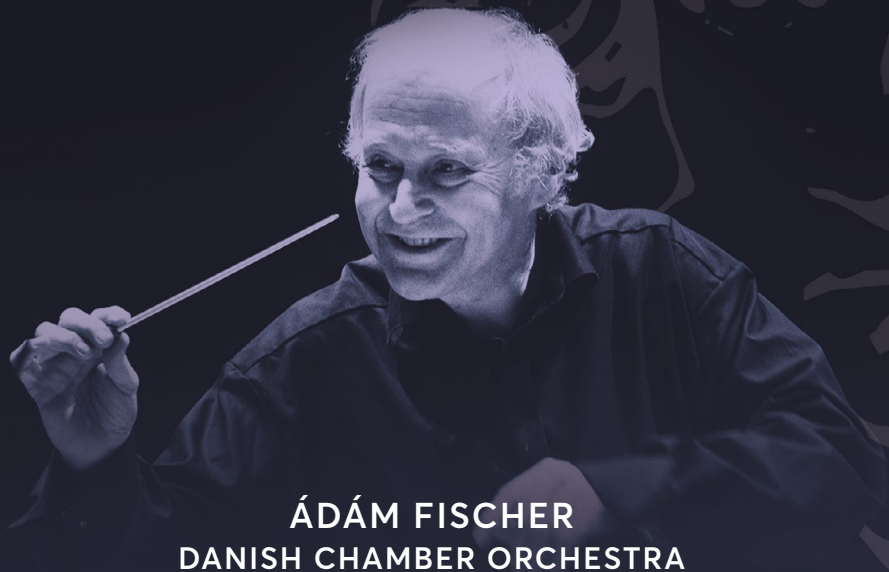




5 DISCS

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

COMPLETE SYMPHONIES



ÁDÁM FISCHER
DANISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

MICHAEL BOS INTERVIEW MED ÁDÁM FISCHER

Man skulle tro, han var træt. Forstå mig ret: Han er træt, Ádám Fischer, men det er noget rent fysisk, nærmest noget pjat.

“Det er ligesom når jeg har dirigeret alle fire operaer i ‘Nibelungens ring’ over fire dage. Så er jeg heller ikke træt. Det er det, Beethovens Niende også gør ved mig. Jeg har det, som om jeg kunne stille mig op på podiet igen og begynde forfra!”.

Jeg møder Ádám Fischer, da han er i gang indspilningerne af Beethovens monumentale sidste symfoni, en energiudladning for musikerne på podiet, for producer John Frandsen og for Maestro.

Der er den her fornemmelse af, at Beethovens Niende er en af menneskehedens store frembringelser. At efter den vender vi endnu et blad, går videre i kunst- og kulturhistorien med nye indsigter. En følelse af, at det var Beethoven, der satte lyd på romantikken, som smed os ud på dybt vand – uden rigtigt at sikre sig, at vi kunne bunde i den.

Ádám Fischer, født i Budapest i 1949, har været chefdirigent for Danmarks UnderholdningsOrkester i præcis 20 år sideløbende med en højt profileret international karriere, der har gjort ham til hyppig gæst ved Metropolitan i New York, Wiener Staatsoper og, senest, Milanos La Scala.

På pladefronten er Fischer og Danmarks UnderholdningsOrkestrets store ambitiøse claim to fame CD-indspilning af samtlige Mozartsymfonier blevet berømmet over hele verden. Det var dengang orkestret hed DR UnderholdningsOrkester og var et ensemble under Danmarks Radio.

Han har tidligere indspillet alle Haydns symfonier med Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, så han har noget med komplette cykler af sine foretrukne komponister, han er for fastholdere. Når han først begynder at trække i en tråd, så åbenbarer der sig landskaber og vistaer, som han er nødt til ikke alene at udforske men også få helt ind i organismen og føle en slags medejerskab af. Og på et tidspunkt bliver de symfonier i Beethovens ellers Mozarts oeuvre, der ellers har været mindst opmærksomhed på, ligeså interessante, ligeså afgørende som de store blåstemplede mesterværker.

“Vi gør det sammen”, er en af Ádám Fischers faste vendinger. Når man har hørt en af hans fortolkninger af Beethoven, er man tilbøjelig til at tænke på erkendelsen af musik skabt i et kollektiv som ‘Fischersk’.

“Jeg har lært over alle de år, jeg har lavet musik, at det altid er bedre at overlade de musikalske løsninger til orkestrets musikere. Det er nødt til at komme fra dem, den personlighed de har tilsammen”.
Hvor langt er I fra endemålet?, spørger jeg Fischer den dag efter en af optagelserne til Beethovens Niende.

Ádám Fischer tygger lidt på ordet, på konsekvenserne af det.

“For 20 år siden krævede jeg, hver gang købte en ny CD, at det skulle være den endegyldige indspilning af et givet værk. Men langsomt måtte jeg jo erkende, at det ultimative er en illusion. Det findes ikke. Ligesom jeg må acceptere, at om et par år vil jeg og orkestret spille vores Beethoven anderledes. Vi forandrer os alle sammen. Vi bliver ældre”.

“Jeg har et nyt forhold til symfonier, jeg engang har dirigeret, når jeg dirigerer dem i dag. Man er nødt til at stå på podiet og udstråle selvsikkerhed, selv om man ved, at lige om lidt ville man gøre det på en anden måde”.

