



Media Release

Hélène Grimaud, “artiste étoile”

Every performer, claims this year’s “artiste étoile” Hélène Grimaud, is primarily a medium who must mirror the composer’s intentions. Which is not to say that there’s no room for individuality: “Of course you have to remain faithful to the musical text, to respect it and be prepared to immerse yourself in it. But the more you do that, the more freedom you discover.” Thus her account of this paradox, to which she adds an explanation: “Art must overstep limits. If everything’s possible, I feel it’s not art.”

Born in Aix-en-Provence in 1969, for two decades this French pianist has been admired throughout the world for her virtuosity and artistic charisma, advancing to become a lodestar on the classical scene. The secret of her success is related to the fact that she is never satisfied with what she has achieved: time and again she tackles the great masterpieces, especially from the German repertoire, in a tireless quest for musical truth. Her continuous study of certain pieces, such as the Schumann Concerto, has paid off: “The more you try to penetrate these pieces, the more mysterious they become. There is something very spiritual about this; it is one of music’s miracles.”

Besides the intimate and poetic Schumann Concerto, which she will perform with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Philharmonia Orchestra, Hélène Grimaud will present Beethoven’s heroic Fifth Concerto with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Ashkenazy. She will also give a recital of works by Mozart, Liszt, Bartók and Berg and appear in chamber music formats, inviting selected soloists from the LUCERNE FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA to join her in a matinee. No less important to her is the lieder recital with baritone Thomas Quasthoff, including Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* and lieder by Brahms. The two musicians worked together for the first time in 2008 – an event she places among the most fantastic experiences of her career.

Concerts and Dates with Hélène Grimaud:

Recital 1 – Lieder (18 August): Thomas Quasthoff, Hélène Grimaud

Recital 2 – Piano (19 August): Hélène Grimaud

Meet the Artist 3 (21 August): Hélène Grimaud in conversation with Gabriela Kaegi

Chamber Music 3 (22 August): Soloists from the LUCERNE FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA, Hélène Grimaud

Symphony Concert 7 (23 August): Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Hélène Grimaud

Symphony Concert 22 (8 September): Philharmonia Orchestra, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Hélène Grimaud

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