

„No instrument comes as close to the human voice as the violoncello, and Marie-Elisabeth Hecker is able to give her singing without words a warmth of heart that enchants from the first bar. No note could be unimportant to her, for each one is meant to shine, to form itself into a loving thought, into a graceful dance movement, into a beguilingly beautiful cantilena.“

(Frederik Hansen – Tagesspiegel)

The german cellist Marie-Elisabeth Hecker touches with the emotional unconditionality and warm sensitivity of her playing. With outward modesty and great inner richness, she feels the music down to the last cell. She herself says about the cello: "For me, it is the most versatile instrument: it can sing, be a pulse generator, the basis for all music, especially chamber music, the position of the tenor. Besides, you can play it very naturally, you don't have to contort yourself." She made her international breakthrough with her sensational success at the 8th Rostropovich Competition in Paris in 2005, where she became the first contestant in the event's history to win first prize as well as two special prizes.

Since then, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker has become one of the most sought-after soloists of the younger generation. Highlights of her career to date include performances with Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Belgian National Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Dresden Philharmonic, Filarmonica della Scala, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Mariinsky Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Spanish National Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, and Wiener Symphoniker. She has collaborated with conductors such as Barenboim, Gergiev, Harding, Hengelbrock, Herreweghe, Janowski, Luisi, Nagano, Saraste, Thielemann, and von Dohnányi.

Especially with her husband, the pianist Martin Helmchen, she appears in recitals all over the world and has been a guest at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, L'Auditori Barcelona, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Bozar Brussels, the Teatro Colón Buenos Aires, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Wigmore Hall London, the Carnegie Hall New York, the Louvre Paris, the Toppan Hall Tokyo, the Konzerthaus Vienna and the Tonhalle Zurich, among others.

She also regularly performs chamber music concerts in various formations with Antje Weithaas, Christian Tetzlaff, Stephen Waarts, Carolin Widmann, Isabelle Faust, Augustin Hadelich and Vilde Frang.

She is additionally the co-founder and co-artistic director of the Fliessen International Chambermusic Festival alongside Martin Helmchen.

Together with Martin Helmchen, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker premiered York Höller's new double concerto in the spring of 2022 at the Ruhr Piano Festival and the Kölner Philharmonie, which was also performed at the Ultraschall Festival in 2023.

Alpha Classics released Marie-Elisabeth Hecker's recording of Brahms' cello sonatas together with Martin Helmchen to great critical acclaim. Her second CD containing Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata and Trio No. 2 (together with Martin Helmchen and Antje Weithaas) has been released by the same label alongside a CD with Elgar's Cello Concerto (together with the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra) and the Piano Quintet.

Born in Robert Schumann's hometown Zwickau in 1987, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker started playing the cello at the age of five and attended the Robert Schumann Conservatory, before the distinguished German cellist Peter Bruns became her principal teacher. She continued her studies with Heinrich Schiff and at Kronberg Academy with Frans Helmerson and subsequently took part in masterclasses with eminent figures such as Anner Bylsma, Bernard Greenhouse, Frans Helmerson, Gary Hoffman and Steven Isserlis. In 2009, she won a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award. In addition to her concert activities, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker teaches masterclasses at Kronberg Academy. In cooperation with Music Road Rwanda, she regularly travels to Rwanda in order to support a local music school with concerts and educational projects. She lives in Germany with her husband, pianist Martin Helmchen and their four daughters.

Marie-Elisabeth Hecker is represented worldwide by Tanja Dorn at Dorn Music.

This approved biography is not to be altered or shortened without the management's permission. Please replace older versions.

January 2025