

Klassik. Frei nach Mozart, Mahler & Co

Playing its violin, viola, accordion, and double bass, German polish formation UWAGA! starts its dizzying and anarchic foray through the classical repertoire, leaving behind a worldwide audience swept off their feet.

Reckless wittiness, vertiginous tempi, a performance that keeps dragging the audience along, and a handling of cultural goods and classical instruments one is easily tempted to perceive as improper and brash – it only takes these few words to describe rather precisely the range of styles Christoph König, Maurice Maurer, Miroslav Nisic und Matthias Hacker cover. Founded in 2007, UWAGA! draws on the classical music repertoire and its riches of dateless compositions, and presents exclusive master pieces in a unique as well as idiosyncratic way.

On stage, styles allegedly incongruous enter a daring liaison. Occidental high culture meets Gipsy verve, swinging lightness, or brute punk pretentiousness. According to the four musicians, Tchaikovsky's ballet suites bear disco music potential, Mahler composed wonderful jazz themes, and baroque as such is pure rock'n roll.

One can already guess it: It's all in the name, UWAGA! is Polish and means "Watch out!" Be it stylistic influences from jazz, Gipsy or funk, spontaneous interaction or virtuosic improvisation – in their new way of interpreting, König, Maurer, Nisic, and Hacker devote something to classical music that has been missing in traditional concert business.

Yet, it is not only the quartet's approach and instrumentation – violin, viola, accordion, and double bass – which are unconventional, to say the least. In their way of handling their instruments, the four musicians, in a calculated manner, cross border lines frequently.

A violin functioning as a funky rhythm guitar? Jazz violinist König cannot be deterred from using even a plectrum, while in an instant switching over into an affectionately phrased classical sequence. Conjuring up block chords out of his violin, Maurer joins in groovingly, while Nisic's accordion lapses into a earthy booming, only to float away moments later in a passionate tonality. Hacker, meanwhile, elicits a surprising abundance of percussive sounds out of his double bass.

The four musicians develop their masterful and fancy versions out of a repertoire reaching from baroque to the late romantic era. UWAGA! seizes the great masters' compositions, chasing them through the epochs with an audacious joy in playing. Yet, the quartet approaches the brilliant artworks showing great respect and love for details. This is what provides worldwide successes of UWAGA! for years already: Exuberant musicality and stylistic open-mindedness. Be it in the Philharmonic Hall Essen, in the impressive Culture & Art Center Daejeon, at the Expo 2010 in Shanghai, or in St. Petersburg's Grand Philharmonic Hall.

www.uwagaquartett.de

Booking & Management

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