



ONE EARTH ORCHESTRA

Contemporary music in social and environmental contexts

With selected programmes of contemporary music, which are rooted in different musical cultures, the One Earth Orchestra enters into a fruitful dialogue with other music producers, other music cultures, forms of expression and points of view. The orchestra does not strive to play music from all over the world, nor for the whole world, or to perform works that appeal the world over. Its intention is to be a voice in the music of this world and to communicate and cooperate with other musical voices.

The name of the ensemble, which was founded in 2012, refers less to the concepts of world music than to the fact that music is only a minuscule part of an enormous organism, sounding and vibrating with infinite facets, an organism we call earth. All life is and creates vibration. The name One Earth Orchestra is dedicated to the life which surrounds us all and of which we are also a part.

The One Earth Orchestra develops musical programmes, which allow outstanding interpretations of selected works of contemporary music to be heard and furthermore it presents pertinent musical-artistic contributions on the defining issues of our times. These are social, environmental and political issues that concern all people in this and future generations. Art and music make it possible to apprehend these topics and issues not only through the rationale of language, but also as analogies, associatively or emotionally and so, to comprehend them more fully.

A significant concern is the reinforcement of cultural diversity, such as the continued existence of musical experimentation and innovation beyond the mainstream, or the continuation of the music of indigenous cultures which has, in some cases, almost fallen into silence. Cultural diversity is the greatest treasure that the evolution of humanity has produced in the past 40,000 years. It is a reflection of the biological diversity of life, the greatest treasure that evolution has created on the earth.

The concert venues where the One Earth Orchestra performs are, in addition to concert halls or festivals of contemporary music, places of remembrance, international conferences, public spaces and landscapes whose contexts are thematically linked to the pieces. The ensemble has given concerts, among others, at the United Nations' Conference on Biodiversity in Hyderabad (India) with a programme which broached the issue of the close relationship between the biological and cultural diversity of life. This concert sought a musical dialogue with the indigenous tribe of the Kadar in the southern Indian jungle in Parambikulam, celebrating their traditional music in order to pass it down to the next generation. Also, the orchestra performed in a bunker in Frankfurt am Main (Germany) which was built on the former site of Frankfurt's largest synagogue after it was torched to the ground and demolished in 1938. Here, together with actors a programme was developed in which music was interwoven with eyewitness texts, creating a dense and sometimes harrowing memorial-collage.

Along the Spine

The concert tour, planned for 2015 - 2017, will travel along the American Cordillera, the mountain ranges near the west coasts of North, Central and South America, which run from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. The tour is divided into three parts:

1. Chile and Peru (2015)
2. Ecuador to Mexico (2016)
3. USA, Canada and Alaska (2017)

By way of highly flexible and adaptable concert programmes, *Along the Spine* intends to seek out and to document musical exchange and dialogue between musicians and audiences from different American cultures, and thus to strengthen the continuation of musical and cultural diversity. It is first and foremost the diversity of cultures, the various biospheres, that make it possible for us to experience ourselves in the midst of this vibrant and inspiring world. In this sense, the distinct music of every indigenous ethnic group is a "World Heritage Site", which has to be protected and preserved.

For *Along the Spine* different pieces of contemporary and traditional music from various countries and cultures have been prepared. From this repertoire for each concert and for each musical encounter a specific selection will be made, that can be extended by playing together with local musicians.

Additionally members of the ensemble will offer workshops for high school students, college students and musicians at the particular concert venues.

The **first part** of the tour took place from **18th February to 20th March 2015**. The journey was characterized by great diversity. The One Earth Orchestra played a total of **12 concerts** for a variety of audiences at very different and, in some cases, highly unusual venues. The concert venues ranged from open air concerts, such as at the town hall square in San Clemente, to a school hall in the indigenous community of the Mapuche in Llongahue, to the Club Alemán de Valparaíso or even traditional-academic concert halls, for instance the Conservatory in Lima.