“Den Niende er den mest populære symfoni i repertoireet. Den er blevet spillet uden pauser siden uropførelsen i 1824. Det er kun Mozarts opera ‘Don Giovanni’, der har prøvet det. I det 19. århundrede spillede man kun musik fra samtiden, det hørte til de absolutte undtagelser, hvis man opførte noget, der var for eksempel 20 år gammelt”.

“Den Femte er faktisk en endnu større udfordring end Den Niende”, siger Fischer som en eftertanke.

“Den opføres på endnu mere forskellige måder. Den Femte er det første orkesterværk, der nogensinde blev pladeindspillet, af Artur Nikisch helt tilbage i 1913”.

Selv når man i 1800-tallet opførte lidt ældre musik, var det en helt anden oplevelse, end musikerne tilstræber i dag. Det var simpelthen ikke et mål at spille musikken, som den stod skrevet i noderne – de havde set forbløffede ud, hvis nogen havde stillet dem det krav. I sidste sats af Den Niende fandt Mahler på at lade et helt tamburkorps for fuld lydstyrke gå gennem auditoriet, og i det hele taget forstærkede han symfonien med ekstra slagtpj.

“Man kan sammenligne dirigenten med en sceneinstruktør. En instruktør spørger sig selv: Hvad skal jeg stille op med dette gamle stykke? Skulle jeg ikke prøve at vise det, som dramatikeren ville lave det i dag? Sætte mig ind i, hvad det var, han ville fortælle? Sådan er en sceneinstruktørs filosofi, og det er også dirigentens”.

Det er umuligt i dag at høre musik fra begyndelsen af 1800-tallet og for alvor leve sig ind i, hvordan det var at høre den for første gang.

“Når du spiller Beethoven eller Mozart eller Haydn, er det jo ikke nok at spille på originalinstrumenter eller prøve at spille nøjagtig, som de gjorde dengang. Det ville ikke røre et moderne publikum følelsesmæssigt, for i mellemtiden har vore ører ændret sig, de ting vi kan fantasere om er nogle andre. Jeg er nødt til at spille noderne sådan, at vi kan skabe den følelse hos lytterne, som Beethoven ville have – snarere end nøjagtig hvordan han ville have det til at lyde”.

Men meget af dogmatikken og kompromisløsheden i forbindelse med bevægelsen med originalinstrumenter i tidlig musik er blevet opløst i pragmatisme og et helt fremherskende ønske om at

musicere naturligt. Med hvad det end kræver af instrumenter, tempi og dynamik. Og gerne helt på tværs af de regler for barokken og wienerklassiken, man vedtog i 80'erne og 90'erne.

“Jeg har brug for at finde ud af, *hvorfor* et stykke musik blev skrevet. Det føles ikke tilstrækkeligt bare at følge Beethovens instruktioner, det er ikke nok til at overbevise orkestret og publikum. Jeg må føle på min egen krop, hvorfor det var så vigtigt for ham – og ikke nok med det, jeg er nødt til at ønske det, han ønskede, gøre hans vilje til min egen”.

Faktisk nåede Fischer at indspille seks af Beethovensymfonierna – knap og nap – med det danske orkester tilbage i 2014. Lige da de skulle til at indspille Den Niende, blev der truffet en politisk beslutning om at spare på statsradiofonien, og besparelserne resulterede i, at DR trak sig ud af samarbejdet med DR UnderholdningsOrkestret. Efter en svær tid, hvor orkestret de facto var i livsfare og det store arbejde siden 1998 stod for at falde sammen, genopfandt orkestret, med stor hjælp fra publikum og sponsorer, sig selv som det uafhængige Danmarks UnderholdningsOrkester og fortsatte sit signaturarbejde med de store wienerklassikere.

Der er kun en god håndfuld af de oprindelige musikere fra de første år tilbage, alligevel tøver Fischer ikke med at sige, at det er det samme orkester, som han har arbejdet sammen med i to fulde årtier.

“Det gav ingen mening at gå videre med indspilningerne, nu da orkestret i princippet var lukket ned, så vi begyndte helt forfra med det nye orkester”.

Du har indspillet en Haydn-cyklus, en Mozart-cyklus og nu en med Beethoven, hvad er det for en udvikling, de cykler bærer vidne om?

“Det er klart, at Beethoven som *person* var mere revolutionerende end de to andre, men jeg finder den samme omstyrrelse i Haydns og Mozarts musik. Beethoven var overordentlig interesseret i, hvordan Haydns musik virkede på publikum, og det er selvfølgelig særlig interessant, fordi Haydn i et eller andet omfang var Beethovens lærer. Beethoven kendte Haydns symfonier, og vi ved, at Haydns symfoni nr. 103 havde stor indflydelse på Beethoven. For at forstå Beethoven er man nødt til at forstå Haydn”.

Ádám Fischer nævner Haydns ‘Paukemesse’, dens udtrykte frygt for krigen, som også dukker op i ‘Skabelsen’.

“Vi hører den der trang til at nyde øjeblikket, prøve at være glad, men i baggrunden hører vi kanonerne. Det overtog Beethoven, og hos ham er det endnu tydeligere: Alt hos ham er revolutioner og krig, sejr og nederlag. Haydn var måske mere menneskelig. I Haydns musik er det, som om folk er blevet vant til krig, hvilket jo er virkelig tragisk. Krigen er der ustandseligt, men folk prøver at tænke på noget andet og være glade i situationen. Haydn prøver at vende det døve øre til krigen, men det lykkes ikke”.

