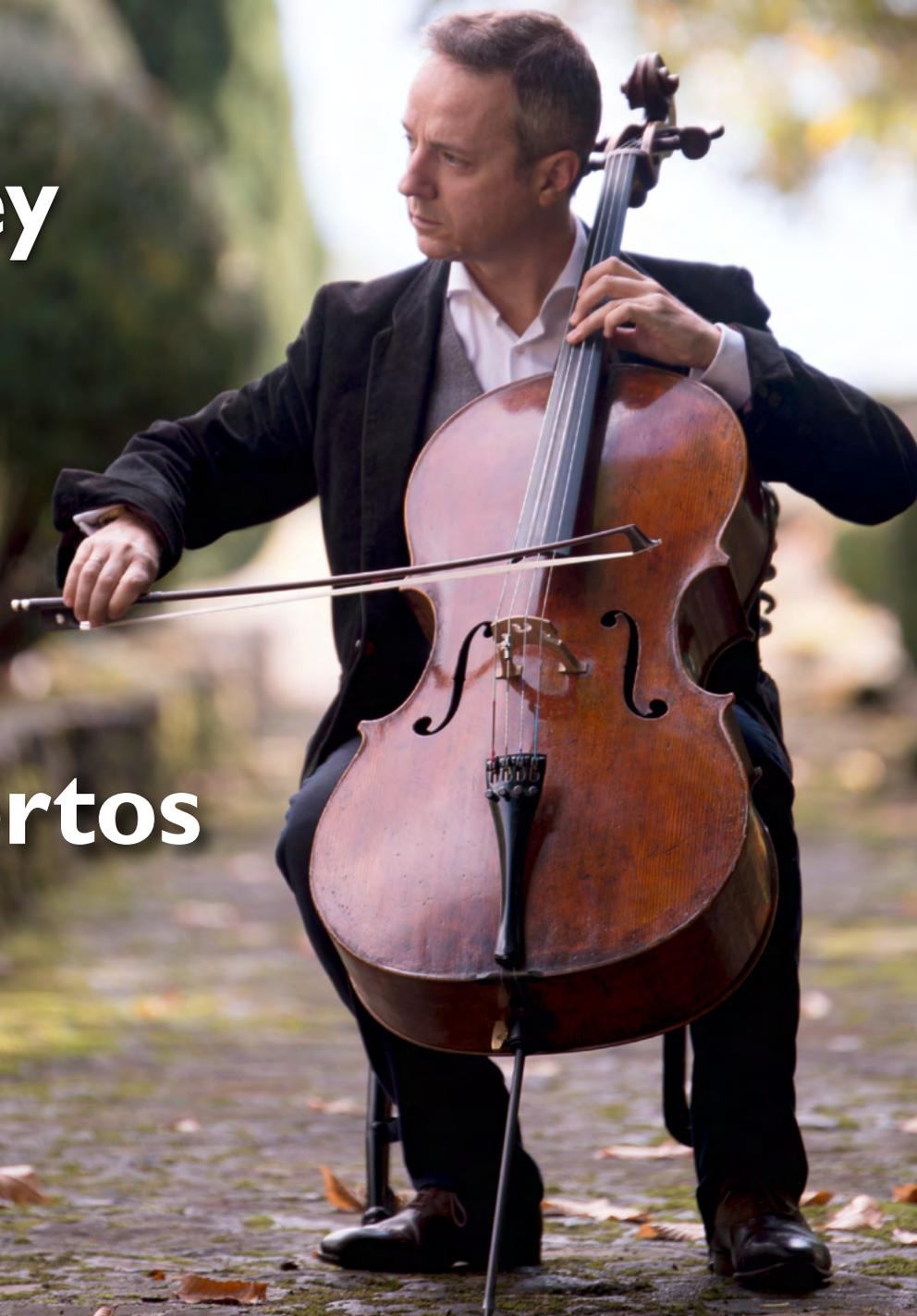


audite

**Marc Coppey**  
**Zagreb Soloists**

**Cello Concertos**

J. Haydn Nos 1 & 2  
C.P.E. Bach



**JOSEPH HAYDN** (1732-1809)

**Cello Concerto No. 1 in C major, Hob. VIIb:1**

- I. Moderato 8:59
- II. Adagio 7:56
- III. Finale: Allegro molto 6:20

**Cello Concerto No. 2 in D major, Hob. VIIb:2**

- I. Allegro moderato 14:53
- II. Adagio 5:13
- III. Allegro 4:49

**CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH** (1714-1788)

**Cello Concerto in A major (H 439)**

- I. Allegro 6:29
- II. Largo con sordini, mesto 7:27
- III. Allegro assai 5:09

**Marc Coppey** (cello / director)  
**Zagreb Soloists**

**Precise, commanding, free –  
Marc Coppey talks to Norbert Hornig about  
Joseph Haydn's Cello Concertos**

***The two cello concertos by Joseph Haydn form part of every cellist's core repertoire: they are frequently performed and have been recorded many times. Why did you decide to record these standard works once again?***

