



Biography

Kolja Blacher

Violin

Kolja Blacher was born in Berlin, and received his first violin lesson at the age of four. He later went to New York City to study at the Juilliard School of Music with Dorothy DeLay, and then with Sandor Vegh in Salzburg. Following his first concert with the "Deutsche Sinfonie Orchester Berlin" at the age of seventeen, he made his debut performance with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1988.

This marked the beginning of a truly remarkable and versatile career. As a soloist Blacher has performed with important orchestras worldwide, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Dresden Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, the NDR and the WDR Symphony, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Yomiuri Nippon Orchestra Tokio, KBS Orchestra Seoul, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra Manchester, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, San Antonio Symphony, Symphony Orchestra St. Gallen, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Oslo Filharmonien and the Real Filarmonica de Galicia.

He has performed with conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Alan Gilbert, Daniel Harding, Vladimir Jurowski, Dimitri Kitajenko, Diego Matheus, Kent Nagano, Matthias Pintscher, Karl-Heinz Steffens und Markus Stenz.

In addition to his work as a soloist, he has collaborated with musicians such as Kirill Gerstein and Clemens Hagen (with whom he plays in a piano trio), Vassily Lobanov, Natalia Gutmann, Wolfram Christ, Alois Posch and Peter Sadlo. These performances have brought him to London, Paris, Zürich, Baden-Baden, Berlin, Florence, and many other venues around the world.

Blacher has also recorded highly acclaimed CDs. His joint recording with Claudio Abbado and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra of the Violin Concertos by Berg and Stravinsky, as well as the violin concerto by Boris Blacher, was honored with the "Diapason d'Or" award. The German Record Critique (Deutsche Schallplattenkritik) also awarded its annual prize to Blacher's CD with Jasha Nemtsov in works by Weinberg and Schostakowitsch. In 2011, Kolja Blacher released a recording of Schumann's Violin concerto (both as musical director and soloist), once again with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, to glowing reviews.

In addition to classical-romantic repertoire (Beethoven, Brahms, Elgar, Schumann), Blacher also devotes his time to the concertos of Kurt Weill (recorded with Claudio Abbado and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra), Berio, Hartmann, Henze, Hindemith, Martinu, Lutoslawski, Szymanowski, Schönberg and Magnus Lindberg. Further projects include a recording of solo-sonatas by Bach in combination with texts by Andreas Gryphius and Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale", in which Blacher takes the role of both violinist and actor, directed by Ruth Berghaus. Even when it comes to chamber music, Blacher chooses to explore rarer projects, such as the violin sonatas by Beethoven ("Kreutzer") and Schostakowitsch, both transcribed for violin and chamber orchestra.

More recently, "Play-Direct" concerts have captured Blacher's interest. Leading the orchestra as concertmaster, he has worked regularly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the Festival Strings Lucerne, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the Camerata Bern, and the Orchestra of the "Komische Oper" in Berlin.

Blacher teaches with great passion at the "Hanns Eisler" conservatory in his hometown of Berlin. He plays a 1730 "Tritton" Stradivari, on generous loan from Miss Kimiko Powers.

www.kolja-blacher.com

2011/2012

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