



Christian Tetzlaff

Violin

Christian Tetzlaff has been one of the most sought-after violinists and exciting musicians on the classical music scene for many years. “The greatest performance of the work I’ve ever heard,” Tim Ashley wrote in the Guardian about his interpretation of the Beethoven Violin Concerto with Daniel Harding. In the Frankfurter Rundschau Hans-Klaus Jungheinrich called it virtually a “rediscovery” of this frequently played work.

Concerts with Christian Tetzlaff often become an existential experience for interpreter and audience alike; old familiar works suddenly appear in an entirely new light. In addition, he frequently turns his attention to forgotten masterpieces like Joseph Joachim’s Violin Concerto, which he successfully championed, and attempts to establish important new works in the repertoire, such as the Violin Concerto by Jörg Widmann, which he premiered. He has an unusually extensive repertoire and gives approximately 100 concerts every year. Christian Tetzlaff served as Artist in Residence with the Berlin Philharmonic, participated in a concert series over several seasons with New York’s Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under James Levine and appears regularly as a guest with such ensembles as the Vienna and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, the Concertgebouw Orchestra and London’s leading orchestras, working with leading conductors like Andris Nelsons, Robin Ticciati and Vladimir Jurowski.

Apart from his tremendous expertise on the violin, there are three things that make the musician, who was born in Hamburg in 1966 and now lives in Berlin with his family, unique. He takes the musical text literally, he understands music as language, and he sees great works as narratives which reflect existential experiences. What sounds so obvious is an unusual approach in the everyday concert routine.

Christian Tetzlaff tries to follow the musical text as closely as possible – without regard for “performance tradition” and without allowing himself the customary technical simplifications on the violin – often making well-known works appear in new clarity and richness. As a violinist Tetzlaff tries to disappear behind the work – and that paradoxically makes his interpretations extremely personal.

Secondly, Christian Tetzlaff “speaks” with his violin. Like human speech, his playing comprises a wide range of expressive means and is not aimed solely at harmoniousness or virtuosic brilliance. Above all, however, he regards the masterpieces of music history as narratives about existential matters. The great composers have focussed on intense feelings, great happiness and serious crises in their music, and as a musician Christian Tetzlaff also explores the limits of feelings and musical expression. Many works deal with nothing less than life and death. Christian Tetzlaff’s goal is to convey that to the audience.

Essential to this approach are the courage to take risks, technical brilliance, openness and alertness to life. Significantly, Christian Tetzlaff played in youth orchestras for many years. His teacher at the Lübeck University of Music was Uwe-Martin Haiberg, for whom musical interpretation is the key to violin technique – not the other way around. Christian Tetzlaff founded his own string quartet in 1994, and chamber music is still as important to him as his work as a soloist with and without orchestra. The Tetzlaff Quartet has received such awards as the Diapason d'or, and the trio with his sister Tanja Tetzlaff and pianist Lars Vogt was nominated for a Grammy. Christian Tetzlaff has also received numerous awards for his solo CD recordings. In September 2017, his recent solo recording of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas was released.

Christian Tetzlaff plays a violin made by the German violin maker Peter Greiner and teaches regularly at the Kronberg Academy.

In the 2017/18 season Christian Tetzlaff can be experienced on four continents, among others with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, Israel Philharmonic, London Symphony and London Philharmonic Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic and Tonhalle Orchestra Zürich under the baton of conductors such as Zubin Mehta, Sir Simon Rattle, Paavo Järvi, Manfred Honeck, Robin Ticciati and Vladimir Jurowsky.

With the Tetzlaff Quartet, in trio with Tanja Tetzlaff and Lars Vogt or solo performances, he will be in New York, London, in the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg and the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin.

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