

**Burkard Schliessmann's recording of Bach's towering masterwork
The Goldberg Variations
re-released with Dolby Atmos technology on Divine Art**



Divine Art has re-released Burkard Schliessmann's 2007 recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* remastered in 2022 with Dolby Atmos technology to give a special acoustic experience for the listener.

The Goldberg Variations represent a milestone in the keyboard repertoire and for Schliessmann, who has made Bach's keyboard music his life's work, the Variations demand a particular kind of internalization – an inner and outer lyricism - which gives the work its particular aura. Schliessmann has also studied the organ and by the age of 21, he had performed from memory all Bach's complete organ works. His repertoire includes the major keyboard works of Bach, including the *Italian Concerto*, Partita No. 2 and Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, with an arc reaching to Schumann and Chopin.



Apart from his passion as a pianist and pedagogue, Schliessmann is a professional scuba diver and serves as an Ambassador for the "Protecting of Our Ocean Planet" programme of the Project AWARE Foundation. From his dives, Schliessmann has created a body of work as an underwater photographer (www.diving-adventures.net), capturing the wonder and magic under the sea.

According to the legend surrounding the Goldberg, Bach's masterwork was commissioned by Count Keyserling to provide cheer in his sleepless nights. Schliessmann explains,

"The aura of mystery surrounding the Goldberg Variations lends a special air of unapproachability that eludes both performer and listener, as a result of the repeat of the Aria as an apotheotic finale that commends itself to silence as an aspect of suspended time.

The circularity of the Goldberg in returning to the aria at the end resembles the alpha and omega of music in general, music that evolves out of nothing and disappears back into nothing as if in a state in which time stands still without beginning or end."

Schliessmann marvels at the mathematical architecture of the Variations:

"The Aria determines the structural design of the entire set of variations from its first note onwards. Contrary to expectations, this Aria does not provide the usual sort of thematic material that is then subjected to increasingly elaborate variations throughout the rest of the work. Instead, the Aria provides the first statement of the bass line – a passacaglia made up of four eight-bar periods, thirty-two bars in length which correspond to thirty-two sections of the work (30 variations with the aria at the beginning and end). The Aria with its otherworldly calm is in stark contrast to the subsequent restlessness. The vast area that the work covers in terms of its emotional and intellectual development is simply awe-inspiring, generating a force which, constantly renewed, resembles a perpetuum mobile whose source of energy never runs dry."

The impetus of the re-release was Variation 25, the heart of the variations which stand as personal confession of Bach's mortality "Oh death, how bitter is your sting."

An in-depth interview with Schliessmann appeared here:

<https://www.pianistmagazine.com/blogs/burkard-schliessmann-talks-to-pianist-about-his-latest-album/>

Burkard Schliessmann



Schliessmann was a pupil of Shura Cherkassky, Poldi Mildner, Bruno Leonardo Gelber and Herbert Seidel, the great interpreters of the Romantic repertoire. He is a recipient of numerous awards including the Goethe-Price of Frankfurt/Main in 2019/20. He performs regularly throughout Europe, the US and Asia and is a regular at many European festivals including Frankfurt Feste, the Valldemossa Chopin Festival and the Maurice Ravel Festival in Paris. Performance highlights with orchestra include the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Radio Symphony Orchestra Frankfurt, WDR Radio Symphony Orchestra Cologne, Symphony Orchestra

Wuppertal and the New Philharmonic Westfalia.

His critically-acclaimed recordings include *At the Heart of the Piano* (Bach/Busoni, Schumann, Liszt, Scriabin, Berg) as well as albums dedicated to Scriabin, Schumann, Liszt, Bach and Chopin.

Schliessmann is also an exceptionally gifted pedagogue offering masterclasses at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, Lee University in Cleveland and others.

He has been a Steinway artist since 1990.

"... I rank this Chopin among the best available. With both the technique and intellect to do just about anything he wants, Schliessmann's strength is in the lyrical, legato melodies that make Chopin's music such a cornerstone of the piano repertoire ..."

James Harrington (American Record Guide)

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