For us cellists, these Haydn concertos represent probably the most high-ranked Classical repertoire with orchestra. Of course we are slightly disappointed about the fact that there are no Mozart or Beethoven cello concertos. Therefore the Haydn concertos, apart from being extremely beautiful, enjoy a very privileged standing. In addition to that, they mark an important stage in the history of cello literature. We have the Bach suites, we have Boccherini's works for cello, and then these fabulous Haydn concertos which definitely established the cello as a solo instrument. They possess all the qualities one could wish for in a concerto. Not only are they highly virtuosic, but Haydn also skilfully emphasises the lyrical virtues of the instrument. Of course there is also French Classical repertoire, which, regrettably, has slightly fallen into oblivion, such as the cello works by Duport. But Haydn definitely is the jewel in the crown.

***Do you remember your first encounter with Haydn?***

I started playing the Haydn concertos as a child, later on in competitions, and finally on the concert stage. Since I started collaborating with the Zagreb Soloists, I have also been performing them without a conductor, as *concertante* works from a chamber music perspective. The orchestra is not very large – fifteen strings, two oboes and two horns would probably correspond to the size of the ensemble that Haydn had at his disposal.

***Soloists are often asked to perform Haydn's cello concertos. Is there no danger of succumbing to routine in recordings, however beautiful these works may be?***

When one records a work, one should do so with fresh ears, looking at it from a new perspective – even when one has lived with that music for a long time, as in this case with the Haydn. But we have worked together for only two years, so everything is still novel, and we share the same enthusiasm for the music. We have played these pieces in a number of concerts, so a recording seems a natural progression. Haydn remains a challenge, time and again. It is easy to forget how difficult these concertos are to play, simply because they are so well-known and familiar. But nothing should sound difficult. The same goes for Mozart's violin concertos – the soloist should never be seen to be struggling.

***What difficulties does Haydn specifically pose?***

It is highly precise music – that is an important point – making high demands on intonation and articulation, as well as, of course, phrasing. It should always sound precise and, at the same time, very natural, never stiff. Formally, it is also immensely clear music – Haydn, after all,

was a pioneer of the sonata form in his string quartets and symphonies. He was a free spirit, and elements of improvisation also feature in his compositions; and he never repeated himself. The performer is faced with similar challenges: precision and structural strictness should be expressed in a commanding, yet free, manner – like Haydn, who certainly was not an academic composer.

***The cello concertos by Haydn each have a characteristic sound – what are their fundamental differences?***

The C major concerto is a work of the young Haydn, a typical example of the music still rooted in the first half of the eighteenth century: Baroque devices can easily be detected. The second concerto in D major was written around twenty years later. The *cantabile, bel canto* aspect is very pronounced, going towards a *dolce*. There are many operatic elements to these concertos, and this delicate mixture of folk music and intellectually challenging music with Haydn is just incredible. He can write a rondo that sounds like a simple song or a peasant dance, and then – as in the D major concerto – a soprano aria which seems to come straight out of an inventive opera scene. Most elegant. The two pieces make entirely different demands on the performer. In the end, the most important thing is to combine virtuosity with lightness whilst making the instrument sing.

***What do terms such as “performance practice” and “historically informed” mean to you – do you aim for a particular sound ideal?***

I am part of a generation that I would like to call “post-Baroque”. For us, this is no longer such a hot topic as it once may have been. We no longer live in the 1950s. Today, it is taken for granted that one is informed about certain aspects of “historical” performance practice and interpretation. Every string player should know Leopold Mozart’s violin tutor: it is so inspiring and instructive with regard to performing Classical music. It is time to stop making a big issue out of it. And theories apart, it is essential to approach a piece of music with a degree of intensity, and to bring it to life. If “historically informed” means that a work is brought to life, I am very much in favour. If, however, music is being put into a museum, it becomes dangerous. We play at modern pitch, A=442Hz, on modern instruments, using gut strings. We use natural horns in the orchestra – they mix well with the strings, particularly the cellos, but also with the oboes which makes for a good balance. I play a cello by Matteo Goffriller (1711) with a modern bow and gut strings which I also use for music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They assist the player in finding a particular, more personal, sound. It is never a purely mechanical or automatic exercise to create a sound; it emerges immediately, in the moment.

