

## **INTERVIEW**

### **Rolf Rische: “Mozart speaks Arabic in lip sync”**

- **An interview with the head of Society and Entertainment at DW-TV, scriptwriter and project manager.**

**Question: Classical music on television – at first glance, that seems pretty unspectacular. What makes “Classical Masterpieces” on DW-TV so special?**

**Rolf Rische:** Our classical music programme is different. But there is not just one thing, one trick, that – we hope - makes our series special. However, the project brings together an unusual combination of ideas, works and, not least, people. The basic concept is that the six programmes are not about opera, but about absolute music, symphonies. In each episode, we concentrate on only one particular work.

We wanted this production above all to be one thing: attractive for the viewers. When recording the concerts we tried some new methods. We filmed in HDTV, employing techniques that tend to be used more in pop music. Remote-controlled cameras in the middle of the orchestra, boom shots, dollies and so on. The aim was to create new visual effects – but without cheap gimmicks. But we wanted to make more than “just” an exciting concert recording. As well as the music, which naturally plays the central role, there are explanations by Kent Nagano, and the musicians get to speak as well. What is important about the work, about the interpretation? There is also a look behind the scenes. And, of course, there are our animated segments – which aren’t exactly typical of this genre, either. We made the job of writing the scripts pretty difficult for ourselves here, by the way: all the dialogues are based on original quotes. The whole thing was made by a team in which everyone, from the producer to the cutter, is one of the top people in his or her field. From the sound engineer, who has already been awarded five Grammys, right down to our camerapeople, who have also received a number of prizes.

**DW-TV targets a worldwide audience. Will this classical music series really go down equally well with viewers in Sydney, Singapore and St. Petersburg, Cairo, Buenos Aires and Boston?**

At DW-TV we have noticed a constant and even growing international interest in culture from Germany. We know this partly because of our media research. Kent Nagano and the DSO represent the highest artistic quality and – to use a bit of marketing jargon – are internationally established “brand names”. The DSO is often away on tours abroad, and it has put on numerous concerts in collaboration with Deutsche Welle. The interest is equally as big as the success. Because a TV programme naturally obeys different laws than live events, we have tried to make it viewer-oriented. What is also important is that our Foreign Language department at DW-TV has made high-quality adaptations in Spanish, Arabic and English, for example, which make the programmes more accessible at this level too. So Mozart speaks lip-synched Arabic in the cartoon, for example.

**Will the series be available for viewers here in Germany as well?**

Viewers in Germany who receive DW-TV digitally via Astra, for example, will be able to watch the “Masterpieces” regularly every Saturday starting on July 22. The pay-TV station “Classica” will also be showing the series in Germany. And we are talking with regional broadcasters who are also interested in presenting the series. In addition, a box with six DVDs is to go on the market, probably this year or by 2007 at the latest. We will be selling this box at the DW-Store as well.

**As the media visiting card of Germany, Deutsche Welle also acts as a mediator in the cultural transfer from Germany and Europe. What other things does DW-TV offer its viewers in this respect?**

This year, in “Mozart Year,” following the six episodes of “Kent Nagano Conducts Classical Masterpieces,” we will be showing the six-part series “Anne-Sophie Mutter: My Mozart”. In it, Anne-Sophie Mutter, probably the

best female violinist in the world at present, plays the most important violin works by Mozart and talks about “her” Mozart. Her musical partners also get the chance to speak. This series will run every Saturday starting on September 2.

Of course, there are always highlights like these, but what we offer on a regular, daily basis is just as important. It can be said with justification that there is no lack of culture on DW-TV. Among other things, there is our weekly cultural magazine show **Arts. 21**, the daily magazine show **euromaxx**, the film show **Kino**, the music programme **popXsport**, and the up-to-date cultural reports on **Journal**.

### **Have you any plans for more innovations?**

Yes, and here I must add: as always. DW-TV is constantly improving its programmes, developing formats and offering the viewers something new. Fortunately we have a director of television who couldn't be more in favour of innovation and always supports our new projects. He was the one who initiated the “Masterpieces” project in 2005, for example. Looking to the future, as far as classical music or music in general on DW-TV is concerned, I can say: yes, we are thinking about new, exciting projects. But it is too early now to say anything more concrete about them.

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