

10 YEARS • FREUNDESKREIS SCHWEIZ

Liber Amicorum

ROYAL CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA



SWISS FRIENDS
FREUNDESKREIS SCHWEIZ
CERCLE D'AMIS SUISSE



Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra with it's seventh chief conductor Daniele Gatti

Dear members,

This year, the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Over these last ten years, many instruments have been donated, collectively by the Freundeskreis Schweiz as well as privately by individual members. Not only are high-quality instruments an incentive for the orchestra's world-class musicians, but they are also of the utmost importance in preserving the highly acclaimed timbre of the world famous orchestra.

The Concertgebouw concert hall, with its excellent acoustics, was built specially for the orchestra and has remained unchanged for over a century now. It is the combination of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra with its unique sound and the hall built specifically for it which has earned the orchestra its world-class reputation.

Fine instruments are costly, and the orchestra would never be able to afford such instruments were it not for the support of associations like the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO. With the present Liber Amoricum, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra would like to express its gratitude to the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO and its individual members for the instruments they have so generously donated over the last ten years.

As the users of the instruments donated, the musicians were asked to write a few words about their experience using them every day in the orchestra so that you might know more about what has become of your donation.

Instrument donations are only one aspect of the support provided by the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO. A second aspect is the support of young, talented Swiss musicians through masterclasses given by musicians in the orchestra. The Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO also facilitates scholarships to the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Academy. We hope that this Liber Amoricum will help to encourage the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO to continue to provide its invaluable and appreciated support to the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

On behalf of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, I thank you once again for your marvellous support and hope that you enjoy our concerts all the more with these instruments already so familiar to you.

Amsterdam, September 2017

Jan Raes, Managing Director, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Freundeskreis Schweiz of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Established in 2007, the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO is a non-profit association under Swiss law. Contributions to the association are tax-deductible.

The Freundeskreis, with its eminent patron, conductor Bernard Haitink, endeavours to support young, talented Swiss musicians. In close cooperation with the orchestra, the Freundeskreis enables them to participate in annual masterclasses given by musicians in the orchestra.

6 Young, talented musicians meeting the high standards of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra are given the opportunity to enrol in the Orchestra Academy, in which they receive individual tuition from musicians in the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, occasionally playing alongside them during concerts. This is a unique chance to gain stage experience in such an outstanding orchestra as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. The Freundeskreis supports the masterclasses and offers grants to excellent young musicians allowing them to enrol on Academy courses.

In addition, the organisation supports the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in realising its artistic ambitions by, for instance, making donations to enable purchasing

high-quality instruments. These instruments remain the property of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra but are played by the orchestra's members, thereby safeguarding the orchestra's unique sound.

Over the last ten years, the following instruments have been donated by the Freundeskreis Schweiz:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 oboe | 2 single horns | 1 euphonium |
| 1 oboe d'amore | 3 descant horns | 1 double bass |
| 6 clarinets | 4 trumpets <i>German model</i> | 10 orchestra bells |
| 1 D clarinet | 1 D/E-flat trumpet | |
| 3 double horns | 1 flugelhorn | |

A further aim of the Freundeskreis is to raise awareness of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra among Swiss audiences by supporting events like the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra's annual appearance at the Lucerne Festival, held at the Lucerne Culture and Congress Centre, where members of the Freundeskreis are invited to mix and mingle with the members of the orchestra after the concert. Members of the orchestra also participate in exclusive performances to raise funds for talented Swiss musicians.



Trompettist Omar Tomasoni and Jop Wehmeijer, president of the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO



Horn and Sheet music

FONS VERSPAANDONK **On his horn - the Alexander 107X, built by Musik Alexander, Mainz - acquired in 2009**



The first time we met...

I had a good feeling right away! After having tried several instruments, I just knew this was the one. The sound was beautiful and open, even in the upper registers. High notes are produced more easily on a B-flat/high F horn, but on some instruments, there's a trade-off in the overall sound. That's negligible on this horn, which is why it's ideal for use not only in the orchestra, but also in chamber settings.

The characteristics of this horn...

I like that it sounds a bit warmer and darker than other horns. That's to do with the alloy. Most brass instruments are made of brass, but this horn's alloy contains about ten per cent more copper than usual, which we call 'gold brass'.

