

**Daniel Barenboim in Conversation
with Festival President Helga Rabl-Stadler**

**“Music as an expression of humanity has suffered;
that is what we must fight against.”**



Daniel Barenboim and his West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, founded in 1999,
at the Salzburg Festival © Monika Rittershaus

(SF, 03 January 2021) The turn of the year is always an occasion to look back and gaze into the future. The Festival’s President talks to Daniel Barenboim, who has been a Salzburg Festival artist since 1965, who contributed decisively to the success of the centennial edition in the special summer of 2020 as a pianist and conductor of his West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, and who – of course, one might be tempted to say – will also feature in two concerts on the 2021 Festival programme.

Helga Rabl-Stadler: *Daniel Barenboim, how would you describe the year 2020 in retrospect?*

Daniel Barenboim: I think it was a particularly difficult year. There has never been a global problem of this dimension. Even in World War II, there were places where one could escape. Today, we are all slaves to this pandemic. There are very different aspects of this we must keep in mind:

Of course the first consideration must be health, all over the world and for everyone.

The second consideration must be the huge economic problems. It is terrible that so many people have been driven into poverty by the pandemic.

And third, one must not forget that this pandemic attacked all of us. We cannot relax our thinking. A great nervousness has gripped all our human and professional relationships. There are people who are more fearful than others, but we are all under pressure.

Both young musicians and the audience are less educated today.

Helga Rabi-Stadler: *What is the role of culture in our world today? How could culture and the arts lend us strength in these energy-sapping times?*

Daniel Barenboim: We must recognize that our treatment of the arts and culture during recent years has not been forward-thinking. Both young musicians and the audience are less educated today. One must acknowledge this in all honesty. Young musicians are trained; they become specialists, wonderful violinists or oboists, for example, playing their instrument, but their knowledge, their overall culture has often been neglected. However, when you play Beethoven, who has been performed a lot this year, you must know who Goethe was, who Schiller was, and you need to be familiar with their ideas, for these are part of the content of his music.

The other side of the coin is the audience: a large part of the audience has less musical education than it used to. In the 1970s Arthur Rubinstein told me that his audience at the beginning of the 20th century had played Chopin at their piano at home. At the time of speaking, he was lucky if they had his recordings of Chopin waltzes. This has become more dramatic since.

Rabi-Stadler: *Which role can music play, which does it still play today?*

Barenboim: Music as an expression of humanity has suffered; that is what we must fight against. Human beings have the ability to make the best of a situation like the pandemic, for example, but also to make the worst of it.

The point is people's responsibility for themselves and others.

Rabi-Stadler: *Meaning that people should take responsibility for themselves and others?*

Barenboim: Yes, it is about human rights, but also about human responsibility, yet that is something no one talks about. A positive attitude would be: yes, the coronavirus attacks all of us, all of us equally, women and men, older and younger people, independent of any status. The consequence from that should be: all of us must think and act jointly. However, this is very difficult, because the sense that we are responsible for one another has been lost. Perhaps we also forced politicians to take severe measures, because people failed to show enough responsibility for one another from the beginning. Human beings are generally geniuses at inventing things, but then they don't know what ethical responsibility for their discoveries means.

Rabi-Stadler: *Are you optimistic that people will still long for live events, even after the lockdown? How will the arts return to the stage?*

Barenboim: I share your concern. However, we must not forget that music is created within a space, meaning live, on stage, with an audience. That is how we enjoyed music and

learned much from it. There is no substitute for this shared experience. Streaming is good, is important – but it is no substitute for live concerts and live opera performances.

Politicians must treat music like a treasure.

Rabl-Stadler: *How can we convince politicians that music, that culture and the arts hold a special power for society?*

Barenboim: Most politicians are not interested in music, and I accept that. However, a politician who plays a role in society must treat music, the arts, like a treasure. Whether it interests him personally is irrelevant; music is important for society.

Founding the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra was a humanistic act.

Rabl-Stadler: *You acted highly politically when you founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra (WEDO) in 1999.*

Barenboim: Founding the WEDO was not a political act, but an act of humanism. I wanted to demonstrate that young people from different political worlds can make contact and make music together. I am grateful from the bottom of my heart for the way the orchestra has developed over 20 years. But, to be honest, I had expected it to have a greater echo within the region. Unfortunately, that is not the case. On the other hand: we have about as many people who admire us in Palestine, Israel and Arabic countries as we have people who refuse to accept us. This means we must be doing something right. It is not one-sided, it is a project which shows that people can find a common language, if only they want to.

