

A world premiere with its dedicatees in Lucerne:  
Schneiderhan plays Martin, Henze and Mozart.

Lucerne Festival • Vol. X



**Irmgard Seefried**, soprano (Martin)

**Swiss Festival Orchestra**

conductors:

**Paul Hindemith** (Mozart)

**Ferdinand Leitner** (Henze)

**Bernard Haitink** (Martin)

Mozart: Violin Concerto in A major, K. 219

Henze: Violin Concerto No. 1

Martin: *Magnificat* (1967 version)

Live recordings: Lucerne, Kunsthau, August 13, 1952 • August 26, 1964 • August 14, 1968

Previously unreleased recordings

An outstanding violinist of the twentieth century, **Wolfgang Schneiderhan** was not only celebrated for his interpretations of the classical repertoire, but he also distinguished himself by his commitment to contemporary music. This is demonstrated in three previously unreleased live recordings from Lucerne including the world premiere of Frank Martin's *Magnificat*, performed by its two dedicatees.

An outstanding violinist of the twentieth century: Wolfgang Schneiderhan, born in Vienna in 1915, was concert master of the Vienna Philharmonic for many years before turning to his solo career entirely. As a chamber musician – for instance with his Schneiderhan Quartet or in the trio with Edwin Fischer and Enrico Mainardi – he also proved to be influential. Schneiderhan was one of the defining artists in the history of the Lucerne Festival: between 1949 and 1986 he gave an amazing forty-two concerts; as Georg Kulenkampff's successor, he directed the masterclasses over several decades; and in 1956, together with his former student Rudolf Baumgartner, he founded the Lucerne Festival Strings.

Although Schneiderhan possessed enormous technical prowess, he never entered the territory of pure virtuoso concertos or sensational solo pieces. Instead, his dexterity always underpinned a well-articulated tone, a cultivated breath of modulation and a highly differentiated dynamic palette; the natural and genuine nature of his playing was, justifiably, praised again and again. Schneiderhan's "house gods" were Bach, Mozart and Beethoven, but he was also a knowledgeable and committed champion of twentieth century composers, from Boris Blacher, Karl Amadeus Hartmann and Rolf Liebermann through to Frank Martin and Igor Stravinsky.

The range of Schneiderhan's repertoire is also displayed in these three Lucerne live recordings, now released for the first time. His commitment for the music of his time becomes particularly evident: he performs Henze's highly virtuosic First Violin Concerto (which he would go on to record on disc as well, with the composer conducting) alongside Martin's *Magnificat*. The Swiss composer had composed this unusually scored work, which one year later would be expanded into his *Maria-Triptychon*, for Schneiderhan and his wife, the soprano Irmgard Seefried – the Lucerne live recording of the world premiere with the two dedicatees therefore represents an exceptional archive discovery. The early recording of Mozart's final violin concerto on the other hand shows Schneiderhan as a representative of the Viennese Mozart tradition. Here, his partner at the podium of the Swiss Festival Orchestra is Paul Hindemith who can be experienced as a conductor of classical repertoire.

The 32-page booklet in three languages provides extensive background information on Wolfgang Schneiderhan in Lucerne, and also features photos from the festival archives published here for the very first time.

In cooperation with audite, LUCERNE FESTIVAL presents the "Historic Performances" series featuring outstanding concert recordings of artists who have shaped the festival throughout its history. The aim of this CD edition is to rediscover treasures – most of which have not been released previously – from the first six decades of the festival, which was founded in 1938 with a special gala concert conducted by Arturo Toscanini. These recordings have been made available by the archives of SRF Swiss Radio and Television, which has broadcast the Lucerne concerts from the outset. Painstakingly re-mastered and supplemented with photos and materials from the LUCERNE FESTIVAL archive, they represent a sonic history of the festival.

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- First releases
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- With the two dedicatees of Martin's *Magnificat*, Irmgard Seefried and Wolfgang Schneiderhan
- Wolfgang Schneiderhan, one of the outstanding violinists of the twentieth century
- Paul Hindemith as a conductor of classical repertoire
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