



THOMAS HENGELBROCK

Thomas Hengelbrock gets to the bottom of things and puts himself entirely at the service of music. An exceptional talent in many respects: as violinist, conductor, scholar, and music mediator, he has been inspiring his international audience for many years. A profound examination of the musical text, meaning and content of works forms the focus of his work, which spans epochs and genres, and underpins his international career. In exciting programmes he combines the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, often uncovering astonishing musical affinities. Thomas Hengelbrock regularly unearths works that have been forgotten and thought lost, while at the same time offering refreshing new takes on the standard repertoire.

For over 25 years, Thomas Hengelbrock has celebrated international success as founder and artistic director of his Balthasar Neumann Choir and Orchestra. In a variety of academy programmes, he promotes young musicians and shares his knowledge and experience. Hengelbrock is also a sought-after partner for major international orchestras such as the Vienna and Munich Philharmonic Orchestras, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Orchestre National de France and others. In 2017, he opened the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra. In September 2024, he was appointed Musical Director of the Orchestre de chambre de Paris.

In addition to historically informed performances of works such as Mendelssohn's "Elijah", Haydn's "Creation", Beethoven's "Missa solemnis", Wagner's "Parsifal" and Mascagni's "Cavalleria rusticana" in the original version, he also devotes himself in particular to the music of the immediate present. Thomas Hengelbrock works closely with contemporary composers such as Jörg Widmann, Simon Wills, Lotta Wennäkoski, Qigang Chen and Erkki-Sven Tüür and conducted the world premieres of Wolfgang Rihm's "Reminiszenz" (2017) and Jan Müller-Wieland's oratorio "Maria" (2018).

Thomas Hengelbrock can be heard together with his Balthasar Neumann ensembles at renowned concert halls and opera houses, including the Opéra national de Paris, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Teatro Real in Madrid, the Royal Opera House in London, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie and the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona. He is also a regular guest at the festivals in Baden-Baden, Aix-en-Provence and Salzburg, and in 2020 started a Résidence Artistique at the Château de Fontainebleau with the Balthasar Neumann Choir and Orchestra under the patronage of UNESCO.

In addition to his work as a conductor, Thomas Hengelbrock has also been involved as a director in numerous productions such as Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" or Mozart's "Don Giovanni", and in 2005, together with the choreographer Pina Bausch, he created a celebrated production of Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice", which is still being performed in numerous countries. But the combination of music and literature is also a focus of his artistic work. He works with actors such as Klaus Maria Brandauer, Johanna Wokalek and Graham Valentine. His own versions of Grieg's "Peer Gynt" and Schumann's "Scenes from Goethe's Faust", in which music and world literature merge, were enthusiastically received by the audience.

During the Corona pandemic, Thomas Hengelbrock was particularly committed to the continuation of culture and creating opportunities for freelance musicians in Europe. He has also been committed for many years to opening access to art and culture for young people. He passes on his knowledge and experience to the next generation through the two academies he founded, the Balthasar Neumann Academy and the Cuban-European Youth Academy, as well as through a variety of school and social projects. Thomas Hengelbrock was awarded the Herbert von Karajan Music Prize in 2016 for his services.

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