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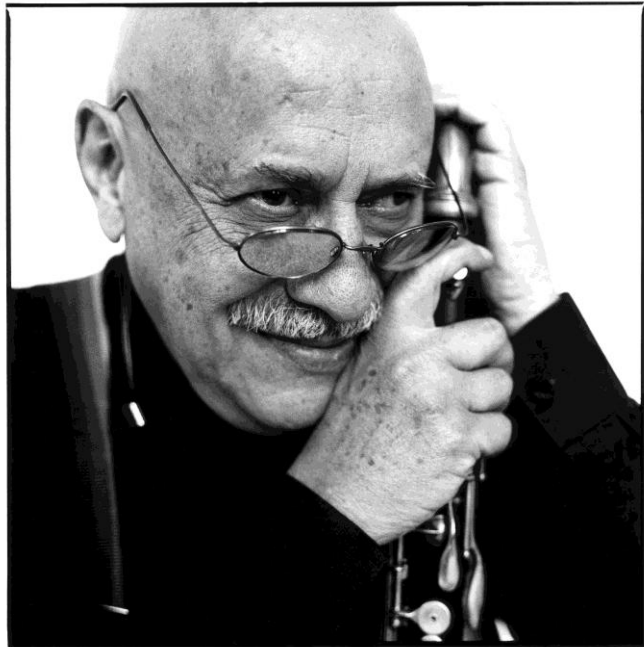
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Giora Feidman

Klezmer Clarinetist



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BIOGRAPHY

Preserver and Reviver of Tradition

Musical history alive – more than 50 years after Giora Feidman's first stage appearance this is still true. As one of the most important interpreters of contemporary music, over the decades Giora Feidman has evolved into a phenomenon. He is an artist, a discoverer and a sensation, a tireless ambassador with an act of undiminished appeal.

It is difficult to describe, what he does on the stage with his clarinet, how it laughs, cries and narrates, captivating his listeners, constantly amazing them with something new. And still Giora Feidman stays on the lookout for opportunities to present his music again and again in a new way. His claim to versatility, his own innovative interpretations of tango, jazz, classical music and Klezmer, merge to become a great and magnificent complete works. The impressive range of his musical activities is mirrored in his current ventures. Tours with his ensembles, numerous solo performances as well as his participation in different film, theatre and music projects show that Giora Feidman has long ago become an all-round artist. His excellence comes from a distinctive personal style, formed from his cultural, religious and musical roots.

In 1936, born as the son of a Jewish immigrant in Argentina, his youth is hallmarked by the Jewish musical tradition of the Klezmer. After a classical music education, Giora Feidman becomes a member of the symphony and opera orchestra at the Teatro Ccoln in Buenos Aires. Two years later, an appointment as the youngest clarinetist in the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra follows. In a membership spanning almost two decades, he works with every eminent conductor of the day. During this time Giora Feidman develops his appreciation of music as “the language of the innermost soul”, as a vehicle for understanding which overcomes all boundaries.

At the beginning of the seventies, Feidman leaves the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and commences with his musical message – the worldwide renaissance of the old Klezmer tradition, which he enriches with multifaceted styles of classical and modern music. From New York, where he is celebrated as the “King of Klezmer”, he paves the way for the “Jewish soul” on the classical concert stage. He thus presents his audience, not just with a very personal interpretation of Klezmer, but with a boundless homage to life. At the same time his music is continually developing. Together with his quartet, which accompanies him during his guest performances worldwide, Giora Feidman branches off in new directions. Going back to the roots of his Argentinian native country, the tango becomes a quintessential part of his music. With his current ventures Spirit of Music, Tango Klezmer and Dance of Joy or “Two Religions – One Language: Music”, the clarinetist builds a bridge between cultures. The symbiosis is just as exciting as it is fascinating, emanating from Feidman's own biographical background.

