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*Lions*

***Interview with Wilhelm Walz and Ingo Brookmann***

***from Marie-Alix Expert-Théas***

***I Introduction LECP***

*The Lions' cultural activities continue thanks in particular to the Lions European Music Competition Thomas Kuti.*

*In 2024, the LECP was founded: the Lions European Chamber Orchestra, which gave its first concert at the Sainte Croix Church in Bordeaux, before a packed nave, where an attentive audience expressed its enthusiasm with loud applause.*

*Two key figures were behind this success:*

*DGE Ingo Brookmann, who had the idea to create this orchestra, and the talented conductor Wilhelm Walz, who knew how to bring together these young talents, thanks already to his experience***.**

*We will now discover who Maestro Wilhelm Walz is: a rich, generous and multi-talented personality*

***Le Maestro Wilhem Walz***

*But who is Maestro Wilhelm Walz?*

*A close-up of a conductor known for his extensive involvement in the musical world.*

*His incredible many talents allow him to approach music in all its forms:*

*As a solo violinist, but also playing in chamber music ensembles.*

*His passion also leads him to conduct orchestras, and to constantly expand his generosity, particularly by promoting young talents, hence the LECP.*

*He transmits his artistic sensitivity to the musicians, from his baton to the audience, and expresses all the emotion of the work being conducted. In a word, he captivates.*

**1.** When we listen to and see you conduct, you live the music; it's undeniably within you.

What is your musical background?

*- My parents were musical- and they were interested and engaged to support my musical education and talent.*

2 Why did you choose the violin?

- *I started at the age of 5 with violin, because my future teacher asked me, whether I would like to sit or to stay (I had the choice between violin and cello).*

*I studied conducting at the music university of Stuttgart already during my violin studies. I started my intensive  conducting career beginning 1985.*

*First I conducted youth orchestras.*

**3** It was a good choice, as you knew Josef Suk, Antonín Dvorak's great-grandson It makes us dream

How did you meet him?

*He was my teacher and became a friend:*

*In 1978 I met Josef Suk after concerts and studies with him and the following years we had a lot of concerts together.*

**4** What was his influence?

*He supported my talent and the personal inspiration on stage*

**5** As Principal Guest Conductor of the Suk Chamber Orchestra since 2000, W.Walz has conducted concerts with unusual programs, in which he juxtaposes classical Czech repertoire with contemporary pieces.

Is it in relation to Joseph Suk?

*- Of course based on the musical collaboration with  Josef Suk I intensified  my love to Czech classical music and composers*

**6** You also work with many orchestras including

with *the Prague Symphony Orchestra*, notably for concerts at the Fronhof in Augsburg.

wich one are they?

*- I worked as well with Virtuosi di Praga, Dvořák Symphony Orchester, bayerische kammerphilharmonie, Philharmonie Bad Reichenhall and others.. I conduct regularly the Orchester „The Global Players“.*

**7** When the Lions European Chamber Players Orchestra began?

*- Founder and chief conductor of the Orchester Lions European Chamber Players, the debut  was 2024 in Augsburg during the festival  Konzerte im Fronhof and in Bordeaux.*

*The following performances of Lions European Chamber Players will take place in Dublin 11/2025, Leer/Ostfriesland, Karlsruhe 2026, Venice 2027 and Budapest 2028 at the Lions European Forum.*

**8** In 2005, you founded the *Global Players Wilhelm Walz*, not only to perform in concerts but also to focus on educational and social projects.

The orchestra is composed of musicians from different countries.

the Global Player offers young musicians a platform to showcase their art at benefit concerts for the Augsburg Elias Holl Lions Club.

Is this initiative for young people for you not only a means of transmission but also a springboard to encourage them towards a professional career, what is the underlying reason for this creation?

*-  To support their career and give them a platform to show their talents*

***President Ingo Brookmann***

**9** Now some questions for the dynamic and dedicated **President Ingo Brookmann** who had this brilliant initiative.

Ingo an additional element was brought to the Thomas Kuti Competition in 2024, the creation of the LECP,

how was born this idea?

Our idea was born on the basis of friendship Lions granted: Having been in touch with Wilhelm Walz and our gracious sponsor Katja Segmüller from Augsburg for years the idea was created to foster the work of the Lions Music Competition in founding an orchestra with former prize winners and students of music from all over Europe.

**10** From this rich experience, is the Global Palyers WW orchestra the springboard for the creation of the LECP?

It was quite easy getting the idea of a European Lions Student Orchestra given the experience of Wilhelm Walz and Ingo Brookmann being thoroughly convinced that this project coincidences with the values of Lions.

11 What is your goal with these young musicians?

Ingo Brookmann answers: There are minimum 3 goals we aim at:

To bring together young talents from all over Europe to work together and to make friends according to our goal : Uniting Europe in Music.

To support young talents to go on with there career.

To grant Charity Concerts to the audiences at the locations of our Europa Fora.

**12 Particularly for the LECP, are you driven by a feeling or even a responsibility to pass on knowledge to these very young musicians?**

Born of the LECP is already a new Leo Club – named “European Symphonic Friends” that will be chartered at the end of the Charity Concert of the LECP in Dublin.

The idea is to connect the members of the LECP to Lions by offering them to be part of the Lions movement.

This new Club is sponsored by the Lions Club Leer/Germany and the District 111-NW.

**13** For the LECP,

do you want to perpetuate the orchestra as an institution and be a fully-fledged orchestra?

We like to go on with our orchestra project. The Chairperson adds : As it always is: We are depending on sponsoring or benefits or grants that are contributed and we will go on with asking for financial support by Lions personally and by Lions Clubs and Districts and Multi Districts to foster the basis of income.

**14** How do you perceive its evolution?

At this stage we have the plan to go on with rehearsals and a Concert 2026 in Leer/Ostfriesland and afterwards in Karlsruhe at the Europa Forum.

More plans are already made for a following project in Augsburg and Venice in 2027.

Given that the students from all over Europe also need financial support we collect money to pay for their travelling and accommodation and they get a salary.

To get an imagination about the amount: In 2026 we estimate to need in total nearly 100.000 Euro.

**15** Will you renew the musicians every year?

Musicians that have been with us in 2024 have been asked to continue in 2025 – 90 % stayed with us and will continue in Dublin. So we are aware that our project has a really good impact on the young talents.

*We wish the LECP, its conductor and its chairperson a long and beautiful journey through the heavens of music, with magnificent concerts that allow us to dream.*

***Marie-Alix Expert-Théas***