

„... Martin Helmchen formed melodic phrases as clear and elegant as the columns of a Greek temple...his playing made sparks fly ...“

The New York Times

„By the time the renowned German pianist Martin Helmchen and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra came to the end of a bravura performance of Beethoven’s “Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Minor” at Orchestra Hall on Thursday, there was one overwhelming wish to be made: that somewhere in the great beyond of the afterlife, Beethoven was suddenly fully able to hear his early masterwork (written before he was plagued by the loss of hearing) in an absolutely glorious rendering. He could applaud the brilliance of Helmchen and the CSO musicians, as well as the impeccable conducting of the graceful Kazuki Yamada.”

WTTF News

German pianist Martin Helmchen has been performing on the world’s most prestigious stages for two decades and is one of the most sought-after pianists of today. His originality and intensity of interpretation, which he presents with impressive tonal sensitivity and technical finesse, sets him apart as a musician. In 2020 he was honored with the prestigious Gramophone Classical Music Award.

In the 2024/25 season, Martin Helmchen will be Artist in Residence with the Frankfurt Opera and Museum Orchestra. Additionally, he will perform with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Dresden Philharmonic, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra, and the NHK Symphony Orchestra. His solo recitals will take him to venues such as the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Rudolfinum in Prague, the Beethovenfest Bonn, and the SWR Piano Series in Mainz.

Martin Helmchen has performed with numerous renowned international orchestras, including the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouworkest, the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris, the Vienna Symphony, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and The Cleveland Orchestra. He regularly collaborates with conductors such as Herbert Blomstedt, Christoph von Dohnányi, Alan Gilbert, Bernard Haitink (†), Manfred Honeck, Jakub Hruša, Paavo Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski, Fabio Luisi, Andrew Manze, Klaus Mäkelä, Andris Nelsons, Sakari Oramo, Tarmo Peltokoski, and Kazuki Yamada.



Chamber music holds a special place for him – a passion for which Boris Pergamenschikow provided significant inspiration. His close chamber music partners include Marie-Elisabeth Hecker, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Julian Prégardien, Augustin Hadelich, and Antje Weithaas.

He is a guest at renowned festivals such as the BBC Proms, Tanglewood, Schubertiade, Lockenhaus and Lucerne Festival, as well as the Marlboro and Aspen Music Festivals. He is additionally the co-founder and co-artistic director of the Fliessen International Chambermusic Festival alongside Marie-Elisabeth Hecker.

Martin Helmchen records for the label Alpha Classics. His most recent release, in May 2024, was a recording of the Six Partitas by Johann Sebastian Bach, for which he received a Critic's Choice from Gramophone Magazine. In March 2022, his highly praised album "Novelletten und Gesänge der Frühe" featuring piano works by Robert Schumann was released. His previous recordings include, among others, Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, Messiaen's "Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus," and albums with Marie-Elisabeth Hecker featuring works by Schubert and Brahms.

Born in Berlin in 1982, he initially studied with Galina Iwanzowa at the Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" Berlin before moving to study with Arie Vardi at the Hochschule für Musik Hannover. Other mentors include William Grant Naboré and Alfred Brendel. His career was significantly shaped by winning the "Concours Clara Haskil" in 2001 and the Credit Suisse Young Artist Award in 2006. Since 2010, Martin Helmchen has been an Associate Professor of Chamber Music at the Kronberg Academy. He lives in Germany with his wife, cellist Marie-Elisabeth Hecker and their four daughters.

Martin Helmchen is represented worldwide by Tanja Dorn at Dorn Music.

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