Rabl-Stadler: *The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra performs every year at the Salzburg Festival. This year we have two concerts on our programme.*

Barenboim: Personally, I feel it is a special joy and honour that the Salzburg Festival supports us in this way, and that we can perform in Salzburg every year. It is very important to me.

Rabl-Stadler: *What qualities do you admire in the young conductor Lahav Shani, who will make his Salzburg debut this summer with the WEDO?*

Barenboim: He is extraordinarily talented and already chief conductor of two orchestras, he is forging his own path, and has also conducted at the Mozart Week.

Talent is like a garden which requires water.

Rabl-Stadler: *What advice would you offer a young conductor in these turbulent times?*

Barenboim: Talent alone is not enough: reading a score is more difficult than reading a book. If you don't understand a sentence in a book, you can go back and read it again. A conductor must understand that talent is like a garden which requires water. You must think in and with music; it is not enough to play hundreds of concerts. You must keep in mind what

happened in the past, you must remain in the present, because that is what resounds, and also think of the future, of what happens in the next measures in terms of dynamics, harmony and melody.

Rabl-Stadler: *How did you programme the two concerts scheduled for 11 and 12 August in Salzburg?*

Barenboim: On the first evening, Michael Barenboim and Kian Soltani will play the Brahms Double Concerto. They perform as soloists and as musicians of the WEDO. I love César Franck's Symphony, but it is rarely performed; we start off with Beethoven's *Prometheus Overture*. On the second evening, Lahav Shani conducts two 20th-century pieces, Bartók's Divertimento and Prokofiev's Symphony No. 1. And I will play Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2.

Martha Argerich represents only the best of everything one can imagine.
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Rabl-Stadler: *You enjoy playing with family and friends. This summer, your musical friend Martha Argerich will perform with Renaud Capuçon in Salzburg. She celebrates her 80th birthday in June. How do you know each other?*

Barenboim: I met Martha in Buenos Aires in 1949 at the house of a Jewish gentleman from Austria, Mr. Rosenthal, who hosted musical soirees at home every Friday, and I fell in love with her musically. She represents only the best of everything one can imagine.

Artists and concert programmes discussed in the interview:

West-Eastern Divan Orchestra 1

Ludwig van Beethoven Overture to the Ballet *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus* Op. 43

Johannes Brahms Concerto for Violin, Violoncello and Orchestra in A minor Op. 102

César Franck Symphony in D minor FWV 48

Michael Barenboim Violin, **Kian Soltani** Violoncello

West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim Conductor

Wed, 11 August 2021, 8 pm, Großes Festspielhaus

West-Eastern Divan Orchestra 2

Sergei Prokofiev Symphony No. 1 in D major Op. 25 – “Symphonie classique”

Béla Bartók Divertimento for String Orchestra Sz 113

Johannes Brahms Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 2 in B-flat major Op. 83

Daniel Barenboim Piano

West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Lahav Shani Conductor

Thu, 12 August 2021, 9 pm, Großes Festspielhaus

Solo Recital

Franz Schubert Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 4 in A major D 574

Robert Schumann Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 in A minor Op. 105

Richard Strauss Sonata for Violin and Piano in E-flat major Op. 18

Renaud Capuçon, Violin

Martha Argerich, Piano

Tue, 3 August 2021, 8:30 pm, Haus für Mozart

Daniel Barenboim has appeared 87 times at the Salzburg Festival; in 2010 he gave the keynote address at its opening ceremony; in 2018 he received the Festival Brooch with Rubies, and on 19 August 2020 he celebrated the 70th anniversary of his stage debut and the 55th anniversary of his Salzburg Festival debut.