Der er vel denne holdning til, at Beethoven var den første subjektive komponist, den første der skrev sin egen selvbiografi i musikken ...

"Ja ... og nej", svarer Ádám Fischer.

"Faren er, at vi prøver at forstå disse kunstnere gennem vore egne følelser og oplevelser, men de levede i en anden tid, ligesom Haydns og Mozarts tid var en anden end Beethovens. Og det, der skiller dem, er den franske revolution. Indtil da var musikere tilfredse med deres plads i hierarkiet. Der er en berømt historie om Haydn, som blev spurgt, hvorfor han aldrig havde skrevet klaverkvintetter. "Hvorfor skulle jeg?", svarede han. "Ingen har bedt mig om det".

Så det handlede endnu ikke om at udtrykke sig selv?

"Jo, Haydn udtrykte sig selv, men inspirationen kom først, når han blev bedt om at skrive et specifikt værk. I stærk modsætning til Beethoven og senere Wagner. Wagner havde ingen succes, ikke noget job, han havde ingenting. Han sultede, da han var 30. Men i stedet for at gøre noget, han kunne tjene penge på, skrev han en opera, der skulle opføres over fire dage, og planlagde at bygge et nyt operahus. Intet kunne være mere forskelligt fra det 19. århundrede".

Har alle Beethovens symfonier noget radikalt eller unikt at sige til sit forsvar?

Ádám Fischer puster langsomt luft ud gennem tænderne. Det her er ikke hans yndlingsdel af interviewet.

"Jeg har ikke lyst til at vælge ... Nej, det er ikke mit job at vælge, det er derimod mit job at overbevise dig om, at de alle er gode, selv om det er klart, at visse er bedre end andre ...".

Ádám Fischers musiklærer fortalte ham for mere end 40 år siden, at kun symfonierne med numrene 3, 5, 7 og 9 var "rigtig store".

*"Det hørte vi, før vi overhovedet lyttede til symfonierne! Jeg har personligt haft problemer med nr. 8, men det må jeg sige, at jeg er kommet over. Det var den, det tog længst tid for mig at forstå".
Fordi det er den mest komplekse eller mindst komplekse?*

"Det er svært at blive klog på, hvad den vil fortælle. Generelt vil de alle sammen fortælle om en revolution, der tager form og bryder ud, både 'Eroica', nr. 5, 7 og 9 og 'Fidelio', men den 8. ... På en måde er den mere moderne end Den Niende, fordi den ikke gør sig umage for at have en effekt på publikum. Den vil ikke medrive. Det er sjældent, folk falder for den med det samme. Den er på en måde post-revolutionær. Den har en mildhed og en slags klogskab, som man associerer til alderdom, til en mere moden personlighed, hvor der også er plads til tilgivelse".

"Med Den Niende er Beethoven tilbage som den unge revolutionære".

– Michael Bo

OPFØRELSESPRAKSIS

Beethovens symfonier udgør uden tvivl en af de største kunstneriske udfordringer, enhver dirigent kan møde.

Af de talløse spørgsmål om, hvad autentisk interpretation indebærer, vil jeg her kun tale om et enkelt; nemlig problemet omkring Beethovens metronomangivelser. Som man vil vide, blev de første metronomer bygget i Wien i Beethovens levetid, og han forsynede derefter sine værker med metronomtal (i de fleste tilfælde retrospektivt).

I generationer har musikere over hele verden diskuteret, hvordan man skulle arbejde med disse metronomangivelser, og i hvilken udstrækning en troværdig fremførelse af Beethovens musik er afhængig af en tæt tilnærmelse til Beethovens tempi. I min studietid var man stadig generelt af den overbevisning, at Beethovens metronom viste forkert, fordi man anså hans tempi for at være for hurtige og uspillelige. Med andre ord: angivelserne måtte være forkerte. Senere, særligt med fremkomsten af ensembler med originalinstrumenter, blev der lavet nogle indspilninger, der var strikt i overensstemmelse med Beethovens tempi – på godt og ondt, så at sige. Jeg er overbevist om, at hverken en dirigent, der helt ignorerer Beethovens metronomangivelser, eller en blind og kompromisløs efterlevner af dem yder musikken fuld retfærdighed.

Tempi i musik er afhængige af adskillige faktorer. Det er grunden til, at jeg helt generelt ikke bryder mig om at følge tempoangivelser ukritisk. Tempi beror i høj grad på de akustiske omstændigheder i en given koncertsal, i dette tilfælde cd-studiet; og de individuelle musikers personlighed spiller også en vigtig rolle. Tempoet må altid være fleksibelt og bevare sin flydende og organiske karakter.

Kort sagt, tempoet er et middel til at opnå det ønskede musikalske resultat, snarere end et mål i sig selv. Derfor er det bogstaveligt talt umuligt at definere et tempo endegyldigt og bureaukratisk ved hjælp af et metronomtal.

Ikke desto mindre er det af største vigtighed, at vi dirigenter til stadighed sætter os ind i komponistens intentioner så omhyggeligt som muligt, hvis vi skal kunne fortolke og formidle deres værker retvisende. Først og fremmest må jeg prøve at forstå Beethovens grunde til specifikke tempoangivelser, og hvad han ønskede at opnå ved dem.