Parallel to this, Feidman remains loyal to his musical beginnings, his path characterized by appearances with numerous well-known orchestras and ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet or the Polish Chamber Philharmonic, and CD productions with, among others, the Berlin Symphonikern (Berlin Symphony Orchestra) and the Philharmonischen Kammerorchester

München (Munich Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra). In July 2002, he combines a tour with the Münchner Rundfunkorchester (Munich Radio Orchestra) with an event the music world has awaited: Giora Feidman plays Mozart's Concert for Clarinets.

Furthermore, the artist presents himself within the framework of the most diverse projects. Among these, he recorded a soundtrack for the silent film classic "The Golem" as well as a journey through past centuries, which he has been making for the last few years with the organist, Matthias Eisenberg. In Germany, Feidman's extraordinary success begins in 1984 with his appearance in Peter Zadek's since – legendary production, "Ghetto". Feidman's talent, almost bestowing his clarinet with acting abilities, continues in 1994 in the operas "Der Rattenfänger" ("The Pied Piper") (Dortmund) and "Lilith" (Bayreuth 1996) as well as the play "Meschugge vor Hoffnung" ("Crazy with Hope") in the Hamburger Kammerspiele. International film projects augment this musical sphere. At the beginning of the nineties, Giora Feidman responds to an invitation from Steven Spielberg and, together with Itzhak Perlman, contributed to the music for the film "Schindler's List" that achieved an Academy Award. Feidman has a central cameo performance in both the triumphant film, "Beyond the Silence" (by Caroline Link) and a film about the life of the "Comedian Harmonists" under the direction of Joseph Vilsmaier. In both soundtracks he interprets compositions from Ora Bat Chaim. The music of the painter, poetess and composer, Ora Bat Chaim, is for Giora Feidman the symbol of understanding. At the Remembrance Ceremony for the Victims of National Socialism, he performs, together with members of the Berliner Philharmoniker (Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra) in the Plenarsaal des Deutschen Bundestages (Chamber of the German Parliament), the debut performance of her composition "Love". The album "Love – Giora Feidman plays Ora Bat Chaim" is rewarded with the "Echo Classic 2003" for the category "Classic without Boundaries" by the Deutsche Phonoakademie (German Sound Academy). In 2004/5 this amazing artist is thrilling his audiences on extensive tours throughout Europe. One of his current projects in "Nothing but Music" a musical with a cast of international actors and musicians, using poetic images to narrate a musical ramble around the world and through the history of the twentieth century in which the great clarinetist conducts as "Spirit of Music".

The dream of achieving a music which overcomes all barriers has long ago become a reality for Giora Feidman. More than a sheer musical experience, his concerts have become the medium of a new dialogue. In 2001 he was honored with the Great Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Großen Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande). 2005 he is awarded the international "Brückpreis" of the city of Görlitz / Zgorzelec for his contribution to international understanding. In that year in August one highlight of his artistic works was the performance at the XX World Youth Day in Cologne with an audience of 800,000 people and Pope Benedict XVI. In March 2006 Giora will celebrate his 70th birthday and he will be honored with a TV documentation to his birthday.

"Long live Giora, his clarinet and his music! He builds bridges between generations, cultures and classes, and he does it with perfect artistry!" Leonard Bernstein once wrote about the great clarinetist. His enthusiastic opinion is still true today.

