

THE SOLOIST

Marcus Kretzer grew up in a musical home. Already his aunt had what it takes to be a pianist, but she died young during the Second World War. Encouraged by his mother playing the piano too, he got his first lessons of his own volition at the age of seven years and decided soon thereafter to become concert pianist.

The Czech pianist and piano pedagogue Drahomir Toman, a grandson student of Liszt, student of Vilém Kurz and fellow student of Friedrich Gulda, had great influence on Kretzer's further musical development to 1986 - from this school also the pianists Ivan Klánský and Wolfgang Manz originate.

Rapid progress confirmed Kretzer: in his first public recitals in Germany he appeared with 14 years, abroad he debuted with 17 years in Rudolfinum in Prague. Early success followed up, such as the 1st prize at the Steinway competition in Hamburg 1983 or the 1st prize at the Bundeswettbewerb "Jugend musiziert" 1984 in Erlangen, including the grant of an additional incentive.

After school Kretzer studied until 1988 at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln with Aloys Kontarsky. From 1988 he continued his studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg, graduated in 1993 the additional cultural management studies with Diplom and completed his musical studies in 1996 with concert exam (comparable to a state examination of the 3rd degree), interpreting Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in Laeiszhalle in Hamburg which has been described as splendid and caused a strong sensation.

Continuative stimuli Kretzer get by mastercourses with Svjatoslav Richter and Tatjana Nikolajeva as representatives of the Eastern European school in the spirit of Theodor Leschetizky and Heinrich Neuhaus and by Yara Bernette and Fausto Zadra as protagonists of the South American tradition of Vincenzo Scaramuzza.

He participated at numerous national and international piano competitions and won eight 1st prizes, among them the "Primo Premio Assoluto" at the 7° Concorso Pianistico Internazionale 1996 in Rome with 98,8 of 100 points - this award included, besides a Seiler concert grand, extensive tours through Italy.

Subsequently Kretzer gave concerts in almost all countries of Europe, in North and South Africa and in Central America. He played for radio and television stations (ARTE ETERNA

CUBA, CUBA TV, N3 and NDR4, Radio Allegro South Africa, Radio Hamburg, Radio Schleswig-Holstein, RTL, SAT1, WDR, WDR3, ZDF) and appeared many times in music festivals, such as the Cubadisco fair and music festival, the International Eisteddfod in South Africa, the Europäisches Klassikfestival Ruhr, the Mosel Musikfestival, the Rheinischer Klaviersommer, the Salzburg Festival or the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival.

Kretzer's repertoire comprises all epochs of piano literature, wherein he lies focuses on the works of Bach and Scarlatti, Beethoven and Schubert, Chopin and Liszt, Albéniz and Debussy and of Rachmaninoff. His serious involvement with New Music is reflected in his recording of the dodecaphonic piano works of the eastern German composer Rudolf Halaczinsky (1922-1999).

Kretzer's interests in excess of music are wide: archaeology, architecture, the Visual and Performing Arts, cinematics, literature, vintage cars. By reason of his passion about Rome, his favourite town, and its history he studied Roman History from 1996 to 1998 at the University of Hamburg and musicology at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg at the same time. Finally all of these interests reflect his holistic understanding of art and culture and make him to a late representative of the universally educated, "romantic" artist Typus.

Kretzer's artistic career has introduced him to renowned conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Michael Beck, Sebastian Beckedorff, Leonard Bernstein, Hernán Caceres, Sergiu Celibidache, Victor Costa, Luciano Di Martino, Antón Kolar, Sebastian Lang, Enrique Pérez Mesa, Gerd Schaller, Michael Schmidtsdorff, Edgar Seipenbusch, Saulius Sondeckis, Carlos Spierer, Patrick Strub, Christian Süß or Jacques Wijnen.

He played with orchestras such as Arcata Stuttgart, Bergisches Kammerorchester, Bergische Symphoniker, Hamburger Bachorchester, Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Magdeburgische Philharmonie, National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba, National Symphony Orchestra of Guatemala, Philharmonie der Nationen, Sinfonia Varsovia, Staatsorchester Braunschweig, Symphonie Orkest Eindhoven.

Following the romantic tradition Marcus Kretzer created transcriptions of classical orchestral works for one to four pianos as well as sophisticated and effective paraphrases on Argentine Tangos which received approval even by Daniel Barenboim.

THE CHAMBER MUSICIAN

Chamber music is a central point in Marcus Kretzer's artistic producing. With his duo partner, the German cellist Olaf Niessing, visiting professor at the University of Talca in Chile, he regularly gives concerts which cover the entire range of literature for cello and piano. With the Italian violinist Roberto Sechi, professor at the Conservatory of Genoa, they appear as a trio.

Together with Tatjana Nikolajeva, her student Nicolai Lugansky and the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Saulius Sondeckis Kretzer played in the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival the concertos for three pianos by Johann Sebastian Bach – inspired therefrom he arranged performances of all six Bach concertos for two, three and four pianos single-handedly in Hamburg, Solingen and Wuppertal. This successful series again was the inspiration for a piano quartet whereby he gave concerts in 2006 and 2008 during a tour of Germany - with Olivier Casal, Nami Ejiri and Anna Malikova Marcus Kretzer played works of the classical orchestral literature which he arranged for the cast of four pianos.

Kretzer's other artistic activities include multiple co-operations with John Neumeier and the ballet of the Hamburg State Opera and recitation concerts with the talkmaster Alfred Biolek, the politician Norbert Blüm or the actors Richy Müller and Michael Trischan.

THE PEDAGOGUE

At the Academy of Osnabrück/Institute for Music Marcus Kretzer teaches classes for piano in major, minor and additional subjects as well as in piano chamber music.

He has a wide experience of teaching: simultaneous to his studies in Cologne, from 1986 to 1988, he taught at the Youth Music and Art School of the city of Remscheid, where he also headed the department of piano. While studying at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg he was initially employed as tutor of a major class and twice, from 1998 to 2001, as professor.

Since 1989, Kretzer gives master classes both at home and abroad, including at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana/Cuba, the Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts in Kingston/Jamaica, the Conservatorio de los tres Mundos, Granada/Nicaragua, the Colegio San Agustín in David/Panama, the Conservatorio Nacional de Música in Santo Domingo/Dominican Republic.

His students were multiple 1st and 2nd prize winners at prestigious national and international piano competitions ("Jugend musiziert", Steinway-Wettbewerb, Aussig/Austria, Senigallia/Italy).

Kretzer's holistic understanding of art and culture encourages his students to any kind of artistic interaction and motivates them to deal with all expressions of human art and their sociological and historical context.

With his piano playing and teaching method he is in Central America certified "to have great influence on the future graduates of universities and their development to an international level". (Pedro de la Hoz, Granma)

To his most important students there, who for their part give concerts, teach and achieved artistic reputation, belong Natasha Garcia-Guinot, Francisco Paredes-Llanes, Nora Maria Lastre and Madarys Morgan Verdecia.

Marcus Kretzer's "method" combines the Eastern European with the South American school. Efficient ways of practicing distil the special difficulties of the particular literature. The superiorly controlled ability to form and to create completely serves the musical substance which, for its part, is explored by trained imagination, certain knowledge of style and the most precise attention to the text.

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