

The Württemberg Chamber Orchestra of Heilbronn

What the papers say
2008/09 season

Jupiter hurls bolts of lightning down from heaven

"The orchestra, which for Chopin had adopted the equally sensitive role of accompanist, demonstrated its brilliance after the interval with Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. Exuberant conductor Ruben Gazarian impelled his orchestra to energetic yet tight phrasing with exploding emphasis, as if Jupiter were hurling bolts of lightning down from heaven. After Chopin's poetic dream world, Mozart's symphony was like a purging storm of classical music." (*Frankfurter Neue Presse*, 6 July 2009)

Stylistic awareness and virtuoso technique

"It was already a quarter to ten when the most profound composition of the evening was tackled: Dmitri Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony for Strings, Opus 110a. [...] Gazarian, with his orchestra, unleashed fierce ardour and intense grief, bitter gloominess and dance-like elation." (*Heilbronner Stimme*, 29 May 2009)

Chamber orchestra sends the audience into raptures

"We're allowed to go into raptures about a concert; sometimes we have to. With the chamber orchestra it's simply inevitable owing to its virtuosity, homogeneity and profuse emotionality." (*Aalener Nachrichten*, 15 May 2009)

Amusing portrait of the Germans

"The qualities of the Heilbronn orchestra as accompanists were once again clearly apparent. Ruben Gazarian and his ensemble smoothly fitted in with the soloist without giving up their own musical rights." (*Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 11 May 2009)

Cultivated transparency

"The sound of this chamber ensemble, which for this recital [...] performed in the Beethoven Room at the Liederhalle in Stuttgart, gets its energy from a cultivated transparency, an intimate, sensitive formulation of musical ideas and a wonderful shading of colours – not to mention precision and a playing passion. The musical notes front clear statements: nothing sounds irrelevant and the suspense never lets up." (*Esslinger Zeitung*, 11 May 2009)

Virtuosity from serious to light music and back again

"At the start of the final concert in the 2008/09 season, the six sharp and stimulating preludes (1963) by Jean Françaix with virtuoso solos for the double bass soloist and others resounded with similar eloquence. There was never any doubt that the musicians from Heilbronn under their Armenian principal conductor would provide an opulent performance brimming with tension of the two serenades by Edward Elgar (E minor) and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (C major)." (*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, 11 May 2009)

Outstanding orchestra plays modern compositions by Jürg Baur

"The superb orchestra plays transparently with plenty of feeling for contrapuntal finesse. There was enthusiastic applause for this unparalleled artistry." (*Westdeutsche Zeitung*, 4 May 2009)

Double the performance, double the quality

"A touch of luxury drifts into your ears whenever the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra starts to play: silky strings, noble woodwind sounds, and the dignified accents set by the brass create an item of musical craftsmanship made in Germany. [...] The orchestra's artistry paid off most of all in Franz Schubert's 2nd Symphony. Ruben Gazarian put in a modest, solid conducting performance." (*Neue Rhein Zeitung*, 30 April 2009)

Musical pearls shine through Scottish storms

"The Württemberg Chamber Orchestra of Heilbronn under its vivacious conductor Ruben Gazarian depicted in the Hebrides Overture and the Scottish Symphony the storms and idyllic spots of the Caledonian countryside with a delicate sense of tone, magnificent homogeneity among the strings, wind players with style, and altogether a heartfelt air of Mendelssohn." (*Tiroler Tageszeitung*, 29 April 2009)

Full honours for Felix Mendelssohn

"[The musicians in the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra] developed the piece from its darkly overcast introduction into a stormily resounding musical splendour, expertly made the most of the dance-like elements of the scherzo and the effervescent liveliness of the finale up to the maestoso conclusion, and were fêted at length by the audience for their superb instrumental proficiency." (*Kronen-Zeitung*, 29 April 2009)

Rare enjoyment from wonderful fine tuning

"[Schubert's] second symphony composed when he was 17 was vivaciously performed at this Odeon concert by the Württemberg Chamber Orchestra under its spirited conductor Ruben Gazarian. Between the pulsating movement of the first movement and the exuberant good mood of the finale, in the slow variation movement, which suggests Schubert's typically ambling 'hiker' gait, the musicians also for once adopted a measured approach." (*Mittelbayerische Zeitung*, 27 April 2009)

Honegger prompts a change of mood

"In the last composition of the evening, the mood suddenly changed, for Swiss composer Arthur Honegger wrote his second symphony in 1941 in response to the world war – a moving piece of music performed with passionate abandon by Gazarian and his elite strings." (*Oberhessische Presse*, 14 February 2009)

Audience spellbound by world-class musician

"Using feverish intensity and a fine atmospheric feeling, the string ensemble also clearly revealed the subtle dynamic and atmospheric nuances." (*Bietigheimer Zeitung*, 17 January 2009)

Performances at the highest level

"The orchestra conducted by Ruben Gazarian performed in the best spirit and celebrated the musical contest with dreamy lightness and nimble elegance." (*Fellbacher Zeitung*, 17 December 2008)

With elegance and the aura of purity

"Under Ruben Gazarian's alert guidance, the chamber orchestra demonstrates its central qualities: precision, agility and a degree of cohesion among the musicians usually only found in much smaller chamber ensembles. Accordingly, the results could not be more musical or energetic." (*Kieler Nachrichten*, 22 October 2008)

Emden audience privileged to witness a magical moment

"An orchestra that appears to inhabit Mozart's soul." (*Ostfriesen Zeitung*, 11 October 2008)