***Your recording of the Haydn concertos is rounded off by the A major concerto by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Why this piece?***

What should one programme with Haydn? Many cellists opt for concertos from the same period, such as those by Kraft or Mönn. Other concertos written at Haydn’s time are beautiful, but not of the same quality. I therefore decided to include a work of an earlier composer, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. The Baroque concertos of Antonio Vivaldi aside, he wrote the most important cello concertos before Haydn. I have also performed them a good number of times with the Zagreb Soloists. These works reveal a different perspective of the concerto genre from the period between Baroque and Classicism. They are virtuosic but do not yet make use of the entire fingerboard of the cello. The lower registers of the cello therefore emerge all the more and the sonorities are lower. In the three movements, orchestra and soloist

enter into an interesting dialogue, akin to that in the Baroque concerto grosso. The slow movement is incredible, and very hard to classify. There are moments of dark drama, anticipating the music of the “Sturm und Drang”: we discover the soul of a composer on the cusp of Romanticism. An idiom which is neither Baroque nor Classicism, and difficult to define – just Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. He cannot be pigeonholed; he was a free spirit, like Haydn. That is why I found it intriguing to combine these two composers.

***What motivated you to take on the artistic leadership of the Zagreb Soloists, thus by implication succeeding the ensemble’s founder, the cellist Antonio Janigro?***

I was invited to perform with the orchestra. And they happened to be looking for a new artistic director. The orchestra mobilises enormous energy on stage which I like a lot. And they are prepared to work, to search and to experiment. They are extremely committed musicians; everything they do happens with the greatest devotion.

***On which repertoire do you intend to focus with the orchestra?***

It is important to me to be versatile, to perform music from the Baroque right through to contemporary music. The Zagreb Soloists are a string ensemble who of course like to play Classical repertoire, but who are equally interested in the music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We want to cover the entire spectrum of musical styles. That is also the only option for a string ensemble to establish itself in the music world. Until the seventies, there were many good string ensembles. But, ever since the emergence of Baroque groups and ensembles specialising in contemporary music, these are no longer as present as they once were. Musicians of the early twenty-first century have to have different approaches for different repertoire. That is a real challenge and that is what I primarily focus on. We offer, for instance, a programme called “Night”: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* by Mozart, *Verklärte Nacht* by Arnold Schoenberg and a piece by Wolfgang Rihm entitled *Nachtordnung*. Diverse pieces, all exploring the subject of “night”. To present music in its stylistic diversity and variety, revealing cross connections in the process: that, to me, is truly tantalising.

Translation: Viola Scheffel



## MARC COPPEY

French cellist Marc Coppey, winner of the Bach Competition Leipzig at the age of eighteen (First Prize and Special Prize for the best interpretation of Bach), is considered one of today's leading cellists. Early on Sir Yehudi Menuhin discovered his talent and subsequently invited him to make his Moscow and Paris debuts performing together with him and Viktoria Postnikova. In 1989, Mstislav Rostropovitch invited Marc Coppey to the Evian Festival and from there his solo career took off.

A frequent soloist with leading orchestras, Marc Coppey has collaborated with distinguished conductors such as Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Alan Gilbert, Lionel Bringuier, Eliahu Inbal, Emmanuel Krivine, Yutaka Sado and Yan Pascal Tortelier, to name but a few. He has appeared in numerous recitals in Europe, North and South America and Asia in prestigious concert halls such as Wigmore Hall in London, the Schauspielhaus in Berlin, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Salle Pleyel, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and the Philharmonie in Paris, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory in Moscow and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. He is a regular guest at festivals including those of Radio-France-Montpellier, Strasbourg, Besançon, La Roque d'Anthéron, Monte-Carlo, the Nantes and Lisbon "Folle Journée", Bachfest Leipzig, Musikfest Stuttgart, Chamber Music Festival Kuhmo and the Pablo Casals Festival at Prades.

An avid chamber music player, Marc Coppey has explored and performed the cello repertoire with renowned artists, among them Maria João Pires, Stephen Kovacevich, Nicholas Angelich, Michel Béroff, Kun-Woo Paik, Peter Laul, Augustin Dumay, Viktoria Mullova, Valeriy Sokolov, Alina Pogostkina, Ilya Gringolts, János Starker, Paul Meyer, Emmanuel Pahud and the Tokyo, Takács, Pražák, Ébène and Talich Quartets. From 1995 to 2000 he was a member of the Ysaÿe Quartet.