Jeg har efter min bedste evne og overbevisning studeret Beethovens forskellige metronomangivelser over en lang periode for bedre at forstå, hvad der er deres funktion og betydning. De intensive studier af Beethovens symfonier har givet mig ny forståelse af dem. I mange tilfælde har det bragt mig tæt på det tempo, som Beethoven har angivet. Men ikke altid! Og når jeg har følt, at jeg kunne yde det musikalske udtryk mere retfærdighed ved at vælge et noget anderledes tempo end angivet i partituret, har jeg ikke holdt mig strikt til metronomtallet. For mig forekommer det at være den mest ærlige kunstneriske tilgang.

Undersøgelsen af forskellige mulige interpretationer af Beethovens symfonier er en livslang proces. Den udgave af dem, som vi præsenterer her, er således på sin vis blot et snapshot af de ideer, jeg havde, da optagelserne fandt sted.

– *Ádám Fischer*

MICHAEL BO'S INTERVIEW WITH ÁDÁM FISCHER

He would be tired, right?

That is what you would expect. Don't get me wrong, *Ádám Fischer* is tired, but being tired is something purely physical with him, something that seems almost inconsequential.

"After having conducted all four operas in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* over the course of four days, I did not feel tired afterwards, either. Beethoven's Ninth has the same effect on me. I feel as if I could get right back up on the podium and start all over again!"

I meet up with *Ádám Fischer* while he is in the process of recording Beethoven's monumental last titanic symphony, a charge of energy for the musicians on the podium, as well as for producer John Frandsen and for Maestro himself.

There is this sense that Beethoven's Ninth is one of humanity's great creations. After this symphony we turn another page and move on with new insights into the history of art and culture. A sense that it was Beethoven who added sound to the Romantic Age, throwing us head and heart first into deep water, without really making sure that we were able to swim.

There is that sense. And it is a daunting one. And *Ádám Fischer* is visibly energized. *Ádám Fischer*, born in Budapest in 1949, has been the Principal Conductor of Danish Chamber Orchestra for precisely 20 years, alongside his high-profile international career, which has made him a frequent guest at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, at the Wiener Staatsoper, and most recently at La Scala in Milan.

When it comes to recordings, Fischer and Danish Chamber Orchestra's huge and ambitious claim to fame is their CD recordings of all of Mozart's symphonies, which have been praised all over the world. In those days the orchestra went by the name of DR UnderholdingsOrkestret and was a Danish Radio ensemble.

Fischer has previously recorded all of Haydn's symphonies with the Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, so he has a thing for complete cycles by his favourite composers. *Ádám Fischer's* recordings are tailor-made for the persistent listener. When *Ádám Fischer* first begins to tug at a thread in the whole musical framework, landscapes and vistas reveal themselves which he must not only explore but also adopt into his whole organism and of which he feels some sort of co-ownership.

At some point, the symphonies in Beethoven's or Mozart's oeuvres, which have otherwise drawn the least attention to themselves, become just as interesting and as crucial as the great established masterpieces in the hands of Ádám Fischer.

"We accomplish it together," is one of Ádám Fischer's phrases. When you have heard one of his interpretations of Beethoven, you tend to think of music being created collectively as music made "The Fischer Way".

"Over the years I have learnt that it is always better to leave the musical solutions to the musicians of the orchestra. It has to originate from them and the personality they share collectively."

How far off are you from the end goal?, I ask Fischer after one of the recording sessions of Beethoven's Ninth.

Ádám Fischer considers his words a little, and their consequences.

"Every time I bought a CD 20 years ago, I insisted that this should be the final, the ultimate recording of a given work. But slowly and gradually I have come to accept that the ultimate recording is an illusion. It does not exist. Just as I have to acknowledge that in a few years the orchestra and I will play even our Beethoven differently. We all change. We grow older."

"I renew my relationship to symphonies that I once conducted when conducting them today. You have to stand on the podium radiating confidence, even though you know that in a little while you will do it differently."

"The Ninth by Beethoven is the most popular symphony in the repertoire. It has been played in an unbroken line since it was first performed in 1824. Only Mozart's opera "Don Giovanni" has achieved the same. In the 19th century you only played contemporary music. It was the absolute exception if you performed something that was 20 years old."

"The Fifth is actually an even greater challenge than the Ninth," says Ádám Fischer, almost as an afterthought.

"It is played in even more diverse ways. The Fifth symphony was the first orchestral work ever to be recorded when Arthur Nikisch did it back in 1913."

Even in the 19th century when old music was performed, it was conceived of very differently than musicians aim for today. The goal was not to simply play the music as it was written. The musicians would have been astonished if anyone had asked them to simply do that. In the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth, Mahler came up with the idea of having a full drum corps at full volume passing through the auditorium, and he added extra percussion to the symphony for effect.

"You can compare the conductor to a modern-day stage director. A stage director asks himself, "What should I do with this old play? Should I try to visualize how the playwright would have done it today and try to understand what he wanted to say? This is the philosophy of a stage director as it is the philosophy of the conductor."

"It is impossible to listen to music from the beginning of the 19th century today and really understand what it felt like to hear it for the first time."

"When playing Beethoven, Mozart or Haydn, it is not enough to play it on original instruments or try to play exactly as our research indicates that they did back then. It would not, to the same extent, move a contemporary audience emotionally, because in the meantime our ears have changed, and so have the things we can fantasize and dream about. I need to play the notes in such a way that we can recreate the *feelings* of the listeners which Beethoven would have wanted to invoke in his audience, rather than playing it exactly how he wanted it to *sound*."