Discography

- The Incredible Clarinet (pläne 1982)
 - Vival El Klezmer (pläne 1984)
 - Magic of the Klezmer (pläne 1986)
 - The Singing Clarinet (pläne 1987)
 - Clarinetango (pläne 1990)
 - Gershwin & the Klezmer (pläne 1991)
 - The Dance of Joy (pläne 1992)
 - Klassik Klezmer (pläne 1993)
 - Concert for the Klezmer (pläne 1993)
 - Der Rattenfänger (pläne 1993)
 - Feidman & the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra - In Jerusalem (pläne 1994)
 - The Soul Chai (pläne 1995)
 - Feidman & das Leipziger Kammerorchester - Klezmer Chamber Music (pläne 1995)
 - To You (1996)
 - Feidman & die Radio Philharmonie Hannover - Bloch–Olivero-Bat Chaim (Koch Schwann 1996)
 - Feidman plays Ora Bat Chaim - Silence and beyond (Koch Schwann 1997)
 - Feidman & Arditti String Quartett - Der Golem (pläne 1997)
 - Feidman & Katja Beer - Schubert & Jiddische Lieder (pläne 1997)
 - Lilith – 9 Gesänge der Dunklen Liebe (pläne 1997)
 - Klezmer Celebration (pläne 1997)
 - Feidman and the Israel Camerata (pläne 1998)
 - Feidman & die Berliner Symphoniker - And the Angels sing (Koch Classics 1999)
 - Journey (pläne 1999)
 - To Giora – your Klezmer Friends (pläne 2000)
 - Giora Feidman & die Berliner Symphoniker (Koch Classics 2000)
 - TangoKlezmer (Koch Classics 2001)
 - Feidman – Dancing in the Fields (Koch Classics 2002)
 - Feidman plays Piazzolla (Warner Music 2002)
 - Feidman plays Ora Bat Chaim – Love (Warner Music 2003)
 - Feidman plays Mozart & More (Warner Music 2003)
 - Iris Berben & Giora Feidman – Ewigkeit dringt in die Zeit (Kreuz Verlag 2004)
 - Feidman - Wenn du singst wie kannst du hassen (ARD Video 2005)
 - Feidman & the Safad Chamber Orchestra - Safad (pläne 2005)
 - Giora Feidman & Matthias Eisenberg - live at St. Severin (pläne 2005)
 - Giora Feidman & the Georgian String Orchestra – Crossing borders (pläne 2006)
 - Giora Feidman Trio & Friends – KleZmundo (pläne 2006)
- 2007 – Klezmer in the Galilee
- 2008 – The Spirit of Klezmer

Critical Acclaim

Leonard Bernstein

“Long live Giora, his clarinet and his soul music! He bridges many gaps – generational, cultural and social and he does it with consummate artistry”

Zubin Mehta

“Feidman is incomparable. He is able to make his clarinet play sounds that will make even the most insensitive and most ignorant audience believe in his message.”

The New York Times

“Maestro Feidman has the magic gift to give his clarinet the expression and the eloquence of the human voice.”

Washington Times

“That was Benny Goodman in the Savoy, Sidney Bechet in a hot night in New Orleans and the Pied Piper of Hamelin... after all a man who raises feelings as old as the stones of the Wailing Wall.”

Tagesanzeiger Zürich

“The clarinet brings figures and scenes into our heads, it is moaning and groaning, laughing, wailing, praying and begging, grumbling, stammering, flattering and rejoicing... It knows about anger and pain, sorrow and desperation and still retains a hunch of happiness.”

DIE ZEIT

“He plays a song with a simple melody in a way that opens up many mysterious rooms... whispered prayers which in the twinkling of an eye, turn into a Swing as light as a feather.”

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

“Such a clarinet pianissimo is unique in the whole world. Giora Feidman, that means a special kind of art, there is nothing comparable in the world.”

Berliner Morgenpost

“His clarinet even makes the silence sound. But its laughing with its bubbling, giggling, malicious, hysterical or timid sound is even more diversified.”

Frankfurter Rundschau

“Clarinet tones, so silent as if he was playing towards the inside, and still thoughtlessly virtuous, laughing and crying at the same time.”

Programs

Giora Feidman in a Duet: “Two Religions – One Language: Music”

Giora Feidman – clarinet

Matthias Eisenberg – organ

Two exceptional artists have come together in Giora Feidman and Matthias Eisenberg. Their different origins and their respective musical homeland embody two religious worlds, one Christian and one Jewish.

Each of them is an outstanding celebrity in his music world. Eisenberg, who has appeared as an organist since he was nine years old, has, as it were, imbibed church music with his mother’s milk. He was born into the world of the “Dresdner Kreuzchor”, the “Gewandhaus Leipzig” and our own resident “Bachorchester”.