Memorable pieces I've played on this instrument...

I recently performed a Close-up chamber music concert in the Recital Hall of the Concertgebouw. The programme featured Jörg Widmann's octet Pieces of Eight, which has an extremely challenging, high horn part and calls for all sorts of special effects. I've also regularly played Bach's Christmas

Oratorio with the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra. The Alexander 107X just sounds great in this very high horn part!

Special places I've been with this instrument...

On our world tour, we played Mahler's Symphony No. 1 at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires and Richard Strauss's Ein Heldenleben at the Sydney Opera House. Both performances were very special experiences.

Where my instrument sounds best...

I think the instrument is best showcased in the Main Hall of the Concertgebouw with its outstanding acoustics.

Where my instrument is when I'm not playing it...

In my back garden, I've had a studio built where I can practise and store all my instruments. I've got about seven of them.



ALEXEI OGRINTCHOUK

On his oboe - built by Marigaux, Paris - acquired in 2014

This instrument fits me because...

I'm very happy to play the French instrument Marigaux. For me personally, it offers the greatest range of colours, it gives me a lot of flexibility in the playing and offers great projection in the Main Hall of the Concertgebouw.

A memorable piece I played on this instrument...

It was very emotional for me to begin the new season three years ago on my new instrument with the famous big oboe solo in the second movement of the Brahms Violin Concerto with Leonidas Kavakos and Mariss Jansons. Two months later, another special occasion: I played the Strauss Oboe Concerto with our orchestra. It was recorded live and released on CD.

Things hidden in my oboe case...

Like every musician, I have some secret things in my case. But... they are hidden there and will remain a secret.

The sound of my instrument...

It has the most sensitive, warm and pure tone. So of course, the oboe is the king of all instruments!

The relationship with my instrument...

The oboe is my voice. And it is like my brother – we're together in our journey through life. The oboe is not only the toughest instrument in the world in terms of sound production, but it's also very capricious. So sometimes we argue. But we always end up together with the most joyful moments onstage.



Oboe and reed machine



Double bass in double bass room in the Concertgebouw

DOMINIC SELDIS

On his double bass - *Erasmus*,
built in ca 1810 by Vincenzo Panormo, London - acquired in 2015



This instrument fits me because...

The size of the instrument fits me perfectly. Playing this bass is fantastically challenging. There's no ceiling on the possibilities of sound, colour or character. It's the best possible feeling for any instrumentalist.

Getting to know my bass...

To be perfectly honest, I'm still learning how to get the best out of it. It will take years before we really are as one, since the instrument demands the very best of me to get the very best out of the bass. Most importantly, the journey there is fabulous.

The character of my bass...

This bass is like my perfect woman. High-class, expensive and absolutely stunning from the outside – with all the bumps in all the right places. At the same time, it has a deep character that needs to be handled with care, attention and respect.

A memorable piece I played on this instrument...

I know this sounds super soppy, but really every time I

play this instrument it is special. But naturally, any Mahler symphony is always a highlight!

A memorable moment when travelling with my instrument...

On our recent European tour, we've been doing a Side by Side project. In each capital city, we've sat next to a local youth player. I always gave the bass to a student to play in the rehearsal. The look on their faces when I tell them what the bass is and who owned it is priceless! One student even refused to touch it!

Where the precious instrument is kept...

The bass room at the Concertgebouw is normally where it's kept, where the temperature and light conditions are perfect and where it's completely secure. I can leave it there overnight and know for sure it will be there in the morning.

The sound...

The bass sounds very Italian – smooth, deep, full, expansive, rich and classy.



BERT LANGENKAMP

On his D/E-flat trumpet - built by Yamaha - acquired in 2010

The character of the instrument...

This trumpet is feisty – sometimes it can be a little headstrong, but still sensual at the same time. No matter what, it always shines.

The most beautiful piece I've played on this trumpet...

J.S. Bach wrote amazing trumpet parts for his cantatas and oratorios. These were originally for the natural trumpet, obviously, but since valves were invented around 1830, these parts have also been played on the piccolo and/or the D trumpet. They're tough, but always a joy to play.

Where the trumpet sounds best...

The Royal Concertgebouw is the best place to play! But the trumpet always sounds great in a church, too. My father plays the organ for church services, and I've played with him off and on since I was about twelve years old. I often use this D/E-flat trumpet in works by Baroque and Classical composers like Torelli, Telemann and Haydn.

