

Hamburg Chamber Players

The chamber music ensemble Hamburg Chamber Players – six string players and a pianist – utilize the concept of versatility in various instrumental combinations. Their concerts are conceived around variety, both through the ensemble size of the specific programme as well as within the programmes themselves. The musicians give short introductions to the works and lives of the composers being performed thereby guiding audiences through the thematically selected programmes. In addition to the standard repertoire, the Hamburg Chamber Players pay particular attention to re-introducing the public to forgotten composers. Thus for the London label Toccata Classics, they were able to record a CD of chamber music works by the forgotten Hamburg composer and friend of Brahms, Ferdinand Thieriot. 2007 saw the ensemble's first television appearance.

Ian Mardon performs as a soloist and chamber musician in Germany and North America. Over the course of the years, Mardon has performed on many TV shows and in numerous films. Additionally he has worked for advertising and appeared on a multitude of CDs. He devotes a substantial portion of his energies to chamber music and serves as artistic director and first violinist of the Hamburg Chamber Players. He studied at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, with the violinist and laureate of the Paganini Competition Philippe Djokic. He went on to receive his Master of Music degree under the guidance of Masuko Ushioda, winner of the Tchaikovsky Competition, at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, USA. Mardon plays a J. B. Guadagnini from 1775.

Youngkun Kwak studied violin first at the Hamburg Hochschule in 2005 under Prof. Andreas Röhn and then continued his studies in 2006 at the "Hans Eisler" Hochschule in Berlin under Eva Schönweiß. He is a multiple prize winner of the German national competition "Jugend Musiziert" and between 2001 and 2004 served as concertmaster of the German National Youth Orchestra. His teachers include Christo Draganov, Thomas Brandis, Nicolas Chumachenco, and Ulf Schneider. Concert tours have brought Kwak to Denmark, Spain, Holland, Italy, Poland, England, Austria, Switzerland, France, and Japan.

Julia Mensching, viola, studied with Andra Darzins and Jakob Zeijl at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg. She is a winner of the German national competition 'Jugend Musiziert' and played in the Albert Schweizer Youth Orchestra. In 2006 she graduated from the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt where she also did additional studies in historical-instrument practice. Her musical training was fine-tuned through master classes with Tabea Zimmermann and Thomas Riebl, to name a few. She has also played in the Staatsorchester Wiesbaden. Besides western classical music, she also performs Arabic music on the viola.

Rudolf Seippel, viola, is on the faculty of the Diepholz Music School where he teaches violin, viola and chamber music. He studied with Hirofumi Fukai in Hamburg and with Hariolf Schlichtig of the Cherubini Quartet. His musical ideas were furthered through master classes with Kim Kashkashian and Thomas Riebl, as well as the Beethoven Trio.

Martin von Hopffgarten, cello, studied with Konstantin Haesler (Hannover), Ulf Tischbirek (Lübeck) and Marcio Carneiro (Detmold). He received his orchestra training in Stuttgart and currently is the principle cello of the Klassik Philharmonie Hamburg. Performances with pianist Clemens Kröger (Duo Sarasate) and solos with the Klassik Philharmonie Hamburg (including Beethoven's Triple Concerto) reveal his impressive virtuosity. In 2007 von Hopffgarten appeared as soloist with the Klassik Philharmonie Hamburg giving a convincing and soulful interpretation of Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*.

The cellist **Rolf Herbrechtsmeyer** graduated from the Hochschule in Hanover where he studied with F. J. Sellheim. He continued studying in Düsseldorf with Rudolf Mandalka, where he received his 'Konzert Exam'. He then undertook further studies in Historical Instrument practice in London with Anthony Pleeth (Baroque cello) and Stefan Popov. Since 1995, he has been living in his native Hamburg as a freelance musician playing with the Klassik Philharmonie Hamburg as well as various other orchestras, giving solo recitals and playing chamber music. He is also a dedicated cello teacher.

The pianist **Yuko Hirose** comes originally from Japan, where she studied at the Musashino Academy in Tokyo. In Hamburg she studied at the Hochschule with Peter-Jürgen Hofer and there received her 'Konzert Exam' with honours. In 1985 she was a prize-winner at the Festival International des Jeunes Solistes in Bordeaux and in 1987 received the Masfield Stipendium. She has appeared on NDR radio and performs regularly as a soloist and chamber-musician. Ms. Hirose teaches at the Musikhochschule in Bremen and the Norderstedt Music School.

