

Andreas Staier | Biography

Piano, Fortepiano, Harpsichord



"Staier shaped phrases with a precision that gave each voice a distinct contour while simultaneously integrating it into an overarching structure. In doing so, the instrument itself emerged as a speaking medium."

The pianist Andreas Staier first became world famous as a harpsichordist. After studying with Lajos Rovatky and Ton Koopman, he worked for three years with the Musica Antiqua Köln. But Staier is far more than a virtuoso representative of so-called historical performance practice. Rather, one could describe him as a passionate sound seeker. Each work that the pianist undertakes is not only analyzed in terms of its structure but also explores the historical situation in which it originated. Through his meticulous approach, he has opened up completely new interpretive

approaches and made surprising listening experiences possible. This is why he also works with instrument makers to explore special nuances of sound – be it works of the 16th century such as the English virginalists, Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, the *Diabelli Variations* of the late Beethoven or the last piano works by Brahms. Staier has also always turned to lesser-known composers when he could discover original aspects in their works, such as Sebastián de Albero or Josef Antonín Štěpán.

His commitment does not end with the music of the 19th century. This is shown by Staier's collaboration with the French composer Brice Pauset (b. 1965) from whom several compositions have been commissioned. The *Kontra Sonata* (2000), a hybrid of Schubert's *Sonata in A minor D 845* and Pauset's *Kontrakompositionen* is a prime example of Staier's epoch-crossing musical thinking. Staier himself used the time during the Corona Pandemic to finish his composition *Sechs Cembalostücke* which he puts in connection with Bach's *Preludium and Fugue E major* of the *Well-Tempered Clavier Book 2*. The work was premiered at the Philharmonie in Cologne in January 2023 and the accompanying album *Méditation* was released in 2024 by Alpha Classics (Outhere Music). The sheet music is published by Editions Lemoine. The work has since been performed in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Sapporo and Lyon.

This season, in addition to concerts in Europe, Staier will also be performing on his tour of Japan and South America.

Staier's work is documented on numerous recordings, almost all of which have received prestigious awards. Also, Staier himself has often been honored for his work: In 2024 he was awarded the prestigious Bach Medal of the City of Leipzig. He was Artist in Residence at the AMUZ in Antwerp from 2012-2016, and between 2011 and 2021 at the Opéra de Dijon.

Both on harpsichord and on fortepiano, Staier performs at numerous renowned music festivals worldwide with ensembles such as La Cetra Barockorchester Basel, the Freiburger Barockorchester, Concerto Köln, the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin or the Orquestra Barroca Casa da Música Porto with which he recorded *À Portuguesa* with works by Spanish composers for harmonia mundi in October 2018. For the Beethoven jubilee, Staier presented his album *Ein neuer Weg - Beethoven*, based on the three op. 31 piano sonatas and the variations 34 and 35, which received rave reviews. His recording of the *Well-Tempered Clavier Book 2* is considered a reference recording. With the release of Book 1 in 2023, the publication of his work was completed. Together with Roel Dieltiens he also released Beethoven's *Cello Sonatas op. 102* and the *Bagatelles op. 119 & 126*.

Longtime musical partners include the pianists Alexander Melnikov, Christine Schornsheim and Tobias Koch, the violinists Isabelle Faust and Petra Müllejans or the tenor Christoph Prégardien. Besides this Andreas Staier maintains a close collaboration with Daniel Sepec and the cellist Roel Dieltiens.

Staier's extensive interests and abilities have made him a much sought-after educator from an early age. In addition to masterclasses worldwide, he was Professor of Harpsichord and Fortepiano at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis from 1987-1995. During the 2017/18 season, Andreas Staier was a Fellow at the *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin*. For several years, Andreas Staier also has been performing as a conductor and orchestra leader.