
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY FOUNDATION

INFORMATION



FELIX-MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY-STIFTUNG
PRÄSIDENT KURT MASUR

July / August 2009

Leipzig Mendelssohn Prize 2009

In the Mendelssohn Anniversary Year 2009 many music lovers took the opportunity to visit Leipzig and the Mendelssohn House – one very welcome occasion was the Mendelssohn Gala on 2nd February 2009.

Once again the Leipzig Gewandhaus was the host, with a Celebration Concert given to a packed audience by the Gewandhaus Orchestra with the outstanding piano virtuoso and Mendelssohn admirer Lang Lang, under the direction of Maestro Riccardo Chailly – which was the great occasion to honour this year's Leipzig Mendelssohn Prize-winners.

Unfortunately, former Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was unable for health reasons to receive his prize in person on this evening – his “Laudator” Justus Franz later presented it to him at home. The two other Mendelssohn Prize-winners – the conductor and Gewandhaus Kapellmeister Riccardo Chailly and the actor Armin Mueller-Stahl – received their deserved awards from Ornella Muti and Geraldine Chaplin respectively. These read out the laudations with fulsome praise for “their” prize-winners and artistic col-

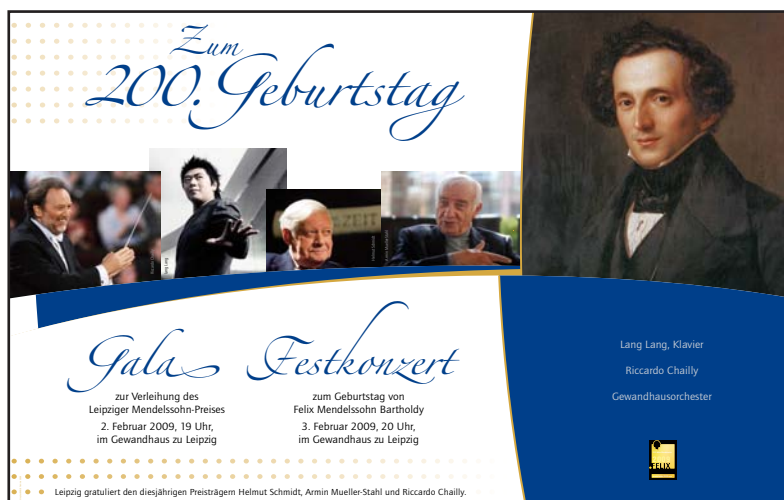
leagues at festive dinner in the Mendelssohn Room following the concert.

Helmut Schmidt was honoured in the Social Engagement Category for his services in the spirit of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, for example for developing understanding between peoples through the medium of music. Gewandhaus Kapellmeister Riccardo Chailly received the Mendelssohn Prize 2009 in the Music Category. Since his opening concert for the 2005/2006 season he has given prominence to the compositions of his distant predecessor

as Gewandhaus Kapellmeister, confirming this with numerous CD recordings.

In the Visual Arts Category the Jury selected the multi-talented artist Armin Mueller-Stahl – he is not only an actor, his deep love of music and painting with roots in nature linking him with Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

The financial benefits of the evening will be used to support the work of the Foundation – for which our grateful thanks!



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s. 2 Pictures of the Mendelssohn Gala



The Prize-winners and their charming "Laudatores": Italian actress Ornella Muti and Gewandhaus Kapellmeister Maestro Riccardo Chailly;
Geraldine Chaplin and her artistic colleague Armin Mueller-Stahl with the Leipzig Mendelssohn Prize 2009



Mayor Burkhard Jung and his wife meet Sebastian Krumbiegel, one of the members of "Die Prinzen" from Leipzig



Pianist Lang Lang (soloist of the evening concert), Generalbundesanwältin Monika Harms and Gewandhaus Director Andreas Schulz; right: Prize-winner of the year 2008 Peter Sloterdijk, with German Star Cook Sarah Wiener.
Again Armin Mueller-Stahl, Lang Lang and Geraldine Chaplin in the Mendelssohn Hall of the Gewandhaus;
The dinner was cooked by Dieter Müller (3 stars) of the Schloßhotel Lerbach.





A further splendid event in the framework of the Mendelssohn Anniversary Year 2009 took place in the Mendelssohn House on 14th June. The President of the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation, Professor Kurt Masur, and the Chairman of the Board, Mayor Burkhard Jung, invited guests to a Benefit Evening, at which the world-famous violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, the pianist and composer Sir André Previn and the 'cellist Lynn Harrell had agreed to give a concert in support of the Mendelssohn House. The programme consisted of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 1 in d minor opus 49, and Mozart's Piano Trio KV 502. The concert given by the three world-stars provided very special enjoyment. The trio interpreted the music in complete stylistic harmony, completely focussed on the works and their composers, and with breathtaking beauty. This joyous performance was greeted with thunderous applause and a standing ovation.

After the concert everyone moved to the Gardenhouse, where the Foundation's President had invited them to join him for a festive menu created by the Leipzig Hotel Fürstenhof, and to listen to stimulating speeches.

The Patron of the Benefit Evening was Thomas de Maizière, Minister from the Federal Chancellery, who gave a personal and moving speech about

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy before the concert.

A surprise guest was Queen Silvia of Sweden, who wished to please Maestro Kurt Masur with her unplanned arrival – a successful Royal joke. Other guests for the evening included the publisher Friede Springer, Ann-Katrin Bauknecht, Beate Middel-schulte, Maren Otto, the Mayor of Leipzig Burkhard Jung, Neo Rauch, Kurt Biedenkopf – all of whom through their generous donations contributed to the extraordinary success of the evening and its objectives.

