



MARIE-ELISABETH HECKER, Violonchelo

"Hecker plays like an angel ... the beauty of her sound is enhanced by an exquisitely elegant line and sweeping lyricism. There is absolutely no artifice to mislead the audience; her performance comprises musicality and pure talent." (by Javier Pérez Senz, El País, 06/2008)

Cellist Marie-Elisabeth Hecker made her international breakthrough with her sensational success at the 8th Rostropovich Competition in Paris in 2005, where she became the first contestant in the event's history to win the first prize as well as two special prizes. Since then Hecker has become one of the most sought-after soloists and chamber musicians of her generation, recognised for her deep expression and natural affinity for the cello, with Die Zeit describing her playing as *"heartbreakingly sad and instinctively beautiful"*.

Born in Robert Schumann's hometown Zwickau in 1987, Hecker started playing the cello at the age of five and attended the Robert Schumann Conservatory, before the distinguished German cellist Peter Bruns became her principal teacher. She continued her studies with Heinrich Schiff and subsequently took part in masterclasses with eminent figures such as Anner Bylisma, Bernard Greenhouse, Frans Helmerson, Gary Hoffman and Steven Isserlis. Early recognition came when she won Germany's important *Jugend musiziert* competition at the age of twelve, followed by the special prize at the 2001 Dotzauer Competition and the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award in 2009. She is supported by the Kronberg Academy.

Highlights of her career to date include performances with the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Dresden Philharmonic, Filarmonica della Scala, Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Mariinsky Orchestra, annover, Hannover, Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de Belgique, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg, Philharmonia Orchestra, Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Spanish National Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin and Vienna Symphony Orchestra. She collaborated with conductors such as Barenboim, Gergiev, Harding, Hengelbrock, Herreweghe, Janowski, Luisi, Nagano, Saraste, Thielemann, von Dohnányi and Zacharias.

As a passionate chamber musician, she has appeared in different constellations such as in duo with her partner Martin Helmchen in Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Aspen, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, L'Auditori Barcelona, Berliner Philharmonie, Bozar in Brüssel, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Hohenems, London's Wigmore Hall, Lucerne, Milan, Carnegie Hall in New York, Louvre in Paris, Toppán Hall Tokyo, Verbier, Konzerthaus Wien und Tonhalle Zurich, as well as with Veronika Eberle, Augustin Hadelich, Viviane Hagner, Michail Lifits, Christian Tetzlaff, Antje Weithaas and Carolin Widmann.

Highlights of season 17/18 include quintets with Christian Tetzlaff at Wigmore Hall, with Martin Helmchen and Carolin Widmann at Vienna Konzerthaus and with the Apollon Musagète Quartet at Schubertiade. Moreover, Marie will perform in different constellations at Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern und at Dresdner Musikfestspiele.

In May 2016 the label Alpha Classics released Marie's recording of Brahms's cello sonatas together with Martin Helmchen to great critical acclaim. Recently, her second CD containing Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata and Trio No. 2 (together with Martin Helmchen and Antje Weithaas) has been released by the same label as well as a CD with Elgar's Cello Concerto (together with the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra) and the Piano Quintet.

Marie-Elisabeth Hecker was appointed a professor at Hochschule für Musik Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden in August 2017. In co-operation with Music Road Rwanda she regularly travels to Rwanda in order to support a local music school with concerts and educational projects.