

„... 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. Martin Helmchen has embarked on a complete Schubert sonata recording cycle, with Volume 1 released in October 2025. The Times commented: “Martin Helmchen has proved himself technically brilliant, unfailingly sensitive, thoughtful and completely at the music’s service. ...Helmchen’s blissful concentration of strength, poetry, and poise. Volume 2 of this series can’t come soon enough.”

He has performed with numerous renowned international orchestras, including the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouworkest, the Gewandhausorchester 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.



In upcoming engagements will bring him to the Danish National Symphony Orchestra (DR Symfoniorkestret) in October 2026, followed by a tour with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under Tarmo Peltokoski in November–December 2026, performing at venues including Palau de la Música Catalana Barcelona, Kuppelsaal Hannover, Konzerthaus Dortmund, and Wiener Konzerthaus.

He also continues extensive duo and chamber projects with Marie-Elisabeth Hecker, appearing at major venues in the coming seasons.

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 appears at major festivals including the BBC Proms, Schubertiade, Lucerne, Marlboro, and Aspen, and co-directs the Fliessen International Chamber Music Festival with Hecker.

Helmchen records for Alpha Classics, where he recently launched a complete Schubert sonata recording project—its first volume was released to great critical acclaim and awarded the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. His 2024 Bach Partitas album received a Gramophone “Critic’s Choice.”

Born in Berlin in 1982, he studied with Galina Iwanzowa and Arie Vardi, won the Clara Haskil Competition (2001) and Credit Suisse Young Artist Award (2006), teaches at the Kronberg Academy, and lives in Germany with his wife and four daughters.

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

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