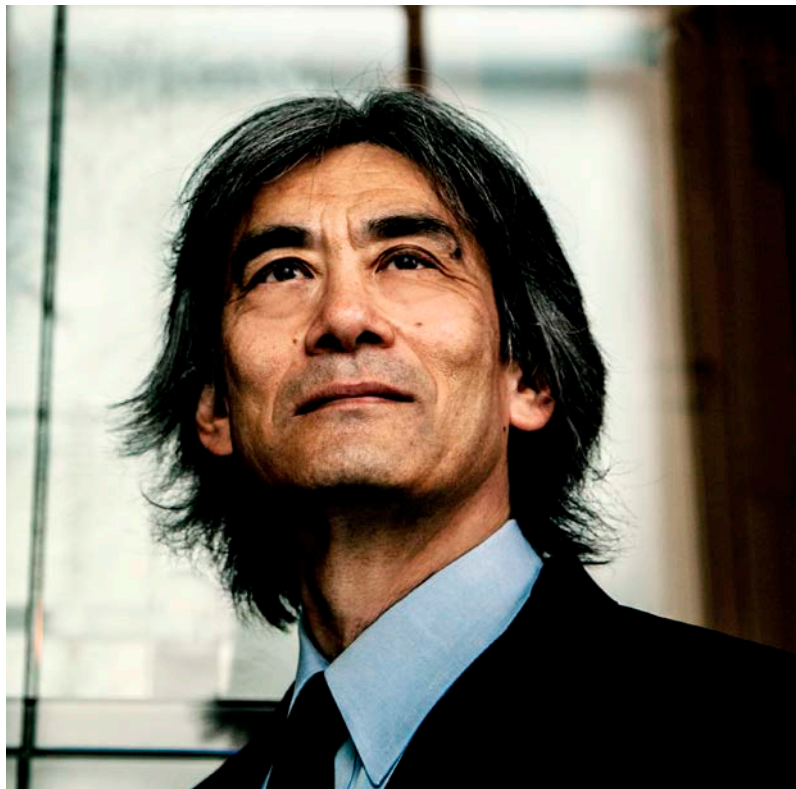


An Explosion of Resounding Light



Kent Nagano © Felix Broede

An explosion of resounding light and glowing sounds – given its programme, the first concert of this summer's *Ouverture spirituelle*, which is entitled *Transfiguration*, promises radiant events. On 22 July 2017 Kent Nagano conducts the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra with pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard as the soloist. The programme features György Ligeti's *Lux aeterna* and Olivier Messiaen's *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*.

Kent Nagano has conducted 47 performances at the Salzburg Festival: 36 on the opera stage and 11 concerts. He made his debut in 1994 with Igor Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex / Symphony of Psalms*, directed by Peter Sellars. The same team led the 1998 production of Olivier Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*, praised by reviewers and audience alike. Further success followed in the shape of Ferruccio Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, directed by Peter Mussbach (1999), and the world premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *L'amour de loin*, directed by Peter Sellars (2000). During Peter Ruzicka's tenure as artistic director, Nagano conducted two works by Austrian Jewish composers whose works the Nazis branded as "degenerate", whereupon they were almost forgotten: *Der König Kandaules* by Alexander Zemlinsky,

directed by Christine Mielitz (2002), and *Die Gezeichneten* by Franz Schreker, directed by Nikolaus Lehnhoff (2005).

Most recently, Kent Nagano performed at the Salzburg Festival in 2011, leading three concerts of the Camerata Salzburg.

Mr. Nagano, your name is inextricably linked to Olivier Messiaen. What does this composer mean to you?

Messiaen was extraordinarily important for my development as a musician and artist; to this day, he serves as an orientation to me. He taught me to experience and understand life and music as being intimately connected. To comprehend music as a revelation: a revelation of nature and a divine power at work within it, and to derive and affirm action and responsibility as a musician and artist from this source, time and again – that is what Messiaen imparted to me.

You are conducting the first orchestral concert of the 2017 Salzburg Festival. What memories arise when you think of Salzburg?

Salzburg means a lot to me. Surely that is because in this city and the surrounding landscape, I have felt a spirit that helped me to get a sense of Europe. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Max Reinhardt, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Richard Strauss and the founding and history of the Salzburg Festival – to me they speak of activism and courage to make people's lives human through culture, and to give them special value and meaning through art and music, by experiencing art and music.

The concert series Ouverture spirituelle is dedicated to the term "Transfiguration" (metamorphosis in Greek) this year. To you, is music the art that can transport us into another sensual world, into another sphere?

That is exactly how I see it! There is an energy and a spiritual force alive in music which is essential for humankind, because music is able to open up our imagination, enabling people to experience other realities than those dominating our daily lives.

Your concert juxtaposes Olivier Messiaen's La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ with György Ligeti's Lux aeterna. What unites or separates these two works, these two composers?

These two works are two very different artistic explorations of subjects that have always moved people, and will continue to do so. Their different aesthetics, however, are exactly what reveals the universality of our grappling with existential questions, those that go beyond physical, concrete comprehensibility.

The choral work Lux aeterna, written in 1966, became world-famous thanks to Stanley Kubrick's science-fiction film 2001: A Space Odyssey of 1968. What do you think of this use of the music in a soundtrack?

When it comes to such "things", I keep an open mind, ultimately measuring such usage according to the benefit, the added value it contributes. If the movie made the name Ligeti and his choral work *Lux aeterna* more well-known, that can be very meaningful, if it arouses some of the moviegoers' curiosity about the composer.