But much of the dogmatism and the uncompromising way of historical performance practice in the recent early music movement has been dissolved into pragmatism and with a completely prevalent desire to make music sound natural with whatever means required instrumentally and as regards tempo and dynamics.

"I need to find out why a piece of music was written. It is not sufficient to merely follow Beethoven's instructions, as this may not suffice to convince the orchestra and the audience. I have to feel it in my body why it was so important to him. And not only that, I have to *want* what he wanted, make his will my own."

Ádám Fischer, in fact, managed to record six of Beethoven's symphonies with his Danish orchestra back in 2014. Just as they were about to tackle The Ninth Symphony, a political decision was made to impose financial cuts to the State Radio (Danmarks Radio). These cuts resulted in the withdrawal of Danmarks Radio from the cooperation with the DR Chamber Orchestra, thereby depriving it of all state funding.

Following this difficult time, the orchestra was in danger of shutting down completely and with this all the work they had done since 1998 was about to collapse. The orchestra, however, with great help from the audience and sponsors, reinvented itself as the independent Danish Chamber Orchestra and continued its signature work with the major Viennese classics.

Only a handful of the original musicians from the first years remain. Yet, to Ádám Fischer it is the same orchestra that he has worked with for two decades.

"Going ahead with the recordings made no sense at this critical time, now that the orchestra was to disband. And we wanted to start all over again with the new orchestra."

You have recorded a Haydn cycle, a Mozart one, and now a Beethoven cycle. What kind of development do these cycles bear witness to?

"Obviously, Beethoven was more revolutionary than the other two, but I find the same upheaval in both Haydn's and Mozart's music. Beethoven was extremely interested in the effect Haydn's music had on his audiences, not least because Haydn to some extent was Beethoven's mentor. Beethoven knew Haydn's symphonies intimately, and we know that Haydn's Symphony No. 103 had a great influence on him. To understand Beethoven you need to be familiar with Haydn."

Ádám Fischer mentions Haydn's *Missa in tempore belli*, its immediate and visceral fear of the war which also appears in *The Creation*.

"We hear the urge to enjoy the moment and to try to be happy, but in the background there is the incessant gunfire. Beethoven adopted this and, in his works, it stands out even clearer. Everything in his work associates to revolution and war, victory and defeat. Haydn was perhaps more human. In Haydn's music people have become accustomed to war which is tragic in itself. The war is always present, but people try to focus on other matters and be happy. Haydn tries to turn a deaf ear to war, but he doesn't succeed."

The general impression of Beethoven is that he was the first subjective composer, the first to write his autobiography in his music ...

"Yes ... and no," says Ádám Fischer.

"We try to understand these composers through our own feelings and experiences, but they lived in a different time. Just as Haydn's and Mozart's times were different from Beethoven's. What sets them apart is the French Revolution. Until then, musicians were content with their place in the hierarchy of society. There is a famous story about Haydn, who was asked why he had never written piano quintets: "Why would I?," he replied. "No one ever asked me to."

So, at this time art was not yet about expressing yourself?

"Well, it was. Haydn expressed himself, but the inspiration only arose when he was asked to write a specific piece. This is in contrast to Beethoven and later on Wagner. Wagner had no success, no job. He had nothing. He was starving at the age of 30. But instead of doing something he could make money from, he wrote an opera to be performed over four days and planned to build a new opera house. Nothing could be more different from the experience of the 19th century"

Do all Beethoven's symphonies have something radical or unique to say on their behalf, to defend their place in the canon?

Ádám Fischer slowly exhales. This is not his favourite part of the interview, to differentiate in terms of where his affection lies.

"I do not want to choose. It is not my job to choose. My job is to convince you that they are all good, although it is clear that some are better than others."

More than 40 years ago *Ádám Fischer's* music teacher told him that only the symphonies carrying the numbers 3, 5, 7 and 9 were "really important."

"We were told this before having even listened to them! I, personally, have had problems with No. 8, but I have to say that I have overcome them. This was the symphony that took me the longest time to appreciate."

Because it is the most or the least complex one?

"It's difficult to understand what it wants to communicate to us."

"Generally, the symphonies all want to tell us about the pending revolution building up, taking form, and breaking out, both 'Eroica', The Fifth, The Seventh and the Ninth symphonies as well as *Fidelio*. The Eighth, however, is in a way more modern than the Ninth, because it does not care whether or not it affects the audience. It does not want to draw people in. People rarely like it to begin with. It is somehow post-revolutionary. It has a gentleness and a sort of wisdom that you associate with old age, with a more mature personality which also makes room for forgiveness."

"With his Ninth Symphony, Beethoven is back in full form as the young revolutionary".

– *Michael Bo*

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Beethoven's symphonies pose without any doubt one of the greatest artistic challenges to every conductor.

Of the countless questions about what an authentic interpretation means, I am addressing only one here, namely the problem of Beethoven's metronome markings. As we know, the first metronomes were built in Vienna during Beethoven's lifetime and he did then give metronome markings to his pieces (retrospectively in most cases).

For generations, the musical world has debated the subject of how to approach these metronome markings and to what extent a close adherence to Beethoven's tempi must form an integral part of a faithful rendering of Beethoven's work. In my student days it was still generally believed that Beethoven's metronome was faulty, on the grounds that the tempi were too fast and unplayable. So, the markings had to be wrong. Later, especially with the advent of period instrument ensembles, some recordings were made which were unwavering in their strict adherence to Beethoven's tempi, for better or worse so to speak.