Unusual things in my trumpet case...

I have about twelve instruments in twelve cases. Besides necessities like the instrument itself, mouthpieces, mutes, valve oil and a cleaning cloth, there's not much else. Oh, well, except for cat hair if one of our cats has decided to curl up in the case for a nap...

The sound of the trumpet...

Churches and paintings are often decorated with golden angels playing trumpets. For me, that says it all!

A nice compliment...

In Britten's Four Sea Interludes, I often play third trumpet. It's an important and particularly difficult part written specifically for D trumpet. A good performance always earns compliments from my colleagues. There's a good atmosphere in the orchestra, and we often give one another sincere compliments – a subtle hand gesture or a shoe sliding over the stage floor during the concert. Or an offstage 'Bravo!' afterwards.



D/E-flat trumpet waiting for rehearsal

DAVIDE LATTUADA

On his A/B-flat clarinet-set -
built by Buffet Crampon, Paris - acquired in 2010



Why I play the Buffet model...

When I was nine, I started playing this type of clarinet, the Buffet, and I've never wanted to switch. The beautiful thing about the sound of the clarinet is of course its velvet character. What I need from my instrument apart from that is its ability to help me with clear articulation. And that's what this model gives me.

Why I chose these clarinets...

Actually, my colleagues made the final decision for me. When we were on tour in Paris, I went to the Buffet factory and had the opportunity to try these instruments during the concert. Afterwards, I was surprised by the conviction of my fellow woodwind players. My feeling while playing the clarinets onstage was very different from what they experienced. I wasn't yet convinced, but they told me, 'No doubt about it: these are your instruments.' They were right!

A memorable place I played my clarinets...

I'll never forget the concert at Carnegie Hall in New York on 30 November 2016. To be honest, it wasn't so much because of the playing, but because of the events that took place there that day – the finals of the World Chess Championships. I went there and witnessed Magnus Carlsen defeat Sergey Karjakin... I may be a musician, but I also happen to be an avid chess player!



Clarinets and the final position of the match between Carlsen and Karjakin



HERMAN RIEKEN

On the ten orchestra bells - manufactured
by Koninklijke Eijsbouts, Asten - acquired in 2012 and 2014

The bells are special to me...

I often used to go to Switzerland on holiday to hike in the mountains. I remember the sound of cowbells and church bells, which always seemed to be coming from somewhere. Mahler incorporated this effect in many of his symphonies. What could be nicer than receiving such a gift from our Swiss Friends?

18 I'm proud of the instruments...

The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra is the leader when it comes to the use of church bells in the symphonic repertoire. I think there's also something profound about the fact that these bells will outlive all of us.

Playing them...

When you play the bells, you can just imagine yourself inside a church tower. The sound is very intense, and when things get loud, we really do have to wear earplugs. The clappers are quite heavy. Each bell has its own specific clapper depending on the weight and size of the bell. If the bell is fitted with a clapper that's too light, it will produce too many overtones rather than the fundamental tone.

When they're not being played...

The bells take up a lot of space, so we store them at Gruijter & Co. together with other large instruments like the Mahler timpanum, the Hammer (used in Mahler's Symphony No. 6), the wind machine and the cowbells tuned in three octaves.

Practising on the church bells...

We can't prepare for upcoming concerts at home on the big percussion instruments. Fortunately, though, we can use the soundproof studio in the basement of the Concertgebouw. Plus all the percussionists live in Amsterdam, where the bells are put out one week in advance so we can practise.

During the concert...

The bells are so big that it's crucial to have an efficient arrangement onstage. Otherwise we'd have to do far too much walking around during the concert. Often, as in Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, we play the bells in the corridor offstage. Because of the distance, though, you really have to anticipate the sound of the orchestra!





Horns on bench in garden

LAURENS WOUTENBERG

On his double horn and
descant horn - built by Klaus Fehr, Sibbe - acquired in 2014



These instruments suit me...

... like horns suit a cow! I could do without them, but a part of me would soon feel like it's missing. Not to mention that these particular instruments fit me like a glove, since Klaus Fehr built them to my own specifications.

A memorable concert...

