

## Thomas Larcher

### Composer/Piano

\*1963, Innsbruck, Austria

*"... his extraordinary, arresting, communicative music is one of this century's wonders ..."* *The Times*

Born in Innsbruck in 1963, Thomas Larcher grew up in Austrian Tyrol, later moving to Vienna where he studied piano and composition. His early career combined composition, performance, teaching and festival direction, and in 1994 he founded the Klangspuren festival. By 2003, when he stepped down as director of the Festival, it had become recognised as one of Europe's most important new music festivals.

Highly regarded as a pianist and festival director, Thomas Larcher turned increasingly to composition as the number of commissions from musicians and institutions grew. As well as three ECM recordings devoted to his music, Larcher's works have been taken up by an impressive list of musicians including Mark Padmore, Leif Ove Andsnes, Viktoria Mullova, Kim Kashkashian, Thomas Demenga, Heinrich Schiff, Till Fellner, Natalie Clein, Christian Teztlaff, Juliane Banse and Martin Fröst.

Larcher's music is both inventive and captivating; he combines contemplative harmonies with extended performance techniques. Recent compositions include his Piano Concerto **Böse Zellen; Madhars** composed for the Artemis Quartet and premiered in Salzburg in 2007; **Die Nacht der Verlorenen** written for Matthias Goerne and London Sinfonietta and first performed at London's Southbank Centre in September 2008; a violin concerto for Isabelle Faust premiered in Vienna in 2009; and a work for solo piano – inspired by work created by visual artist Robin Rhode – written for Leif Ove Andsnes and performed in New York's Lincoln Center prior to a world tour of more than fifteen cities.

Earlier this year, Larcher completed his first American orchestral commission with **Red and Green** for the San Francisco Symphony under Osmo Vänskä. At the premiere in April, Stephen Smoliar commented "The result is a highly unique listening experience with a perfectly valid aesthetic of beauty ... my only regret was having but one opportunity to experience this stunning music". In spring he completed a Double Concerto, commissioned by the BBC Proms and composed for Viktoria Mullova and Matthew Barley. They gave the first performance this August with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ilan Volkov.

An exclusive ECM artist, Larcher's first five recordings for the label showcased him as a performer, while his three most recent recordings devoted to his own music have established him as a distinctive voice: **Naunz** (2001) nominated "editor's choice" by Gramophone; **IXXU** (2006) received the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik; and **Madhares** (2010) named after his third string quartet and also featuring performances of Larcher's concertos for viola and for piano.

As a pianist Larcher's repertoire is broad, ranging from his Schubert/Schönberg CD with ECM to accompanying Mark Padmore in Schubert's "Schwanengesang". His searching interpretation and through programming that reveal links, contrasts and comparisons in music endow him with a special ability to cast new light on the established repertoire, and his performances of the music of our time are particularly illuminating.

During the 2011-2012 season, Larcher takes up simultaneous residencies in Salzburg and Vienna, and is the focal point of a special Wigmore Hall event on November 12th. The day features the UK premières of **IXXU**, **Madhares** and **A Padmore Cycle** written for Mark Padmore.

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