Performances as a soloist (piano) and conductor at the Salzburg Festival:
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- 1965** 18.8. **Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT
Zubin Mehta (Conductor), Vienna Philharmonic
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in C minor K. 491
- 1967** 23.8. **Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT
Karl Böhm (Conductor), Vienna Philharmonic
Johannes Brahms: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1 in D minor Op. 15
- 1970** 28.7. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL: Works by Ludwig van Beethoven
- 1990** 29.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Works by Arnold Schoenberg and Ludwig van Beethoven
- 1994** 8 x **Conductor:** DON GIOVANNI by Wolfgang A. Mozart
Patrice Chéreau (Director)
- 13.8. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL, Works by Franz Schubert
- 1995** 5 x **Conductor:** DON GIOVANNI by Wolfgang A. Mozart
Patrice Chéreau (Director)
- 28., **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
29.7. Anniversary Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in C minor K. 491
Anton Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 in D minor
- 24.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Staatskapelle Berlin
Anniversary Concert: 75th Anniversary of the Salzburg Festival
Pierre Boulez: *Notations* for Orchestra I-IV
Richard Wagner: *Die Walküre*, Act I (Waltraud Meier, *Sieglinde*; Plácido Domingo, *Siegmund* and Matti Salminen, *Hunding*)
- 27.8. **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Staatskapelle Berlin
Arnold Schoenberg: *Verklärte Nacht*
Alban Berg: Three Fragments for Voice and Orchestra from the Opera *Wozzeck* Op. 7
(Catherine Malfitano, Soprano)
Ludwig van Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 3 in C minor Op. 37
- 2001** 18.8. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Sonata in C major K. 330
Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor Op. 57 – *Appassionata*
Isaac Albéniz: *Suite Iberia*

- 2006** 23., **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
 24.7. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Symphony in D major K. 385 – *Haffner Symphony* and
 Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in B-flat major K. 595
 Johannes Maria Staud: *Segue*. Music for Violoncello and Orchestra (Heinrich Schiff,
 Violoncello) – **Commissioned by the Salzburg Festival / World Premiere**
- 2007** 8x **Conductor:** EUGENE ONEGIN by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
 Andrea Breth (Director)
- WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA (WEDO)**
- 13.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT
 Works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Arnold Schoenberg and
 Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- 15.8. **Conductor and Moderator:**
 A DAY WITH THE WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA
 3 pm: Works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Robert Schumann, Anton Webern, Heitor
 Villa-Lobos, Igor Stravinsky
 7:30 pm: Works by Max Bruch, Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Richard
 Strauss, Hugo Wolf, Pierre Boulez
- CONVERSATIONS
- 11.8. Daniel Barenboim in conversation with Pierre Audi and WEDO musicians
 12.8. “Reason is God’s Scale on Earth”
 Daniel Barenboim in conversation with Joschka Fischer, Ursula Plassnik et al.
 Moderator: Wolfgang Schüssel
- SCHOOL OF LISTENING – MASTER COURSES
- 16.8. “The Phenomenon of Sound” – Daniel Barenboim
 17.8. “The Conductor and the Orchestra” – Daniel Barenboim.
 Master Course with Robin Ticciati
- 30.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
 Works by Béla Bartók, György Ligeti, George Enescu, Zoltán Kodály
- 2008** 27., **Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT
 29.7. Pierre Boulez (Conductor), Vienna Philharmonic
 Béla Bartók: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1 Sz 83
- 28.7. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL
 with Lang Lang, Piano; Torsten Schönfeld and Dominic Oelze, Percussion
 Works by Maurice Ravel, Franz Liszt, Béla Bartók
- 2009** 12., **WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA (WEDO)**
 15.8. **Conductor:** FIDELIO by Ludwig van Beethoven (WEDO 1) in concert
- 13.8. Master Course “*A public chamber music rehearsal with members of the West-Eastern
 Divan Orchestra and PercaDu*” (WEDO 2)
- 14.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT (WEDO 3)
 Works by Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner and Hector Berlioz
- 16.8. **Conductor:** CHAMBER CONCERT (WEDO 4)
 PercaDu (Orchestra), Pierre Boulez, Conductor
 Works by Pierre Boulez

- 16.8. **Conductor:** CHAMBER CONCERT (WEDO 5)
Michael Barenboim, Violin; Karim Said, Piano
Works by Arnold Schoenberg, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Alban Berg
- 17.8. **Piano:** SONG RECITAL
Anna Netrebko
Works by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- 2010** 26., **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
27.7. Anniversary Concert: 50 Years of the Großes Festspielhaus
Ludwig van Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 4 in G major
Pierre Boulez: *Notations* for Orchestra I-IV, VII
Anton Bruckner: *Te Deum* for Choir, Soloists, Orchestra and Organ in C major
- 2011** 19.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Gustav Mahler and Ludwig van Beethoven
- 2012** 2.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Ludwig van Beethoven
- 3.8. **Piano:** CHAMBER CONCERT/ Members of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Bohuslav Martinů, Leos Janáček and Antonín Dvořák
- 15.8. **Piano:** SCHUBERT CYCLE I/SOLO RECITAL
Works by Franz Schubert
- 20.8. **Piano:** SCHUBERT CYCLE II/SOLO RECITAL
Works by Franz Schubert
- 24.8. **Piano:** SCHUBERT CYCLE III/SOLO RECITAL
Works by Franz Schubert
- 1.9. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT/ Orchestra e Coro del Teatro alla Scala
Anja Harteros, Elīna Garanča, Jonas Kaufmann, René Pape
Giuseppe Verdi: *Messa da Requiem*
- 2013** 20.5. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Cecilia Bartoli, René Pape
Wiener Singverein
Johannes Brahms: *Ein deutsches Requiem*
WHITSUN
- 24.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Saed Haddad: *Que la lumière soit* (Austrian Premiere), Chaya Czernowin: *At the Fringe of our Gaze* (Austrian Premiere), works by Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi
- 2014** 23.7. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
Plácido Domingo; Wiener Singverein
Max Reger: *Hebbel-Requiem*
Anton Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat major – “Romantic“
- 21.8. **Conductor:** PROJECT TRISTAN AND ISOLDE/West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Richard Wagner: Excerpts from *Tristan and Isolde*
Waltraud Meier (Isolde), Peter Seiffert (Tristan), Ekaterina Gubanova (Brangäne), René Pape (König Marke)