Mozart's Second Horn Concerto, when I performed for the very first time as a soloist with my own orchestra. The new double horn gave me both confidence and inspiration.

How I travel with my instruments...

For years, I'd ride about 100 kilometres a month with my horn in a crate attached to the front of my bike. Until very recently, that is, when I discovered a small dent in the bell which caused the threaded rim to buckle. Since then, I've decided it's safer just to carry it on my back.

Reactions from family members...

Sometimes one of my kids will walk into the room while I'm practising and say, 'Dad, you really do play the horn beautifully!' Wonderful!

The character of my instruments...

I'd call the double horn masculine and the descant feminine. They were both cut from the same brass plate and complement each other. The double horn, with its low register, is heavier, sounds a bit bigger and is more expansive. The descant, on the other hand, easily ascends into the upper register and sounds elegant and clear. I don't mean to insinuate anything, but although the descant may be more flexible, I still find 'her' to be a bit stubborn at times.

A nice compliment...

Once, after a concert, a colleague came up and hugged me, tears running down her face. She had been moved by my playing and by the sound of the instrument. I can't think of a nicer compliment than that.

The relationship I have with my instrument...

I enjoy the sound of my instruments, the smoothness and coolness of the shining metal, and their shapes and curves. At the end of the season, I like to put them to one side, but even after the holiday has only just begun, I start longing to play them again.



ARNO PITERS

On his D clarinet - built by

Leitner & Krauss, Neustadt - acquired in 2011

Why this instrument...

I'm the player in the orchestra who specialises in the high clarinet. I play both the D and the E-flat clarinet. Looking back, I realise now that my old D clarinet was unplayable. Now it's all so much easier! It's like I have a new bicycle that can go a lot faster than my old one without me having to pedal anywhere near as hard.

22 Getting to know my D clarinet...

It took a long time before I could really play this clarinet well. It was a prototype from the builder, and had to be broken in. Over time, the builder made further adjustments to improve it. And he's done a terrific job! Even now, through continued use, the instrument is developing and loosening up, and the sound is freer.

Its character...

This clarinet is like a moody, but very spirited, woman. Very beautiful, but incredibly obstinate, too. I have yet to fully understand her, I think!

A beautiful piece I've performed on it...

Ravel's Daphnis et Chloé! It was a dream playing that part on this instrument. With my old clarinet, I had to work so hard, but with this one, I could just enjoy the music! It was so easy in terms of intonation and beautiful legato.

The difference between the D and the E-flat clarinet...

Composers like Stravinsky and Strauss wrote specifically for the D clarinet. The sound is warmer and fluffier than the E-flat clarinet's, and its tone is a bit fuller.



D clarinet on couch in study



Oboe d'amore and Sophie

NICOLINE ALT

On the oboe d'amore - built by Lorée, Parijs - acquired in 2012



The oboe d'amore...

Orchestral parts written for the oboe d'amore can be for either the first or second oboe. In terms of size, the instrument is in between the oboe and the alto oboe. This oboe d'amore was donated to the entire section by our Swiss Friends, so we all really enjoy playing it!

A memorable piece I've played on this instrument...

Bach, Mahler and Strauss wrote the most beautiful parts for oboe d'amore. At the beginning of the year, we performed Mahler's Rückert-Lieder. In Um Mitternacht, he wrote a part specifically for the oboe d'amore, a gorgeous countermelody accompanying the singer's line. In that one section with its dark atmosphere, it's precisely the sound of this instrument that Mahler is looking for. It's such a joy to play!

How I prepare...

If I know we're going to be performing a work which calls for the oboe d'amore, I start making the special reeds I'll need more than a month in advance. It's also a well-known fact that the oboe d'amore can be temperamental

when it comes to intonation. So I work carefully with a tuning device while practising mainly to get used to the intonation.

What I think is special about this instrument...

I love the bulb-shaped bell at the bottom. That's actually what gives the instrument such a distinctive 'OH' sound. It's very warm and sweet, a sound that instantly moves you as a listener. Even my cat likes it. Whenever I practise the instrument at home, she always comes in to have a listen.

What it's like to play the instrument...

Playing the oboe d'amore really is a specialist skill. It may be freer than the normal oboe in terms of breath control, but it does require special attention to intonation and to wolf tones, notes which have different resistance and sound owing to the physical proportions of the tube. It's because of these idiosyncrasies that it's so important to have a good instrument like this one. I always look forward to playing it again in the orchestra!