I believe that neither a careless approach which ignores Beethoven's metronome markings nor a relentless adherence to them can do justice to the music.

Tempi in music depend on numerous factors, which is why, in general, I do not think much of following tempo indications uncritically. Tempi rely very much on the acoustics of a particular concert venue, in this case the studio, and the personality of the individual musicians also plays an important role. The tempo must be flexible and keep its fluency.

In short, the tempo, rather than being an end in itself, is a means to achieve the desired musical result. That is why it is virtually impossible to define a tempo bureaucratically by the use of metronome markings. However, the most important task for us conductors must be to study the composer's intentions as carefully as possible in order to be able to interpret and communicate them correctly. First and foremost I must attempt to understand the reasons why Beethoven provided particular tempo indications and what he hoped to achieve with them.

I have examined, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the problem of Beethoven's different metronome markings over a long period, to help me understand what might be their function, their meaning. This intensive study of Beethoven's symphonies has given me new insights into them. In many cases it has brought me very close to the tempo that Beethoven specified. But not always. And when I felt that I could do more justice to the musical expression of the work by using a rather different tempo than asked for in the metronome markings, I have not been strict in the adherence to the indicated tempos. To me that appeared to be a more honest artistic approach.

Studying the possibilities of interpretation for Beethoven's symphonies is a lifelong process. The recordings we present here are in a sense a snapshot of the ideas that I held at the time they were made.

– Ádám Fischer

DANMARKS UNDERHOLDNINGSORKESTER

Danmarks Underholdningsorkester har eksisteret som privat orkester siden januar 2015. Før den tid var orkestret et af Danmarks Radios ensembler.

Chefdirigent Ádám Fischer har været fast tilknyttet siden 1997. Sammen med ham har orkestret udviklet en raffineret og energisk spillestil, særligt omkring den wienerklassiske musik. I 2013 udkom deres samlede indspilning af samtlige Mozarts symfonier i en



banebrydende fortolkning, der vakte international opmærksomhed, og som blev belønnet med den prestigefyldte ICMA Award i 2014.

Orkestret påbegyndte arbejdet med Beethovens symfonier allerede i 2013. Men efter bruddet med DR blev projektet genstartet, og den samlede udgivelse i maj 2019 af de ni Beethoven-symfonier er således skabt i orkestrets periode som privat ensemble. Udgivelsen er gjort mulig takket være generøs støtte fra tre store danske fonde: Augustinus Fonden, Louis-Hansen Fonden og A.P. Møller Fonden. Indspilningerne har fundet sted i forlængelse af intensiv og velbesøgt koncertvirksomhed med base på orkestrets gamle 'hjemmebane': koncertsalen i det tidligere Radiohus i København, som nu er hjemsted for Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium.

Danmarks Underholdningsorkester insisterer på musikens sociale betydning og er dybt involveret i talentudvikling, formidling og udvikling af nye koncertformer. Orkestret har tradition for at bygge bro mellem forskellige musikalske genrer og traditioner. Det samarbejder lige entusiastisk og professionelt med kunstnere inden for klassisk musik, populærmusik, filmmusik og shows. Danmarks Underholdningsorkester lægger vægt på at være et orkester for *alle*.

DANISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Danish Chamber Orchestra has existed as a private orchestra since January 2015. Before that time, the orchestra was one of the Danish radio ensembles.

Principal Conductor **Ádám Fischer** has been affiliated with the orchestra since 1997. Together with him, the orchestra has developed a refined and energetic style of playing, especially in the Viennese classics. In 2013, their complete recording of all Mozart's symphonies was released in a groundbreaking interpretation which attracted international attention and was rewarded the prestigious ICMA Award in 2014.

The orchestra already began their work with Beethoven's symphonies in 2013. However, after the break with DR, the project was restarted, and the release date was set for May 2019. The complete recordings of the nine Beethoven symphonies were thus created in the orchestra's period as a private ensemble. The release has been made possible thanks to generous support from three large Danish foundations: The Augustinus Foundation, The Louis-Hansen Foundation and The A.P. Møller Foundation. The recordings have taken place immediately after intensive and well-attended concerts at the orchestra's old "home ground": the concert hall of the former Radio in Copenhagen, which is now home to the Royal Danish Academy of Music.

Danish Chamber Orchestra insists on focusing on the social significance of music and is deeply committed to talent development, communication and the development of new concert forms. The orchestra has a tradition of bridging between different musical genres and traditions and collaborates equally enthusiastically and professionally with artists in classical music as well as popular music, film music and shows. Danish Chamber Orchestra is dedicated to being an orchestra for everyone.

ÁDÁM FISCHER

Chefdirigent

Ungarskfødte Ádám Fischer (f. 1949) er uddannet på konservatoriet i Budapest med videre studier i Wien. Han er en efterspurgt dirigent inden for såvel opera som koncertrepertoire og har samarbejdet med en lang række førende internationale koncert- og operahuse; herunder Wiener Staatsoper, La Scala, Metropolitan, Wiener Philharmonikerne og London Philharmonic.