Whilst on tour, collaborations took place with similarly diverse musical partners. During workshops or over longer periods of working together concert programmes were created and performed with a school orchestra, musicians from the indigenous Mapuche cultures, with the Q'ero and also with students and professors from Lima's conservatory. Equally we worked together with various Peruvian composers, whose pieces were premiered during the tour.

The One Earth Orchestra aims to bring attention to musical diversity, to strengthen and document it, particularly for music outside the remit of classical or pop. During the first part of the tour, *Along the Spine* was successful in widening the musical horizons of those involved – both the participating musicians and the attending audiences – new contacts were made and artistic friendships forged, which are growing and will result in further projects happening in the future.

The forthcoming **second part** is planned for **September and October 2016**. Beginning in Ecuador the orchestra's concert series will travel through Columbia and other countries in Central America, before ending in Los Cabos, Mexico. As the UN's Conference on Biodiversity (COP 13) will be held here, the orchestra chose this place as the final destination of the tour. In as much as the biological diversity of life – the greatest treasure that evolution has left behind – is ultimately the prerequisite for and inspiration behind cultural diversity.

Members

In the ranks of the One Earth Orchestra are musicians from different generations and diverse musical backgrounds. Classical musicians enter into a fruitful dialogue with specialists from the fields of contemporary and non-European music. In addition to this the ensemble seeks musical exchange with musicians and ensembles whom they encounter in the individual contexts and places where they play concerts. Open performance concepts during their concerts make musical encounters and cooperations possible that traverse cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Supporting young musicians and integrating them into projects that cross boundaries both musically and stylistically, as well as culturally, was a core concern when putting together the ensemble and equally when planning concerts.

The permanent members of the ensemble **Eva Zöllner**, **Stefan Kohmann** and **Sebastian Flaig** are first class musicians with many years of international concert experience, the spectrum of music they engage with ranges from interpreting contemporary compositions to traditional Arabic, Jewish, Japanese and Indian music. They are joined by the five young, highly talented members of the ensemble, **Anita Farkas**, **Dominique Thomann**, **Larissa Nagel**, **Nikola Komatina** and **Ruben Staub**. These musicians have their artistic roots in the music cultures of Serbia, Chile, Hungary, Turkey and Germany. Even though they are still studying, they have garnered acclaim during their numerous concerts and won prizes at competitions for up-and-coming talents.

The South African master instrumentalist and instrument maker **Phillip Nangle** is an expert on the musical traditions of various countries in southern Africa. He is a trained ritual-drummer and has mastered an assortment of traditional African percussion, string and wind instruments.

The composer and artistic director of the ensemble, **Volker Staub**, has broken new ground by combining the results of intensive environmental sound-research and field recordings from both rural and urban contexts with contemporary instrumental and vocal music. Staub studied piano with Friederike Richter and composition with Johannes Fritsch in Darmstadt and Cologne and has composed 116 works in virtually all genres. Since 1981 he has been inventing and building experimental musical instruments and sound installations, which he often uses in his own work in conjunction with traditional instruments and vocals.

Staub has received fifteen national and international prizes and awards (including the Hessian Composition Award and bursaries for Villa Massimo, Rome and Villa Aurora, Los Angeles). He has been commissioned by renowned ensembles (including Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Musikfabrik, Axelsson Nilsson Duo, Champ d'Action), festivals (Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik, Stockholm New Music, Musik-Biennale Berlin, Rainy Days Luxembourg, Beyond 440 Hertz Los Angeles, amongst others) and radio stations (WDR, HR, BBC, Deutschlandfunk, VPRO and more). His concerts have taken him to many European countries, to Asia, Australia as well as North and South America. His works have been documented by numerous radio shows, TV features and CD releases.

Volker Staub has taught experimental music since 1988 in various contexts and countries, he directs composition-projects with high school students, university students, professionals and those with no formal training.

Further information, texts, concert programmes, films and audio recordings:

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