

biography



HEINRICH SCHIFF

Heinrich Schiff studied with Tobias Kuhne and Andre Navarra, and made his debut as a cellist in Vienna and London in 1971. Whilst establishing his career as a cellist, Schiff also attended conducting classes with Swarovsky and in 1986 he made his professional conducting debut. Since then cello performances and conducting have come to play equal roles in his career.

As a cellist, Schiff has performed with many of the leading conductors such as Abbado, Celibidache, Colin Davis, Dohnanyi, Eschenbach, Gielen, Haitink, Harnoncourt, Jansons, Masur, Salonen, Sawallisch, Sinopoli, Tennstedt, Welser-Möst, Daniel Harding. Recent engagement highlights have included playing with the Berlin PO with Sir Simon Rattle in the Salzburg Easter Festival, performing with the Vienna Philharmonic with Zubin Mehta and with the Bayerischer Rundfunk and Mariss Jansons. Heinrich Schiff has also appeared with the Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de Lyon, Rotterdam PO, Tonhalle, Northern Sinfonia and the BBC SO on tour in Germany.

Schiff is a highly respected chamber musician and over the years has appeared regularly with the Alban Berg Quartet, and in recital with a number of pianists including Leif Ove Andsnes, Lars Vogt, Till Felner, Oli Mustonen and Elisabeth Leonskaja. He is a regular guest at the Salzburg and Edinburgh Festivals and at the major European concert halls: the Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Wigmore Hall and the South Bank Centre in London, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and the Tonhalle in Zürich. Contemporary music plays an important part in his artistic work and Schiff has collaborated with and commissioned works by major contemporary composers such as Berio, Casken, Henze, Lutoslawski and Penderecki.

In March 2004, Heinrich Schiff was appointed Chief Conductor of the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. He has previously held conducting positions with the following orchestras: Artistic Director of the Northern Sinfonia 1990-1996, Principal Conductor of the Copenhagen Philharmonic and of the Musikkollegium Winterthur, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie and of the Radio Sinfonie Orchester Stuttgart. He is in demand internationally as a guest conductor with orchestras such as the Philharmonia, BBC Scottish SO, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Munich Philharmonic, Dresden Staatskapelle, Orchestre de Paris, Rotterdam PO, Santa Cecilia in Rome, Oslo PO, Camerata Salzburg, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, City of Birmingham SO, Halle, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. Future engagements include returning to the Orchestre de Paris and making his debut both conducting and playing with the Residentie Orkest.

Schiff has released a number of recordings conducting the Northern Sinfonia, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie and the Philharmonia with repertoire ranging from Haydn and Beethoven to Schreker, Krenek and Lutoslawski. As cellist, apart from his prize-winning Bach Solo Suites (EMI) and Shostakovich concertos (Philips), which won the Grand Prix du Disque, Schiff has also recorded the Dvorak cello concerto with the Vienna Philharmonic (Previn), the Schumann concerto with the Berlin PO (Haitink), and the Brahms Double Concerto with Frank Peter Zimmermann (Sawallisch), the latter being awarded the Deutscher Schallplattenpreis. In 2000 he released the complete Beethoven works for cello and piano with Till Fellner on Philips. His most recent release, a recording of Cerha's cello concerto of which Schiff is the dedicatee, has received widespread critical acclaim.

Heinrich Schiff plays 'The Mara' (Stradivarius 1711) and 'The Sleeping Beauty' (Montagnana 1739).

Heinrich Schiff is represented by Jessica Ford at Intermusica, jford@intermusica.co.uk.

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