



Photo: © Sabine Burger

Kaspar Zehnder

Flautist

Conductor

Artistic Director

Born in 1970 in Riggisberg/Bern at the foothills of the Bernese Alps (Switzerland), Kaspar Zehnder grew up in a musical family and received his first flute lessons with Heidi Péter-Indermühle at the age of eight. Three years later he started piano lessons with Agate Rytz-Jaggi.

In 1986, Kaspar entered the University of the Arts in Bern and studied flute with Heidi Péter-Indermühle and conducting with Ewald Körner, while still attending secondary school. He left school with a Matura in ancient languages (Literargymnasiums BernNeufeld) in 1990. At the age of 23, he graduated from the University of the Arts with teaching, soloist and conducting diplomas.

Kaspar continued his training as a flautist with Aurèle Nicolet in Basel and Siena, and became a member of the European Mozart Academy in 1995, where he explored the chamber music repertoire with professors of the Mozarteum Salzburg, the Conservatoire de Paris and the Juilliard School.

His love for unconventional programs, evident not only in his concert performances but also on numerous recordings, led to his appointment as an Artistic Director of the Murten Classics Festival (1999 bis 2020), and to the music department of the Pau Klee Zentrum in Bern.

Since his successful debut at La Scala in Milan in 2007, he has conducted numerous leading orchestras throughout Europe, and since 2012 and until the end of the current season he has been the Artistic Director of the Biel Solothurn Symphony Orchestra (Switzerland), the Hradec Králové Philharmonic Orchestra (Czech Republic) since 2018 and the International Summer Academy Biel/Bienne since 2019.

In addition to cultivating the standard repertoire, discoveries and rarities complement his programmes. For example, Kaspar Zehnder celebrated great successes together with the Biel Solothurn Symphony Orchestra with the world premieres of Bartók's opera Bluebeard in the chamber version by Eberhard Kloke (Biel Solothurn 2020/21) and the opera Eiger by Swiss composer Fabian Meier (Biel Solothurn, January 2022). The Theater Orchester Biel Solothurn's (TOBS) production of Udo Zimmermann's chamber opera Weisse Rose received the Armel Prize for Best Production in 2017 under his direction and was subsequently invited to Vienna, London, Oslo and Krakow.

In 2021, the six symphonies by the Swiss late Romantic composer Joseph Lauber (1864 to 1952), which he discovered, were recorded as a world premiere recording with the Sinfonie Orchester Biel Solothurn and released by the Schweizer Fonogramm label. The Dvořák recordings with the Hradec Králové Philharmonic and the Bach trio sonatas for two flutes and harpsichord (Kaspar Zehnder, Ana Oltean and Vital Frey) are also highly regarded. Together with Magdalena Kožená, Sir Simon Rattle (at the piano), Andrew Marriner and other friends from Berlin and London, Kaspar Zehnder also regularly undertakes chamber music tours as a flautist.

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