Giora Feidman Trio: “Dance of Joy”

Giora Feidman – clarinet

Guido Jäger – double bass

Jens-Uwe Popp – guitar

“There is no song to which you cannot dance. There is no dance to which you cannot sing.” Giora Feidman has made his basic attitude to music clear in this programme. In “Dance of Joy” he makes his profound belief in the arts a central theme - then plays with it. We are all born singers and dancers.

As such, Guido Jäger (on double bass) and Jens-Uwe Popp (on guitar) accompany him with their instruments. With traditional music, folk, compositions from Piazzolla, Gershwin, Schubert and Mahler, he spans a great musical cosmos. Here, all aspects of what the great artist understands by Klezmer are revealed. He associates Klezmer with the two Hebrew words “kli” (instrument) and “zemer” (melody). To express this elemental force we need one instrument – our body. “I convey to others my inner voice, an idea, a feeling. A Klezmer does not play, it sings. Music is understood in every part of the world, by every person, no matter which religion, skin colour or language.” With this maxim he creates a concert programme of great unity, vitality and charm. How naturally the most diverse music and styles stand side by side. They inspire each other and shine with a new brightness.

Giora Feidman Quartet: “Spirit of Music/TangoKlezmer”

Giora Feidman – clarinet

Raul Jaurena – bandoneon

Aquiles Baez – guitar
Ken Filiano – double bass

Three extraordinary musicians with Giora Feidman. Raul Jaurena (bandoneon), Aquiles Baez (guitar) and Ken Filiano (double bass) play an amazing quartet with Giora Feidman. Tango and Klezmer come together, growing into an inspiration of exquisite sounds and passionate outbursts.

Feidman, as a fourth-generation Klezmer musician, grew up with the tango, classical music and a Jewish ancestry. The world of tango, which established itself on the streets of Buenos Aires and Montevideo as a mixture of east European ballads and Argentinian folklore, is given a unique direction by Feidman's brilliant mastery. Feidman and his musicians succeed in putting the listeners under their spell. With utmost natural power they impart a combined inner voice, an idea, a feeling. Their instruments become part of their bodies, which in turn become a single instrument, that sings and dances at the same time.

Feidman's maxim that we, as mortals, are born to dance and sing, is the message which is validated in every moment of this concert. Musician and audience blend into one, allowing the stage and hall to become an emotional entity.

Giora Feidman – Musical. "Nothing but Music"
Giora Feidman – clarinet
6 musicians and 8 actors
written by Stephan Barbarino and Jan Linders
Music: Ora Bat Chaim et al.

"Nothing but music" relates a musical ramble – around the world and through the history of the twentieth century – in ten poetic pictures. The great clarinetist, Giora Feidman directs as "Spirit of Music" through dramatic scenes that only music is able to create: as wedding dance, nostalgic melody, seductive tango, infectious free jazz, as brass band music and Chinese sound, classical and electronic music, as farewell ballad and love song.

An international ensemble of eight performers finds, in interacting with six musicians, a realisation: the language of music is older than any story – and every person is a musician. The writers, Stephan Barbarino and Jan Linders have worked with Feidman since their production "Crazy with Hope" (1993) at the Hamburg Kammerspiele. "Nothing but music" is created through a close cooperation between the three.

Premiere on 6 May 2005 in the Grand Theatre de la Ville de Luxembourg with tours through the capital cities of Germany and Europe.

Giora Feidman – Dialog in Mozart

Giora Feidman – clarinet

Jerusalem String Orchestra

4 dancers

Music: W.A. Mozart, Ora Bat Chaim

”Dialog in Mozart” is a music- and ballet project with renowned dancers, the Georgian String Orchestra together with Giora Feidman, under the choreography of Lior Lev. Lior Lev and Giora Feidman enter in a three-dimensional dialog: music and dance – and the voice of the clarinet are communicating with the language of moving bodies. Sound, time and motion. Dancing, the clarinet and the orchestra are getting united in harmonic cooperation. The successful premiere was on 24 March in the Theaterhaus Stuttgart.