

The Mahler Chamber Orchestra plays the opening concert of the Arts Festival of North Norway at the Kulturhus Storsalen under the direction of HK Gruber

Date: 06-16-2009 03:22 PM CET

Category: [Arts & Culture](#)

Press release from: [Mahler Chamber Orchestra e.V.](#)

After a successful debut at the Fespillene i Nord-Norge in 2008, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra (MCO) was once again invited to the festival, and will lead its audience on an eerily exciting tour of the music of the 20th and 21st centuries. The composer HK Gruber will conduct his own work *Frankenstein!! Ein Pandämonium für Chansonnier und Orchester*, as well as Kurt Weill's *sieben Todsünden* (The Seven Deadly Sins). Another programme will feature the concertmaster Gregory Ahss as soloist and conductor in works by Schnittke, Mozart and Bach.

The Arts Festival of North Norway is one of the most important festivals of its kind in the land of the midnight sun. Every year, the picturesque city, which lies only 300 km from the North Pole, presents a diverse array of concerts, theatre pieces, exhibitions, readings and film screenings to its public: a true celebration of the arts.

The evening in the Kulturhus Storsalen opens with Kurt Weill's ballet chanté *Die Sieben Todsünden der Kleinbürger* for soprano, male vocal quartet and orchestra. This work was the last result of Weill's cooperation with Berthold Brecht.

The Austrian soprano Ute Gfrerer, praised by the opera magazine *Der Opernfreund* as "one of the greatest Weill interpreters in the world" will sing the title role(s) with sharp two-facedness: the piece centres on the schizophrenic character Anna, in whom two rivalling personalities are united. This will be the singer's first time working with the MCO.

After this glimpse into the dark depths of the soul, HK Gruber and the MCO present a devilish treat: HK Gruber's best-known work, *Ein Pandämonium für Chansonnier und Orchester*. This staged piece, which features Gruber as conducting chansonnier, is insolent, ingenious and ironic and demands a great deal of the musicians, who must play a wide array of extravagant toy instruments in addition to their regular instruments.

HK Gruber, multitalented enfant terrible of the Austrian music scene, gives his MCO debut with this concert. The composer, conductor, chansonnier, bassist, and horn player, with his unmistakable and highly individual style, is one of the best-known—and most enigmatic—personalities of today's music world.

The second concert, which takes place in the local church, focuses on the contemporary composer Alfred Schnittke's engagement with the "old masters." Alternating between old and new, the orchestra will play Schnittke's *Moz-Art à la Haydn*, Mozart's *Recitative and Aria „Ah, lo previdi“*, Schnittke's *Suite im alten Stil* for violin and piano, and Bach's *Cantata No. 51 Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*.

The evening's soloists are the soprano Birgitte Christensen and the MCO trumpeter Christopher Dicken. Clemens Linder and MCO concertmaster Gregory Ahss will perform the solo violin parts in *Moz-Art à la Haydn*.

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.

Merit Vareschi
Communications Manager

Mahler Chamber Orchestra e.V.
Hasenheide 54 / D-10967 Berlin
Phone + 49.30.41 71 79-22
Fax +49.30.41 71 79-29
Mobile +49.160.90 96 91 03
m.vareschi@mahler-chamber.de
www.mahler-chamber.eu

[You can find this press release here](#)