

## Ensemble Resonanz



### Ensemble Resonanz with Beat Furrer

Vienna – It's always uncanny how Beat Furrer manages to achieve such energetic charge with reduced tonal gestures: the subtle appeal of his often still yet twitching music is that the Swiss composer extends musical states of quietude so long as until the disquietude within them becomes evident.

Required, however, are masters of orchestral precision, such as Germany's Ensemble Resonanz, to give this sensitive material the necessary attention to detail. Together with Furrer conducting, the ensemble performed *Antichesis* (2006) with string groups spread throughout the Vienna Konzerthaus, realising these often tiny tremors of the individual and the group percussively susurrant. Members of the Schalgquartett Köln then joined in for the World Premiere of Furrer's *Xenos III*. In this piece a text from Händl Klaus is given to a percussionist who recites it into the timpani, while the orchestra presents itself as a conglomeration of instrumental tremors, scratching sounds and long tones: an abundance of mini-movements typical for Furrer.

As a relatively extroverted contrast came *Zipangu* by Claude Vivier, where stylised imaginary folklore melodies prance on top of held tones and in which whimpering glissandi and finally abrasively accented chords allowed both the ensemble and the conductor a chance to show a bit of their emphatic side.

*Ljubiša Tošić, DER STANDARD, 3 March 2010*

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**“When was the last time in this city that Mozart sounded so lively, bright and multifaceted? We whisper very modestly out from the Gate to the World: Ensemble Resonanz is world class.”**

### LAEISZHALLE: ENSEMBLE RESONANZ DELIVERS IN TOP FORM

#### Mozart with Gas

HAMBURG. Even the final applause is organised refreshingly differently by Ensemble Resonanz. After the concert, the musicians don't stay sitting until the audience has made its way to the cloakroom. Like a rock band they quickly clear the stage, like actors in a theatre they come back: first the low strings, then 2<sup>nd</sup> violins, then the winds, violas and 1<sup>st</sup> violins. They present themselves in a long row on the edge of the stage and visibly enjoy the jubilation that their program “Mozart in Italien” aroused in the Großer Saal of the Laeiszhalle.

In their usual clever way, the Ensemble mixed epochs and soundscapes. After an impassioned and selectively played Concerto grosso from the Baroque master Locatelli, with Juditha Haerberlin playing the solo-violin part charmingly, without much vibrato but with much emotion, came a wonderfully transparent “Musica piccolo notturna” for octet by Luigi Dallapiccola from 1956. This is music full of secrets, light, and with Marco Thomas on clarinet articulating particularly finely. Volker Tessmann was the excellent soloist in Mozart's Bassoon Concerto; he made the pious sound of his instrument somehow subtly erotic.

For “The Nameless City” by Fausto Romitelli the middle seats in the left and right sides of the first balcony were taken by five musicians respectively, with five staying on stage. The instruments in the balcony were tuned a sixth of a tone above and below standard pitch – an intentionally composed Doppler Effect which places the audience, especially those in the middle of the auditorium, in a virtual cross-intersection, in which the sirens of the passing ambulances seem to rise in pitch, depending on the displacement and direction of travel. A fascinating, subtle aural illusion. Christoph Ahlstaedt coordinated the soloists modestly and thoughtfully. The musicians pressed energy and life into the score of Mozart's Symphony No. 29 in A Major like a siphon adds gas to still water. When was the last time in this city that Mozart sounded so lively, bright and multifaceted? We whisper very modestly out from the Gate to the World: Ensemble Resonanz is world class.

*Friday, 11 December 2009, Hamburger Abendblatt (TRS)*

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## Alte Oper – Ensemble Resonanz

Bach's „Goldberg-Variations” is one of those works in music history with which one can happily absorb oneself for an entire life, without ever coming to a definitive interpretation. It is this suggestion, this purity, this high-grade refinement which links these Variations with the works of Anton von Webern. Ensemble Resonanz picked up on these similarities and united both composers in the most recent Frankfurt Bachkonzert in the Großen Saal of the Alte Oper.