I 1998 tiltrådte han som chefdirigent for DR Underholdnings Orkestret (siden januar 2015 Danmarks Underholdningsorkester) og han er fortsat en krumtap og stærk initiativtager for orkestrets arbejde og koncertvirksomhed både i Danmark og internationalt. Fra 2015/2016 er Ádám Fischer desuden udnævnt til chefdirigent for Düsseldorfer Symfonikerne.

I 2019 blev Ádám Fischer nomineret til BBC Music Magazine Award 2019 for bedste klassiske indspilning, den af Mahlers 1. symfoni med Düsseldorfer Symfonikerne.

ÁDÁM FISCHER

Principal Conductor

Hungarian-born conductor Ádám Fischer (b. 1949) graduated from the Conservatory in Budapest and continued his further studies in Vienna. He is a sought-after conductor within both the opera and concert repertoire and has collaborated with a large number of leading international concert and opera houses; including the Vienna State Opera, La Scala, Metropolitan, the Vienna Philharmonic and the London Philharmonic.

In 1998, he was appointed Principal Conductor of the DR Danish Chamber Orchestra (since January 2015 Danish Chamber Orchestra) and he remains a strong initiator of the orchestra's work and concert activities both in Denmark and internationally. From 2015/2016, Ádám Fischer was also appointed Principal Conductor of the Düsseldorfer Symphony Orchestra.



In 2019, Ádám Fischer was nominated for the BBC Music Magazine Award 2019 for best classic recording, that of Mahler's 1st symphony with the Düsseldorfer Symphonics.

SARA SWIETLICKI

Sopran / Soprano

Den svenske sopran Sara Swietlicki er uddannet ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium og Operaakademiet i København i 2016. I 2015 blev Swietlicki udnævnt til modtager af årets Jenny Lind legat med tilhørende koncertturne i Canada, USA og Sverige. I 2018 sang hun rollen som Meni i Thomas Adès' opera *The Exterminating Angel* på Det Kgl. Teater og Micaëla i *Carmen* på Malmö Opera.

The Swedish soprano Sara Swietlicki graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Music and the Opera Academy in Copenhagen in 2016. In 2015, Swietlicki was awarded the Jenny Lind scholarship, and as part of this she went on concert tours in Canada, the US and Sweden. In 2018 she sang the role of Meni in Thomas Adès's opera *The Exterminating Angel* at the Royal Opera House in Copenhagen and Micaëla in *Carmen* at Malmö Opera.



© Erik L. Underbjerg

MORTEN GROVE FRANDBEN

Kontratenor / Countertenor

Den danske kontratenor Morten Grove Frandsen er uddannet ved Operaakademiet i København i 2016. I 2015 blev han udnævnt til årets unge operatalent ved Copenhagen Opera Festival, og i 2016 vandt han en Reumert talentpris for sin medvirken i operaen *Leaves af Karsten Fundal* og *Efterklang*. I 2017 var han modtager af Musikanmelder ringens Kunstnerpris.

Morten Grove Frandsen er ofte brugt i ny musik-sammenhæng, og har medvirket i flere af John Frandsens operaer; her kan nævnes *Et Dukkehjem*, *Egoland* og *Martyriet*. I 2017/18 sang han sønnen i den prisbelønnede *Silent Zone* af Louise Alenius.



© Marie Louise Munksgaard

The Danish countertenor Morten Grove Frandsen graduated from the Opera Academy in Copenhagen in 2016. In 2015, he was named this year's young opera talent at the Copenhagen Opera Festival and in 2016 he was given the Reumert talent award for his participation in the opera *Leaves* by Karsten Fundal and *Efterklang*. In 2017 he was awarded the Music Critics' Artist Award.

Morten Grove Frandsen is often used in connection with contemporary music and has appeared in several of John Frandsens operas; *Doll's House*, *Egoland* and *The Martyrdom*. In 2017/18 he sang the role of the son in the award-winning opera *Silent Zone* by Louise Alenius.

ILKER ARCAÿÜREK

Tenor

Den tyrkiske tenor Ilker Arcayürek er uddannet fra Zürich Opera Studio og blev straks efter medlem af ensemblet på Stadtheater Klagenfurt i sæsonen 2013-14. Siden 2015 har Ilker Arcayürek været medlem af ensemblet ved Staatstheater Nürnberg. Arcayürek er udnævnt blandt top ti af en "ny generation af kommende stjerner" og hyldet for sin "gyldne" stemme ved Opera Now Magazine og blev vinder af 2016 International Art Song Competition ved Stuttgarts Hugo Wolf Academy. Han var finalist ved BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition 2015, og blev i 2017 udpeget til at være BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist.



The Turkish tenor Ilker Arcayürek graduated from the Zurich Opera Studio and immediately became a member of the ensemble at Stadtheater Klagenfurt in the 2013-14 season. Since 2015, Ilker Arcayürek has been a member of the ensemble at Staatstheater Nürnberg. Arcayürek is named among the top ten of a "new generation of upcoming stars" and has been praised for his "golden" voice by Opera Now Magazine. In 2016 he won the International Art Song Competition at Stuttgart's Hugo Wolf Academy and was among the finalist at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. In 2017 Ilker Arcayürek was named a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist.

LARS MØLLER

Baryton / Baritone

Den danske baryton Lars Møller er uddannet ved Operaakademiet i København og debuterede i 2006 i på Det kgl. Teater. Fra 2007 til 2014 var han ansat på Nationaltheater Mannheim, hvor han sang de fleste af sit fags store roller. I 2015 sang han rollen som Guglielmo i *Così fan tutte* på Komische Oper i Berlin, og på Den Jyske Opera har han i årene 2014 – 2019 bl.a. sunget Enrico i *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Marcello i *La Bohème*, David i *L'amico Fritz* og Sepa i *Cleopatra*.

