

# „La Petite Grange“

Rendezvous for Art and Culture in the Waldviertel

## House Concert with Philipp Kronbichler

**Sunday, 10th July, 4 pm**

**Reception at 3.30 pm**

### - Program -

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**

Partita Nr. 1 B flat Major BWV 825

*Präludium*

*Allemande*

*Corrente*

*Sarabande*

*Menuett*

*Gigue*

**Johann Sebastian Bach/Ferruccio Busoni**

Choral prelude *Ich ruf zu Dir, Herr Jesu Christ* BWV 639

**Johann Sebastian Bach**

Italienisches Konzert

*Allegro*

*Andante*

*Presto*

### - Intermission -

**Johann Sebastian Bach**

Contrapunctus XIV, BWV 1080/19 (Completion Klaus Oldemeyer)

**Johann Sebastian Bach/Ferruccio Busoni**

Choral prelude *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* BWV 645

**Johann Sebastian Bach/Ferruccio Busoni**

Chaconne d minor from the Partita Nr. 2 für Violine Solo BWV 1004

## About the programme

The music of Johann Sebastian Bach is already more than a quarter of a millennium old, without noticeable loss of its valuable influence on our culture. Its fame and popularity has lasted until today, although it originated in a completely different time, that is essentially different from our culture today. It was the time shortly before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, which completely transformed first the Occident and then the entire world. Like all music, Bach's naturally reflects not only his own mind, but also the spiritual horizon of his culture. That is its outward appearance. Like no other, however, Bach's music is based with an inner foothold on universal archetypes that have carried it through the changes of time. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that Bach was a very religious man, but a latent mystical gift had to be added to let him create such deep, pure, almost perfect music in complete modesty and without any pretence of glory. This inner, pure, untouchable core has proved enduring, although the impression of difficulty, aloofness and inaccessibility is still attached to this music.

Since - as already mentioned - the outer appearance of Bach's music is bound to its time, which have changed considerably (for example, the piano has prevailed over the harpsichord), there are probably no other composers of whom there are so many arrangements and new versions as of Johann Sebastian Bach. Therefore, I thought it appropriate for today's performance to play not only original works by Bach, but also arrangements and completions.

The German-Italian-born composer and pianist Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924) proved to be a congenial musician in this respect. No one else adapted Bach's music with such deep compositional and musical understanding with the tonal possibilities of the modern piano. His piano version of the Chaconne for solo violin transfers the deep emotional, instrumental power of this work so convincingly to the keyboard instrument that it has been able to stand on its own alongside the original for over a century. No one else has been able to transfer Bach's chorale preludes and organ chorales to the piano in such a differentiated manner that they have survived as independent piano character pieces even into the age of historical performance practice.

Bach's unfinished works, on the other hand, present far greater compositional hurdles and challenges, of which the crowning achievement of his polyphonic oeuvre, the *Art of the Fugue*, breaks off abruptly in the final fugue. Many musicians, composers and music theorists spent years to decades of their lives attempting to reconstruct this gigantic torso, among them my Cologne piano teacher Prof. Klaus Oldemeyer. His completion is separated by a general pause from the parts still composed by Bach, quasi as a mark of respect for the unique genius. He also enriches Bach's harmonies with dissonances foreign to the Baroque, but without ever violently breaking the style.

So this concerto combines Bach in the original, Bach in arrangement, and Bach in completion, and juxtaposes all these aspects. The heart of Bach's music, however, knows no aspects or manifestations. It is pure music, a spiritualised tonal language that points far beyond any performance practice and performance opportunity into eternity.

*Philipp Kronbichler*