An important aspect of the popularity of the Goldberg-Variations is their language of simplicity and abundance. This is especially evident when one hears the original Aria again after 30 Variations, this time with more acutely trained ears. Hamburg's Ensemble Resonanz deepens this aspect in that it, following a similar structure to Bach's, places a composition by Anton Webern between 8-segment blocks of Bach's work: after the seventh variation of this subtly shaded chamber music for cembalo-supported Strings follows Webern's Five Movements for String Quartet op. 5 in the composer's own arrangement for String Orchestra. Originally, in the eagerness of youth, Webern had wanted to write a (second) opera but decided, however, to condense this material into a purely instrumental piece, set predominantly in Piano and Pianissimo, and with his own suggested duration “ca. 8 Minutes.”

Webern's String Quartett op. 28, whose melodic matter is strictly derived from the b-a-c-h Motif and the tone-row structural elements of inversion, reversal and inverted reversal, was inserted before Bach's “Overtura” 16th Variation. Between the 23rd and 24th Variations came Webern's Five Movements for String Quartet op. 5 again, this time in their original version.

In each instance the 19 young musicians managed to bring out the depth and emotional power of this constructivist composer. What impressed most, however, was how they managed, without a conductor coordinating them, to play and function as a single organism.

*Elisabeth Risch, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 31 October 2009*

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(Hamburger Abendblatt)

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*Where not only the fingers have to press strings, but also where the whole arm has to bow as well, with string players what on the Cembalo would simply be a run of notes quickly becomes something energised and virtuosic.*

(Frankfurter Rundschau)

*Ensemble Resonanz undertook a subject for the opening concert of their season in the Kleiner Saal of the Laeishalle which couldn't have been weightier. (...) Through its unyieldingness, a deeply moving evening.*

(Hamburger Abendblatt)

*The concert evening began with Haydn, the "Maria Theresia" symphony, also played by the perfectly aligned Ensemble Resonanz, which didn't require a conductor. Also Mozart's famous Divertimento (KV 136) was presented with vivacity in the faster movements, with a sharply defined string sound and powerful natural horns, and vibrantly dance-like in the slower passages.*

(Neue Presse)

*Required, however, are masters of orchestral precision, such as Germany's Ensemble Resonanz, to give this sensitive material the necessary attention to detail.*

(Der Standard)

*Ensemble Resonanz, including their guests, play almost god-like.*

(Hamburger Morgenpost)

*They construct their programs with an instinctive certainty of taste and therein link old and contemporary music in often astounding ways. The underlying thought, always present and sometimes even a little devious, reveals itself to the audience at the latest upon hearing the actual concert. It is exactly that which I like so much: they play with your preconceived notions and expectations, deliberately take risks in this regard, and open up new ways to hear music. As Senator for Culture, one couldn't wish for more in this respect!*

(Senator for Culture Karin von Welck)

*The most successful Hamburg newcomer of the last few years is Ensemble Resonanz. With their high-quality »Resonanzen« concert-series, the string orchestra won its own young, constantly growing audience and brought a new, until now absent, sound to the chronically pallid Hamburg music scene: the old and the avant-garde, contrasts which fit together but still repel too many, gave the cleverly directed concerts in the Laeishalle's Kleiner Saal the feeling of evening adventure holidays from the mainstream.*

(Hamburger Abendblatt)

*Whoever watches Ensemble Resonanz and its two guests experiences the music of the future in the present. It exists in a hierarchy-free zone, in which the authority of each member is acknowledged and where the aim is the best possible joint interpretation of a particular work.*

(Die WELT)

*And here it was in its purest form: this intelligent, never stodgy, always dynamic Resonanz-sound, which retained its lightness.*

(Frankfurter Rundschau)

*The Ensemble is in its element, forming the complex mesh of parts with deep thought and sensitiveness, and at the end lets it melt into glistening tone colours. Haydn's Cello Concerto in D Major was just as high-class: Jean-Guihen Queyras shaped the difficult solo passages with the precision of a watchmaker.*

(Berliner Tagesspiegel)

*If there were an Oscar in the category 'Contemporary Music' for enthusiastic young musicians, it would have to be awarded to Ensemble Resonanz: enthusiasm coupled with great skill, bravo!*

(Christian Quadflieg, Actor)

*Ensemble Resonanz possesses technical perfection and a strong sense musical innovation. They set the benchmark and act as an example for all modern orchestras.*

(Göttinger Tageblatt)