På operaen i København kunne han i 2018 opleves i rollen som Hollænderen i *Den flyvende hollænder*. I 2011 var han modtager af Aksel Schiøtz-prisen.



© Jørg Michel

The Danish baritone Lars Møller graduated from the Opera Academy in Copenhagen and made his debut at the Royal Danish Opera in 2006. From 2007 to 2014 he was employed at Nationaltheater Mannheim, where he sang most of the major baritone roles in the repertoire. In 2015, he sang the role of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* at Komische Oper in Berlin and at Danish National Opera in Aarhus (2014 – 2019) he has sung Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, David in *L'amico Fritz* and Sepa in *Cleopatra*.

In 2018 he sang the role of the Dutchman in *The Flying Dutchman* at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. In 2011 he was awarded the Aksel Schiøtz Award.

DR KoncertKoret

DR KoncertKoret består af 74 professionelle sangere. Kernen består af DR Vokalensemblet, som suppleres når publikum skal opleve den store, brede korklang inden for alle klassiske genrer og epoker.

Foruden det klassiske og romantiske repertoire for kor og orkester har den ny musik altid spillet en vigtig rolle for DR KoncertKoret. Per Nørgårds symfoni nr. 3 er skrevet til koret, og det samme er værker af moderne mestre som Henze, Sandström, Stockhausen, Ligeti, Berio og Penderecki.



The Danish National Concert Choir

The Danish National Concert Choir consists of 74 professional singers. At its core is the Danish National Vocal Ensemble, and one could say that the rest of the Danish National Concert Choir adds the heavy artillery when a broader spectrum of choral sound is required in all the classic genres and epochs.

Besides the Classical-Romantic concert repertoire for choir and orchestra, new music has always played an important role for the Danish National Concert Choir. Per Nørgård's Symphony no. 3 was written for the choir, as were works by modern masters such as Henze, Sandström, Stockhausen, Ligeti, Berio and Penderecki.



O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!
Sondern lasst uns angenehmere
anstimmen und freudvollere.
Freude! Freude!

Freude, schöner Götterfunken,
Tochter aus Elysium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken,
Himmlische, dein Heiligum!
Deine Zauber binden wieder
Was die Mode streng geteilt;
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.
Wem der große Wurf gelungen,
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein;
Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,
Mische seinen Jubel ein!
Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele
Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle
Weinend sich aus diesem Bund!

Freude trinken alle Wesen
An den Brüsten der Natur;
Alle Guten, alle Bösen
Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,
Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod;
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,
Und der Cherub steht vor Gott.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen
Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan,
Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,
Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Brüder, über'm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.
Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?

Oh friends, not these tones!
Rather let us sing more
cheerful and more joyful ones.
Joy! Joy!

Joy, thou beauteous godly lightning,
Daughter of Elysium,
Fire drunken we are ent'ring
Heavenly, thy holy home!
Thy enchantments bind together
What did custom stern divide,
Every man becomes a brother,
Where thy gentle wings abide.
Who the noble prize achieveth,
Good friend of a friend to be;
Who a lovely wife attaineth,
Join us in his jubilee!
Yes — he too who but one being
On this earth can call his own!
He who ne'er was able, weeping
Steaeth from this league alone!

Joy is drunk by every being
From kind nature's flowing breasts,
Every evil, every good thing
For her rosy footprint quests.
Gave she us both vines and kisses,
In the face of death a friend,
To the worm were given blisses
And the Cherubs God attend.

As the suns are flying, happy
Through the heaven's glorious plane,
Travel, brothers, down your lane,
Joyful as in hero's vict'ry.

Be embrac'd, ye millions yonder!
Take this kiss throughout the world!
Brothers — o'er the stars unfurl'd
Must reside a loving Father.
Fall before him, all ye millions?
Know'st thou the Creator, world?

Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!
Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Brüder, über'm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.
Seid umschlungen,
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Freude, schöner Götterfunken
Tochter aus Elysium,
Freude, schöner Götterfunken.

Seek above the stars unfurl'd,
Yonder dwells He in the heavens.

Be embrac'd, ye millions yonder!
Take this kiss throughout the world!
Brothers — o'er the stars unfurl'd
Must reside a loving Father.
Be embrac'd,
Take this kiss throughout the world!
Joy, thou beauteous godly lightning,
Daughter of Elysium,
Joy, thou beauteous godly lightning.

Translation: *William F. Wertz/schillerinstitute.com*



A.P. MØLLER FONDEN

AUGUSTINUS FONDEN

LOUIS-HANSEN FONDEN

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Danish Chamber Orchestra



DISC 1

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36

Total: 56:26

DISC 2

Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55 "Eroica"

Symphony No. 4 in B flat major, Op. 60

Total: 76:10

DISC 3

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 "Pastoral"

Total: 71:27

DISC 4

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92

Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93

Total: 62:10

DISC 5

Symphony No. 9 in D minor,

Op. 125 "Choral"

Total: 62:43

Soprano: Sara Swietlicki

Countertenor: Morten Grove Frandsen

Tenor: Ilker Arcayürek

Baritone: Lars Møller

Choir: Danish National Concert Choir

Total playing time: 05:28:56