MEMBERS AND THEIR STORY

Edward and Helen Piper

Donated the euphonium

Edward Piper: 'When I was in secondary school, I joined the brass band and was assigned the tuba. I can still see myself cycling with the instrument in a beach bag hanging from my handlebars. My parents weren't exactly thrilled with my playing. In fact, my dad used to jokingly refer to the tuba as my 'complaints box'. Ever since, though, I've had a special relationship with brass instruments. When the Freundeskreis was established, I wanted to make a contribution. During a conversation I had with trombonist Nico Schippers, the idea arose of making it possible for the orchestra to acquire a euphonium – a close relative of the tuba. I'm thrilled that after a long search, a beautiful instrument has finally been found!'

Nicole and Paul Staartjes

Donated the 'Codini' horn

'We realised that by giving the gift of a fine instrument we could make a direct contribution to the quality of this outstanding orchestra. The survival of the legendary timbre of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra requires instruments that enable the musicians to get the very best out of themselves. And we really wanted to help make that happen!'

Charlotte and Andreas Meuli

Whose donations include a single B-flat horn

'As members of the Swiss Freundeskreis, we know how important the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra is at the international level. Making a tangible contribution to the quality of the orchestra was very meaningful to us, and we did so by supporting the acquisition of fine instruments. We appreciate the personal contact we have with the musicians and look forward to seeing hornist Sharon St. Onge again each year.'



Members of the the Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO

Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Academy

Each season, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Academy offers several young, exceptionally talented musicians a chance to take part in productions while receiving instruction and guidance from members of the orchestra. These young Academy students also team up with RCO musicians to give chamber music concerts at a number of locations.

In addition, Academy students take lessons, participate in workshops and receive training. Since its inception in 2003, the Orchestra Academy has produced many successful professional musicians. Most play in professional orchestras; indeed, no fewer than six former Academy students are now fully-fledged members of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

During the academy course, the academists play up to twelve programs with the orchestra, conducted by world renowned conductors and under the guidance of mentors from the orchestra.

The academists play chamber music with members of the orchestra and students of the Music Chapel Queen Elisabeth. Furthermore, the academists receive:

- ◆ 20 private lessons from the concert masters, principals and other members of the orchestra
- ◆ masterclass by the artist-in-residence of the orchestra
- ◆ 2 audition training sessions
- ◆ 5 sessions mental training
- ◆ Alexander technique/Feldenkrais Method/Yoga
- ◆ education (creative learning), educational concerts at schools
- ◆ improvisation
- ◆ cooperation with a composer

During the academic year (September to June) the academists receive a monthly allowance. The academists reside in Amsterdam. Academy students, who have completed the course successfully, are given priority at Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra auditions for a three-year period.

De Freundeskreis Schweiz RCO supports students in the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Academy.



Academy students performing chamber music in the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam.



*Flutist Vincent Cortvint giving a masterclass
for young Swiss talent in Luzern*

Membership in the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra's Freundeskreis

Freundeskreis membership is available to individuals and corporate entities alike and offers exclusive privileges:

Individual members are invited on periodic trips to Amsterdam or to European capitals where the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra is performing. With seats specially reserved for them, they can enjoy concerts of the highest quality at the exquisite Concertgebouw or in other illustrious European concert halls. They are also given the opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes look at this cultural institution and interact personally with members of the orchestra.

Corporate members can additionally count on the support of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra should they wish to book individual players for an exclusive client event for their company in Switzerland.

Individual and corporate members enjoy priority booking for performances of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, Switzerland or in other countries, as well as the possibility of interacting with the musicians.

All members make a valuable contribution to the advancement of young, talented musicians in Switzerland.

Membership fee

The annual membership fee is CHF 1,000 for individual members, special fee for individual members up to 40 years CHF 500 and CHF 5,000 for corporate members. Lifetime membership costs CHF 15,000.

Sponsorship

Members and non-members can very effectively associate their name as sponsors of events of the highest calibre, such as concerts given by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, performances by individual orchestral musicians, fundraising events or events to promote young Swiss talent. There is also the opportunity to purchase an instrument for use by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and thus associate a company or a product for the period in which the instrument is used by the orchestra.

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