

The Viennese pianist **Anika Vavic**, a native of Belgrade, is passionate about discovering the inconsistencies and ambiguities of the scores she illuminates at the piano, powerfully yet sensitively. She always strives to live up to the creed of her teacher and mentor, the immortal cellist Mstislav Rostropovich:

“Music is medicine, and we musicians are doctors and priests – I believe it is our job to ‘heal’ our audience from the trivialities of everyday life, to move and inspire them.”

Anika Vavic works regularly with conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Paavo Järvi and Hannu Lintu, Jun Märkl, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Stefan Blunier, Mirga Grazinyte-Tyla, Kirill Karabits, Andres Orozco-Estrada, Markus Poschner, Yutaka Sado and Enrico Calesso. Kristjan Järvi and Jorma Panula are further musical partners from recent years.

During the 2021/22 season, Anika Vavic gives her debut with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra under Jakub Hrusa, playing Rodion Shchedrin’s Piano Concerto No. 4, and returns to Taipei to the National Symphony Orchestra for Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No. 2, but also to Den Haag, where she joins the Residentie Orkest under Jun Märkl to perform Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No. 2. She pays homage to the centenary of Alexander Scriabin’s death at the Imagodei Festival, performing his *Mysterium*, attempting to replicate his “mission”, the vision of the merging of all senses, in a combination of puppet theatre and dance.

She also returns to the Zagreb Philharmonic and the Südwestdeutsche Philharmonie in Konstanz, where she performs Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3; furthermore, she performs the Piano Concerto by the Liszt student Hans Bronsart with the Staatskapelle Weimar. A student of the legendary Liszt interpreter Lazar Berman, she dedicates herself to recording Liszt’s arrangement of Beethoven’s “Pastoral”, set for release in the autumn of 2022 by MDG.

Among the highlights of recent years are her performances with the Mariinsky Orchestra, with which she gave the first Russian, Austrian and Finnish performances of Shchedrin’s Piano Concerto No. 4, in addition to the work’s German premiere with the Staatskapelle Weimar. She has performed with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jurowski as part of the BBC Proms, and at the Enescu Festival in Bucharest performing Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3, and with the Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna performing Leonard Bernstein’s *Age of Anxiety*. She also gave concerts with the Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin and the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, playing Rachmaninov’s *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*, and with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, playing Mozart’s Piano Concerto K. 467 and the premiere of the cadenzas by Kalevi Aho, which the composer dedicated to her.

A Beethoven programme took her to the Ruhr Piano Festival in the pandemic year of 2020 for one of the first post-lockdown public concerts in Germany. A recording of this evening has been released on CD and broadcast by major German and Austrian radio stations. The first public post-lockdown concert in Austria took place in Anika Vavic’s garden – soon growing into a series of events featuring poetry and music, with programmes for adults and children. This festival, “kunst am nussberg”, enters its third season in 2022.

Anika Vavic has performed at the “White Nights” in St. Petersburg, the Mikkeli Festival in Finland, the Ruhr Piano Festival, the Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, the Grafenegg Festival, the Heidelberger Frühling, the Styriarte in Graz, at Klangbogen Wien, the Beethoven Easter Festival in Warsaw, the Carinthian Summer, the Istanbul Music Festival and the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad.

Anika Vavic regularly appears at the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna. Recital tours have taken her to New York’s Carnegie Hall, Washington’s Kennedy Center, London’s Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Cologne’s Philharmonie, the Cité de la

Musique in Paris, Luxembourg's Philharmonie, Barcelona's Palau de la Música, Konzerthaus Berlin and to the Baden-Baden Festspielhaus.

Her chamber music partners include Gautier Capuçon, Rainer Honeck, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Caroline Widmann, Claudius Popp, Matthias Schorn, the Quintette Aquilon, the Artis Quartet as well as Renaud Capuçon and Daniel Müller-Schott.

At the age of 16, Anika Vavic moved to Vienna, where she studied with Noel Flores at the University of Music and Performing Arts. She also received important impulses from Elisabeth Leonskaja, Lazar Berman, Oleg Maisenberg, Alexander Satz and Mstislav Rostropovich. The winner of the Second Steinway Competition in Vienna and its Special Prize for the best Haydn interpretation also received scholarships from the Herbert von Karajan Center and the Gottfried von Einem Foundation. In 2002 the Austrian State bestowed the Women's Art Prize in the music category upon her.

Anika Vavic's repertoire includes works of contemporary music, e.g. the piano concerto by the Chinese-Austrian composer Shih *Requiem for Piano, Strings and Membranophone*, which is dedicated to her, as well as his Piano Quintet. In 2005 the pianist took on the solo in the world premiere of Johannes Maria Staud's *Peras* at the Ruhr Piano Festival. Leonard Bernstein, Kalevi Aho, Vlastimir Trajkovic, Galina Ustvolskaya, Gia Kancheli, Henryk Gorecki and especially Rodion Shchedrin are among her favourite contemporary composers.

"Her brilliant, powerful playing has a certain tendency towards the orchestral, a trait familiar especially from Russian pianists. Her almost classical instinct for form prevents her from losing herself within the river of sounds. A strong, impressive CD which stands out from the multitude of new appearances."

Die Bühne

"Stupendous creative intelligence and expressive power. The recital CD produced in her adopted home of Vienna is full of energy and wit, but never lets profound intimacy out of sight."

Kieler Nachrichten

May 2022