SALZBURGER FESTSPIELE 21. Juli – 30. August 2017

You have been a regular guest at the Salzburg Festival since 1994, having conducted 36 highly successful opera performances and 11 concerts so far. How would you describe the qualities of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Choir?

This orchestra is considered one of the best. Moreover, it enjoys a reputation for having championed contemporary music for generations and presenting model productions to the public.

Olivier Messiaen's large-scale work brings together about 200 musicians: a mixed chorus, seven instrumental soloists and a large orchestra. In 1981 you conducted a performance of it in San Francisco in the presence of the composer. In Salzburg, Pierre-Laurent Aimard plays the piano solo. What is your artistic connection like?

I have known Pierre-Laurent for many years, since he still played in the Ensemble Intercontemporain. He is a true artist, blessed with rare musical talent, but most of all, his music is inspired and always in search of meaning.

What are your personal wishes for the future?

Good music, new music which moves us, and imparts something about the meaning and even unique importance of music. We are a living part of a major tradition which is fascinating in its diversity. Its inner dynamic and goal was always "the future"! To me, that is an obligation.

Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks - Nagano

GYÖRGY LIGETI *Lux aeterna*

OLIVIER MESSIAEN *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*

Pierre-Laurent Aimard, *Klavier*

Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks

Howard Arman, Robert Blank *Choreinstudierung*

Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks

Kent Nagano, *Dirigent*

22. Juli, 19 Uhr, Felsenreitschule



Kent Nagano © Felix Broede



Kent NAGANO bei den Salzburger Festspielen

- 1994** 3x IGOR STRAWINSKY • *Oedipus Rex / Psalmen-Sinfonie*
Peter Sellars (Regie), Wiener Philharmoniker
Edith Clever (Antigone), Thomas Moser (Oedipus),
Marjana Lipovšek (Jokaste)
- 1996** 26.7. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Philharmonia Orchestra
Olivier Messiaen *Éclairs sur l'Au-Delá ...*
- 1997** 1.8. NEXT GENERATION • Matthias Pintscher
Matthias Pintscher: Fünf Orchesterstücke - Uraufführung
Auftragswerk der Salzburger Festspiele
Werke von Olivier Messiaen und Claude Debussy
Isabel Karajan, Ruth Ziseak u.a., Philharmonia Orchestra
- 1998** 6x SAINT FRANÇOIS D'ASSISE von Olivier Messiaen
Peter Sellars (Regie), Hallé Orchestra Manchester
Dawn Upshaw (L'Ange), José van Dam (Saint Francois)
- 26.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Hallé Orchestra Manchester
Werke von Franz Liszt, Edward William Elgar, Richard Wagner
Dame Gwyneth Jones (Sopran)
- 1999** 5x DOKTOR FAUST von Ferruccio Busoni
Peter Mussbach (Regie), Wiener Philharmoniker
Thomas Hampson (Doktor Faust), Chris Merritt (Mephistopheles)
- 8./10.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Wiener Philharmoniker
Werke von Claude Debussy und Gustav Mahler (*Das Lied von der Erde*)
Michael Schade (Tenor), Simon Keenlyside (Bariton)
- 2000** 5x L'AMOUR DE LOIN von Kaija Saariaho
Peter Sellars (Regie), SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg
Dawn Upshaw (Clémence), Dagmar Pecková (Le Pèlerin),
Dwayne Croft (Jaufré Rudel)
- 29.8. POTRÄT WOLFGANG RIHM
SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg
Werke von Franz Schubert, Wolfgang Rihm und Gustav Mahler
Thomas Hampson (Bariton)

- 2002** 5x DER KÖNIG KANDAULES von Alexander Zemlinsky
Christine Mielitz (Regie), Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
Robert Brubaker (König Kandaules), Wolfgang Schöne (Gyges),
Nina Stemme (Nyssia)
- 10.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
Arnold Schönberg (Die Jakobsleiter), W.A. Mozart (Requiem –
Fragmentfassung)
- 2003** 7x LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN von Jacques Offenbach
David McVicar (Regie), Wiener Philharmoniker
Neil Shicoff (Hoffmann), Angelika Kirchschlager (La Muse), Ruggero Raimondi
(Lindorf, Coppélius, Docteur Miracle, Capitaine Dapertutto)
- 2005** 5x DIE GEZEICHNETEN von Franz Schreker
Nikolaus Lehnhoff (Regie), Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
Robert Hale (Herzog), Michael Volle (Graf Andrea),
Wolfgang Schöne (Lodovico Nardi), Anne Schwanewilms (Carlotta Nardi)
- 6.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
Werke von Gustav Mahler, Bernd Alois Zimmermann und Anton Bruckner
Christoph Bantzer (Sprecher), Dietrich-Fischer Dieskau (Sprecher),
Dietrich Henschel (Bass)
- 2011** 12.8. MAHLER-SZENEN • Camerata Salzburg
Werke von Charles Ives, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Gustav Mahler,
W.A. Mozart
Maria João Pires (Klavier)
- 21.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Camerata Salzburg
Werke von Johannes Brahms, Benjamin Britten, Richard Strauss
Tabea Zimmermann (Viola)
- 24.8. ORCHESTERKONZERT • Camerata Salzburg
Werke von Ludwig van Beethoven, Béla Bartók, Anton Webern,
Franz Schubert und Charles Ives

47 Aufführungen bei den Salzburger Festspielen, davon 36 Opernabende und 11 Konzerte