posed by the students. “Nachgefragt” [lit. “Questioned”] allows young people to interview musicians appearing at the Beethovenfest; these interviews often take a quite different form from those between artists and professional journalists. For the first time, the Young Beethovenfest focused on the pilot project “**Student Managers**”. Taking roles from director-general to technical manager, over a period of nine months 16 senior students from four Bonn high schools planned and marketed two concerts entitled “Klassik meets Hip-hop” with the Munich hip-hop band einshoch6 and the Minguet Quartett. To mark the occasion of the two concerts, which were enthusiastically received by the audiences, einshoch6 released their new single “Rettet Deutschland” [“Save Germany”]. The album will be appearing on 6 November.

The education programmes enabled the Beethovenfest Bonn 2009 to reach 222 actively involved school students and a further 2000 young people through school visits and targeted addresses. In particular at the first of the two “Klassik meets Hip-hop” concerts, 300 students accounted for the majority of the audience, who danced along to the music. In addition, this programme reached a public of all ages, who had not expected such a crossover event at the Beethovenfest.

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The Beethovenfest has also reached new audiences since 2006 with “**Look at Beethoven**”. Film students, film-makers and students of allied art-forms are invited to confront Beethoven, his work and his lasting influence in visual terms. This year, the Beethovenfest Bonn invited entries to a short-film competition: of the concepts submitted, five were selected and given a production grant of 2000 euros each. Numerous original short films, installations and sound-pictures were created, stimulating the viewers to heated discussions at the premiere presented by Enrique Sánchez Lansch on 3 September and during the course of the festival at the exhibitions in the Rotunda of the Kunstmuseums, in the Bonner Kunstverein and in the Kammermusiksaal of the Beethovenhalle.

How will the **concert of the future** look? What is the **future of the concert**? Questions that were discussed by musicians, artists’ agents, cultural managers, musicologists, architects and specialists from the business world at a **symposium** held on 11 September chaired by Andrea Thilo, who elicited interesting and sometimes provocative statements from the panel. Following six rounds of questions, and a World Café in which they could take part in the discussion themselves, the international audience, consisting both of experts and interested members of the public, had a multifaceted picture of possibilities for concert programmes, ensemble organization, sponsoring, performance spaces and the planned “Festspielhaus Beethoven” in Bonn. The symposium was part of an **accompanying programme** of 83 events which the Beethovenfest staged, in addition to the 75 concerts in the main programme, in collaboration with partners worldwide, now 24 in number. “Programmatically and technologically we have arrived in the 21st century, through podcasts, internet live streaming, outdoor public screening and DVD productions. These days in particular, Beethoven is highly attractive in an innovative context.” The words of Ilona Schmiel, Intendant of the Beethovenfest Bonn, summarizing the positioning and future perspectives of the festival.

More than two-thirds of the concerts were developed exclusively for and by the Beethovenfest Bonn. It was possible to stage this high-calibre and comprehensive programme thanks once more to generous support on the part of the three main sponsors, Deutsche Post DHL, Sparkasse KölnBonn and Deutsche Welle, along with 27 other sponsors and supporters.

The Beethovenfest Bonn 2009, like its predecessors, aroused **great media interest**. More than 50 journalists reported regionally, nationally and internationally via the print media, radio, television and internet on the events of the festival. The Vietnamese Orchestra Campus was accompanied by a team from Vietnam TV and a radio reporter from Voice of Vietnam, both of whom transmitted daily reports from Bonn back to their homeland. The worldwide reporting and marketing continue to show results: the **audiences** for the Beethovenfest Bonn are becoming increasingly international. 70 groups came to Bonn for the 2009 festival, 16 of them from abroad, including music enthusiasts from Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, France, Israel, Britain and Luxembourg. Particular interest was aroused by the Beethoven symphony cycle performed by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen conducted by Paavo Järvi.

Next year’s Beethovenfest Bonn will run from **10 September to 9 October 2010**. The programme will be published in March 2010.

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