- 22.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Kareem Roustom: *Ramal* (Austrian Premiere), Aya Adler: *Resonating Sounds*
(Austrian Premiere), works by Maurice Ravel
- 2015** 12. 8. **Conductor:** SALZBURG CONTEMPORARY / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Claude Debussy, Pierre Boulez, Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- 13.8. **Conductor:** SALZBURG CONTEMPORARY /
Members of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Richard Wagner, Arnold Schoenberg, Pierre Boulez
- 14.8. **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT /
West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, Guy Braunstein (Violin),
Kian Soltani (Violoncello)
Works by Ludwig van Beethoven (Triple Concerto Op. 56), Arnold Schoenberg
22. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
23.8. Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 9 in D major
- 2016** 10.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- 11.8. **Conductor and Piano:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT /
West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Jörg Widmann, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Concerto for Piano and
Orchestra in B-flat major K. 595), Richard Wagner
- 2017** 26., **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
27.8. Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 7 in E minor
- 18.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Richard Strauss, Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- 20.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Bassam Mussad (Trumpet), Martha Argerich (Piano)
Works by Maurice Ravel, Dmitri Shostakovich, Alban Berg
- 23.8. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL /with Martha Argerich (Piano)
Works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Robert Schumann, Claude Debussy
- 2018** 20.5. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Staatskapelle Berlin
András Schiff (Piano)
Works by Gioachino Rossini, Edvard Grieg (Concerto for Piano and Orchester in A
minor) and Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
WHITSUN
- 21.5. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Staatskapelle Berlin
Cecilia Bartoli (Mezzo-Soprano), Jonas Kaufmann (Tenor)
Works by Gioachino Rossini and Richard Wagner
WHITSUN
- 16.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Elsa Dreisig (Soprano)
Works by David Robert Coleman: *Looking for Palestine* (Austrian Premiere),
Anton Bruckner

- 17.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Lisa Batiashvili (Violin)
Works by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Claude Debussy, Alexander Scriabin
- 2019** 22.8., **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / Vienna Philharmonic
24.8. Okka von der Damerau (Mezzo-Soprano)
Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor
- 14.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Martha Argerich (Piano)
Works by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Witold Lutosławski
- 15.8. **Piano:** CHAMBER CONCERT
Martha Argerich (Piano)
Members of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Works by Sergei Prokofiev, Robert Schumann, Dmitri Shostakovich
- 16.8. **Conductor:** ORCHESTRA CONCERT / West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Anne-Sophie Mutter (Violin)
Works by Jean Sibelius, Ludwig van Beethoven
- 2020** 16.8. **Conductor:** Richard Wagner: *Siegfried-Idyll* for Chamber Orchestra WWV 103
Arnold Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major for 15 Solo Instruments
Op. 9
Pierre Boulez: *Mémoriale* for Solo Flute and Eight Instruments
Ludwig van Beethoven: *Große Fuge* in B-flat major (Version for String Orchestra)
Op. 133
Emmanuel Pahud (Flute), West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
- 19.8. **Piano:** SOLO RECITAL
Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata for Piano No. 31 in A-flat major Op. 110
33 Variations on a Waltz by Anton Diabelli Op. 120 - "Diabelli Variations"

Total: 87 Appearances at the Salzburg Festival

23 x OPERA (2 of which in concert and 1 excerpts)
59 x CONCERTS
5 x Conversations / Master Courses

Kind regards,

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