The Mendelssohn House and its team with Director Jürgen Ernst organised the outstanding musical and social elements of the event, in close cooperation with former Cultural Mayor of Leipzig Dr Georg Girardet.

In his welcoming speech Professor Kurt Masur expressed his great pleasure that in the Mendelssohn Anniversary Year 2009 so many leading figures from the worlds of culture, economics and politics had found their way to Leipzig, each in his or her way honouring the great 19th century master Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. He spoke of the work of the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation, and explained the purpose of the evening's fund-raising – to focus on two very important projects of the Mendelssohn House.



Director Jürgen Ernst welcoming Queen Silvia of Sweden in the Mendelssohn House



Maestro Kurt Masur – surprised and pleased by the Queen's joke

The first project would be to acquire a comprehensive collection of Mendelssohn first editions, in order to support the Museum's work, and above all research work by the Mendelssohn House and other institutions. This is the largest and most complete collection that has yet been put together, and would particularly enhance research into comparing and completing compositions. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy was especially keen on supervising the printing of his works with his publishers in Germany, England or France. Thus, we can find in the first printed editions indications for example of tempi markings and dynamics, according to the composer's ideas. In addition, he – never satisfied – often made further changes, so that different early editions of the same work in France or England can be somewhat bewildering for the present-day user. This is highly important and interesting for researchers.

However, this is only a part of the project. In the context of better usage and publication of valuable archive



Picture above: Queen Silvia of Sweden, Beate Middelschulte, the publisher Friede Springer und Barbara Groth in the music salon of the museum



Pictures left, above: There was time for talks before the concert in the music salon – Queen Silvia of Sweden, Leipzig Mayor Burkhard Jung and his wife and the painter Neo Rauch discussed long and intensive

middle: The former president of the Freistaat Sachsen Professor Kurt Biedenkopf, Maren Otto and the publisher Friede Springer (from left) talked about their impressions after looking round the museum.

below: Jürgen Ernst, Director of the Mendelssohn House, is explaining some details of the historical site for Queen Silvia of Sweden, Beate Middelschulte and Ute Petersen-Schulz.



Picture below: Maestro Kurt Masur and Queen Silvia of Sweden

Continuation of page 3:
material, there has been much discussion in recent years of the digitalisation of museum assets. If the Mendelssohn House were able to acquire this big collection, it could make these rare editions available to a wider public on a cost-effective basis, for example through the internet.

Thus, a part of the funds realised at the 14th June event would contribute to the money needed to acquire this unique collection.

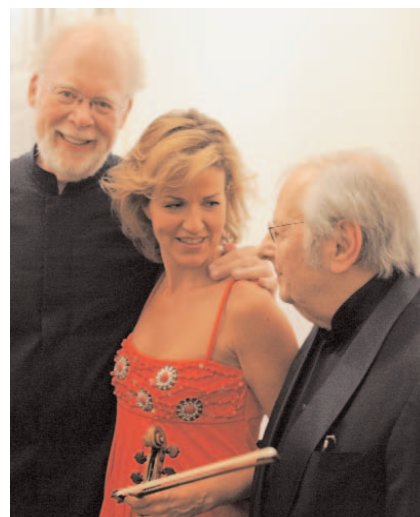
The second current project of the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation would be to acquire a rare historical piano made in the workshop of Johann Nepomuk Tröndlin, a Leipzig piano-maker. This well-preserved and cared-for "Hammerflügel" was built between 1828 and 1830.

Although it is not widely known, there was a close relationship between Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Johann Nepomuk Tröndlin, arising from Mendelssohn's time in Leipzig as Gewandhaus Kapellmeister. Mendelssohn generally valued and preferred

red pianos from English makers, but in this case he was so impressed by the excellent quality of this local production from Tröndlin's workshop that he acquired many of the instruments for the Leipzig Gewandhaus – for the concerts and the rehearsals. It has been established that those pianos continued to be played until the 1860s. According to experts, Leipzig piano-making by the Tröndlin workshop can be compared in importance with piano-making in Vienna.

It is estimated that there are only 12 and at most 15 Tröndlin pianos in existence in the world today. If it is possible to acquire this valuable historical piano for the Mendelssohn House, an instrument which is currently not being played, could bring the particularly rich sounds of the 19th century to a wider public.

The 14th June event was unforgettable, and was a great success in every respect. However, we still do not have the complete funds necessary for these projects. Therefore, we should be extremely grateful for further donations.



First prints of Mendelssohn's compositions; there are more than 730 printed scores in the unique complete collection – well-preserved and stored in special boxes.



The rare historical piano from the Leipzig Tröndlin workshop; this instrument with its typical 19th century sound could be used also in the salon concerts of the Mendelssohn House in Leipzig



Pictures above: The Patron of the evening, Dr. Thomas de Maizière, speaking about Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

World stars after a wonderful concert: Lynn Harrell, Anne-Sophie Mutter and Sir André Previn, (from left) – flowers and a standing ovation for very impressive interpretations of Mendelssohn's and Mozart's works.

Dr Georg Girardet retires

At the last meeting of the Board of the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation on 26th May 2009 the former Cultural Mayor of Leipzig Dr Georg Girardet, who had represented the Lord Mayor on the Board since its inception, bade farewell as he took his well-earned retirement. Lord Mayor Burkhard Jung in a heartfelt speech thanked him for his long-standing involvement and for his constructive and very valuable work on the Board. Maestro Kurt Masur also wished Dr Girardet well on behalf of all Board members, friends, supporters and colleagues. In a short speech he looked back on the difficult beginnings, and the hard-won progress which had significantly improved the situation both for the Foundation and for the Mendelssohn House.

The successor to Dr Girardet and thus the Lord Mayors's representative on the Foundation's Board is Mayor Michael Faber, who was recently elected to the office of Cultural Councillor.

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