Marc Coppey's choice of repertoire is eclectic and innovative. He frequently plays the complete Bach Suites and other well-known concert repertoire, but also works that are rarely heard. Performing and promoting contemporary music is very important to him: he is the dedicatee of several contemporary works and he played the world premieres of the Cello Concertos by Lenot, Tanguy and Monnet as well as the French and Spanish premieres of Elliott Carter's Cello Concerto.

Marc Coppey's recordings have received critical acclaim worldwide. They include works by Beethoven, Debussy, Emmanuel, Fauré, Grieg, Strauss, Dubois, Bach, Dohnányi, Matalon and Dutilleux. Together with the Pražák Quartet, Marc Coppey has recorded the Schubert Quintet and with pianist Peter Laul the Brahms Cello Sonatas, Russian Cello Sonatas and a Schubert album.

Arte TV recently broadcast his live performance (full-length) of the complete Bach Suites from the Chapelle de la Trinité, Lyon.

In addition to his solo career and his chamber music activities, Marc Coppey is Professor at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris and gives master-classes across the globe. He is artistic director of the Colmar Chamber Music Festival as well as the Zagreb Soloists.

Marc Coppey was born in Strasbourg, France. He studied cello at the conservatory of his home town, continued at the Paris Conservatoire and at Indiana University in Bloomington, USA. Today he resides in Paris. He was made Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Culture Ministry in 2014.

Marc Coppey performs on a rare cello by Matteo Goffriller (Venice, 1711), the «Van Wilgenburg».

## ZAGREB SOLOISTS

Founded in 1953 as an ensemble of Radio Zagreb under the artistic leadership of the renowned cellist Antonio Janigro, Zagreb Soloists have gained recognition as one of the world's leading chamber orchestras. Sreten Krstić has appeared as the ensemble's concertmaster since 2012; he is also concertmaster of the Munich Philharmonic.

Zagreb Soloists have given over 3500 concerts on all continents, performing in major concert halls such as the Musikverein (Vienna), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Royal Festival Hall (London), Philharmonie (Berlin), Tchaikovsky Hall (Moscow), Sala Santa Cecilia (Rome), Carnegie Hall (New York), Opera House (Sydney), Victoria Hall (Geneva), Teatro Real (Madrid) and Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires). They have regularly appeared at celebrated music festivals such as those in Salzburg, Prague, Edinburgh, Berlin, Bergen, Barcelona, Istanbul, Prades, Ossiach, Dubrovnik and others, playing with numerous distinguished soloists including Henryk Szeryng, Alfred Brendel, Christian Ferras, Pierre Fournier, Leonard Rose, James Galway, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Aldo Ciccolini, Katia Ricciarelli, Lily Laskine, Zuzana Růžicková, Mario Brunello, Isabelle Moretti, Guy Touvron. Zagreb Soloists' repertoire encompasses Baroque, Classical, Romantic and contemporary music, with a particular focus on Croatian composers, especially those of the younger generation who represent their country's musical heritage.

Zagreb Soloists have recorded more than seventy albums and received numerous awards and accolades, including First Prize at Mar del Plata, the Pablo Casals Medal, the Medal of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, the awards Vladimir Nazor, Milka Ternina, Josip Štolcer-Slavenski, Ivan Lukačić, Villa Manin, UNESCO, the City of Zagreb Award, the Silver CD label of Croatia Records, Order of Merit, several Croatian Porin Awards and the Silver Medal of The Croatian Musical Youth. During the Croatian War of Independence, Zagreb Soloists gave over seventy charity concerts and performed a large number of gala concerts on the occasion of the celebration of independence of their home country.

Zagreb Soloists look back on over sixty successful years as a renowned Croatian classical music ensemble. Despite occasional, age-related changes in personnel, all members – past, present and also future – are united by their outstanding skill and discipline, paired with inexhaustible enthusiasm and love for chamber music.

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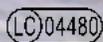
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recording: February 28 - March 3, 2015  
recording location: Lisinski, Small Hall, Zagreb  
recording producer / editing: Dipl.-Tonmeister Bernhard Hanke  
executive producer: Dipl.-Tonmeister Ludger Böckenhoff  
equipment: Schoeps MK2S + Mk4  
Sennheiser MKH 8040 + MKH 20 + MKH 50  
Neumann U 87  
RME Micstasy, ADI 8-QS  
Sequoia I2  
B&W 801 | Geithain RL 901k | PMC |  
Jecklin headphones  
recording format: pcm, 96kHz, 24 bit  
cover photos: Ji  
art direction and design: AB•Design

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