

The Mahler Chamber Orchestra performs works by Mozart, Kurtág and Beethoven under the baton of Daniel Harding at the Salzburg Mozart Week.

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Berlin, 13 January 2010 – The Mahler Chamber Orchestra (MCO) returns to the Salzburg Mozart Week at the end of January, where it was orchestra in residence from 2005 to 2007. Once again, the festival's main focus, alongside the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, is contemporary music: György Kurtág, one of the most important composers of our time, has been invited to help design programmes in which his music encounters that of Mozart. The MCO concert on 28 January features Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21, Kurtág's ...quasi una fantasia... and Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

Following its appearance at the Mozartwochen, the MCO, together with Daniel Harding and Lars Vogt, will take a Mozart and Beethoven programme on tour to the four Italian cities of Udine (30.1.), Mantua (31.1.), Naples (1.2.) and Cagliari (2.2).

The concert, in the large concert hall at the Mozarteum, begins with the Piano Concerto in C major, K 467, one of Mozart's most beloved concertos. This work, written in just four weeks in 1785, is much more symphonic than its precursors: soloist and orchestra engage in an intense musical dialogue, instead of opposing each other as contrasting musical entities.

György Kurtág also experimented with the idea of musical communication in ...quasi una fantasia... from 1988. In this piece, the piano, which sits in the middle of the stage, has a conversation with the other instruments, which are positioned about the hall. This work is one of Kurtág's best-known and most often performed compositions.

In contrast, Beethoven's Symphony in E-flat major, known as the "Eroica", is often seen as the highest expression of individualism in music. According to the legend, Beethoven originally wrote the symphony for Napoleon, but as he became more and more dissatisfied with the French emperor's deeds, he retracted the dedication and replaced it with the more general title "Eroica".

The soloist for the Mozart is Lars Vogt, the Mozart Week's artist in residence. Vogt has already collaborated many times with the MCO and Daniel Harding.

Marino Formenti, soloist for ...quasi una fantasia... is well-known as a performer of contemporary music. He has been working with composers such as György Kurtág, Helmut Lachenmann and Salvatore Sciarrino for many years. This is his MCO debut.

The MCO will return to Austria in May and June 2010, when it will put on both Alban Berg operas as part of the Wiener Festwochen. The MCO will play three performances each of *Wozzeck* (15, 17 and 19 May) and *Lulu* (11, 14 and 18 June) in the Theater an der Wien. In addition, the MCO will give a symphonic concert at the Vienna Concert House on 15 June, conducted by Andrew Manze and featuring soloists Janine Jansen and Julian Rachlin. The programme once again showcases the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

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The Mahler Chamber Orchestra (MCO), with its unusual structure, internationality and outstanding quality, is an ensemble unique to the present time. Its organisation and method of operation make it a model for the future of the European orchestral landscape. Composed of around 40 musicians from 20 different nations, and independent of external sponsorship, the MCO plays operas and concerts all over the world, in cities as well as at exclusive festivals from the North Pole to the Red Sea. The orchestra was founded in 1997 by the musicians themselves and Claudio Abbado, and the two have been reaching milestones of European musical life together ever since.

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