



Tuesday July 12 2022, 15:30

**CAROLIN WIDMANN, violin**  
**JÖRG WIDMANN, clarinet**  
**DENIS KOZHUKHIN, piano**

**Carl Maria von WEBER (1786-1826)**

Grand Duo Concertant in E-flat major, Op. 48 (1816), 20'  
for clarinet and piano

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Rondo: allegro

**Jörg WIDMANN (f. 1973)**

Selection of etudes for solo violin

**Béla BARTOK (1881-1945)**

Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano (1938), 20'

- I. Verbunkos (Recruiting Dance)
- II. Pihenő (Relaxation)
- III. Sebes (Fast Dance)

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10:00 Morning song and short interview w. Carolin Widmann  
10:15 Carolin Widmann performs Hans Abrahamsen  
10:30 Carolin and Jörg Widmann in conversation w. Mathias Hammer  
**15:30 Carolin Widmann, Jörg Widmann and Denis Kozhukhin**  
20:00 Bruno Philippe and Cédric Tiberghien



## About the music

### **Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826): Grand Duo Concertant in E flat major, opus 48 (1816)**

Weber dreamed of achieving the same status as his cousin's husband. The cousin was named Constanze and was married to Mozart. Although Weber's legacy no longer has the same immortality as the peripheral family member, the ambition did succeed, right? For Weber was a superstar in his day and is still recognized as central to the founding of romantic music. Today he is largely known for his clarinet music. However, he himself was a virtuoso on piano. In Grand Duo Concertant, the two instruments unite in convincing ways.

First movement begins in full vigor as a prisoner play between piano and clarinet, before a serene and flattering melody is presented by the clarinet. Second movement is differently mournful, slow and dark. In the third movement, the light and the joy of life are returned. A cheerful and light-hearted melody leads to the breathtaking, brilliant and virtuoso sentence.

### **Jörg Widmann (b. 1973): Selection of studies for solo violin (1995-2002)**

With his heartbreaking and effective etudes, Jörg Widmann is among the most sought-after violin composers of the time. It may immediately seem paradoxical, since Widmann is a clarinetist and has never played the violin himself. But as a composer, his instrumental treatment is without limits, and with the range of etudes for solo violin, he inscribes himself in the proud tradition of virtuoso concertos, which Paganini founded 200 years ago - and which Chopin, Liszt and Ligeti later expanded with similarly famous piano works. In keeping with tradition, Widmann's etudes are artistically autonomous concert pieces with one specific technical challenge in each movement.

What counts for them all is that they are composed without an indication of tone or time signature, and that they are thereby perceived as fleeting mumbling on a backdrop of silence. They begin and end almost imperceptibly, thus challenging the listeners' sense of time.

Each study is written specifically for special violinist virtuosos such as Peter Sheppard Skærved, Isabelle Faust and the composer's own little sister Carolin Widmann.

### **Béla Bartók (1881-1945): Kontraster, Sz 111 (1938)**

At the outbreak of World War II, in 1939, Hungarian Bartók fled to the United States. But already the year before he had read the writing on the wall. The title of his trio for clarinet, violin and piano, Contrasts, is both a key to the musical experience, but also a headline on the contrast-filled life that awaited him the following years.

Bartók wrote the work as an order from the famous American jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman, who was also an excellent classical musician. Jazz music, however, is not prevalent in Bartók's work. Instead, it is the characteristic tonal language of his homeland, the Hungarian folk music, that forms the basis of the music.

The first movement is an advanced polytonal version of the Hungarian Verbunkos dance. The second movement's title, Pihenő means relaxation or pause and shows Bartók's fascination with the unpredictable Javanese gamelan music. In the third movement, the violin tunes two strings and plays in a drone virtuoso folk music finale.

*Mathias Hammer*

## About the artists

Very few musicians have achieved success in balancing a career where there is time to be excellent as composer, clarinet player and conductor. But this is exactly the case with **Jörg Widmann** who has a successful career in all three disciplines. He began his clarinet studies in Munich at the age of 7, and 4 years later he had already started composing. Widmann's further studies have most of the time been in Germany – at Hochschule für Musik und Theatre München and Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe, including some years at The Juilliard School in New York.

The star violinist **Carolin Widmann** must be considered a good friend of the festival, and she is one of those artists who keep bewitching her audiences with her interpretations of both old and new works. In a German interview from 2017 Carolin talks about her way into new works. With enthusiasm she explains how she has to approach the music without any previous experience when the music is quite new. How to understand and interpret must start from zero. She tries to bring the same approach even to older and more well-known music. Because – according to Carolin – you have to keep listening and playing the music as if it's the first time – that's how the magic moments occur.

Growing up in a family of musicians **Denis Kozhukhin** began his piano lessons when he was 5 – his mother was his teacher. With the Russian piano school as his base, Kozhukhin moved on to Madrid, studying at The Reina Sofia School of Music and received his diploma full of the highest praise from the Spanish Queen herself. Today Kozhukhin has played with numerous orchestras and in many different concert halls and is regarded as one of the best in the generation of younger pianists. His technical ability in combination with his intelligence and sophisticated sense of form and phrasing make critics describe his piano playing as captivating, hypnotizing and energetic.