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Cappella Andrea Barca Sir Andrés Schiff, Leitung und Klavier

The musicians of the Cappella Andrea Barca are primarily active as globally successful soloists and chamber musicians and are not tied to any orchestras. They were selected personally by Sir Andrés Schiff for the performance of the complete Mozart Piano Concertos at the Mozartwoche Salzburg from 1999 to 2005. Since then, the Cappella Andrea Barca has been a regular guest at the Salzburg Mozartwoche.

Gradually, under the direction of Sir Andrés Schiff, the orchestra widened their scope. Since 1999, they have organized the annual Omaggio a Palladio Festival at the Olimpico Theatre in Vicenza, where, in 2001, they were also involved in three performances of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. The ensemble was also a guest at the Kunstfest Weimar in the years 2004-2007. In addition, they have toured numerous European cities such as Vienna, Innsbruck, Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Athens, Brussels, Luxembourg, Cologne, Essen, Frankfurt, Bremen, Baden-Baden, Budapest and Lisbon. Two tours in the Mozart Year 2006 led Andrea Barca to the USA, where they were invited to New York's Carnegie Hall for three concerts, as well as the Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center, Washington. At the Beethovenfest Bonn 2008 and 2010 Andrea Cappella performed further concerts. In 2012 Cappella Andrea Barca could be seen and heard at the Lucerne Festival, where they performed Bach's *Mass B-flat Minor* to great acclaim. In the spring of 2014, they performed Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in collaboration with the Balthasar Neumann Chorus and conducted by Sir Andrés Schiff. In 2014 and 2015 the Cappella Andrea Barca, led by Sir Andrés Schiff, was part of a Schubert cycle at the Schubertiade in Schwarzenberg (Austria) and in 2016 at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the Rheingau Music Festival and in 2017 was guest at the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad Festival. A three-week tour of Asia took Cappella Andrea Barca to China, Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong in 2019. Further highlights were the concert performances of Mozart's operas *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* at the Mozartwoche Salzburg in 2020 and 2023.

Very little is known about Andrea Barca's life, despite the diligent efforts of present-day musicologists. He was born most probably between 1730 and 1735 in Marignolle, near Florence, Italy. His parents and ancestors were contadini ("peasants"). He had close contact with Mozart, having participated at the latter's private concert – on April 2, 1770, at the Villa Poggio Imperiale in Florence – as page turner. Ever since that day, he decided to devote his life to the interpretation of Mozart's keyboard works. His enthusiasm brought him to Salzburg, where his efforts were received with mixed success – thanks to the famous local press. Thus, our musician returned to his homeland, working as a composer and pianist. Among his numerous compositions is *La ribollita bruciata*, an opera that must be seen as one of the highlights of Tuscan music history. Ribollita is a traditional Tuscan soup made of bread, beans, and vegetables; the title of the opera means *The burnt ribollita*. Andrea Barca's death – when, where, and under what circumstances he died (if he died) – continues to remain a mystery."

Sir Andrés Schiff's ambition is to present Cappella Andrea Barca in a way that allows the ensemble to prove themselves in soloist and chamber music formations, which is something that most established orchestras will struggle to achieve. "What I work with as a conductor is an extension of chamber music; the cappella is a chamber music ensemble of excellent

soloists, but above all chamber musicians. There are many string quartet players in this orchestra, and playing the string quartet is the pinnacle of making music." Moreover, Sir Andrés Schiff considers the human and personal component equally important: " There is no place for the egotist. This ensemble is based on friendship, understanding, equality and equal ideals - aesthetic, musical and human."

2023/24 season only.

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