

Anita Leuzinger

Anita Leuzinger was born in 1982 near Zurich and began to play the cello at the age of five. She studied with Thomas Grossenbacher in Zurich and later with Thomas Demenga in Basel, where she completed her masters with distinction in 2007. During her studies she received important input from György Kurtág, Miklós Perényi and Steven Isserlis, among others. She was influenced most by the Hungarian pianist Ferenc Rados, who showed her a completely new approach to music.

In 2008, she won first prize at the Naumburg Competition in New York. This led to her debut recital at Carnegie Hall in October 2009, followed by a number of other engagements.

At age 23, when she was still a student, Anita Leuzinger won the position of principal cellist with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra. Her part-time position there enables her to get to know the symphonic repertoire with one of Switzerland's top orchestras, while devoting herself intensely to her solo activities and her passion for chamber music.

For several years now she has been performing regularly with pianist Anton Kernjak, giving concerts in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Germany, USA and Switzerland. She also works often with Heinz Holliger, with whom she has played the Lutoslawski concerto at the Salzburg Festival and given a series of chamber music concerts in Japan.

Her concert activities have taken Anita Leuzinger to the Lucerne Music Festival, the Salzburg Festival, the Davos Music Festival, the Ittingen Festival, the Sommets Musicaux at Gstaad and the IMS Open Chamber Music Festival, England, to name but a few.

Early on she gained experience as a soloist, playing with orchestras such as the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, the Basel Symphony Orchestra, the RSO Symphony Orchestra Vienna, the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Zagreb Soloists.

In 2008, Anita Leuzinger became assistant cello professor to Thomas Demenga at the Musikhochschule Basel. She plays a cello made by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in 1752.

Anton Kernjak

Anton Kernjak comes from an Austrian family with Slovenian background. He studied at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg and later attended concert classes with Rudolf Buchbinder at the Basel „Musikhochschule“, where he graduated with distinction. He was greatly influenced by his studies with the Hungarian musician Ferenc Rados and by master classes with György Kurtág at the IMS International Musicians Seminars in Prussia Cove, UK.

Anton Kernjak has received several awards and was a prize-winner at the international Johannes Brahms piano competition in Austria.

An accomplished chamber musician, he has performed with different duo and trio partners throughout Europe, in Canada, in the USA and in Japan. Past appearances were at the Tonhalle Zurich, the WDR Cologne, Wigmore Hall, London and Carnegie Hall, New York. He was also appeared at the Lucerne Festival, the World Music Days in Luxembourg, the Kunstfest „pelerinages“ in Weimar, the European Music Month in Basel, the Davos Music Festival, the Ittinger Pfingstkonzerte, the Bodensee-Festival, the WDR Chamber Music Series in Cologne and the Festival international de Musique de Chambre Domaine Forget in Canada and the Sermoneta Festival near Rome.

Anton Kernjak has formed a duo with cellist Anita Leuzinger a number of years ago and regularly collaborates with Heinz Holliger. Other chamber music partners include Ursula Holliger, Thomas Demenga, Hanna Weinmeister, Muriel Cantoreggi, Geneviève Strosser and Silvia Simionescu. In addition to the classical-romantic repertoire, his artistic interests focus on contemporary music.

Anton Kernjak teaches chamber music at the Basel „Musikhochschule“.

