

## Biography Gerhard Reichenbach

Gerhard Reichenbach is one of the leading European guitar virtuosos of his generation. His solo performances at the important international guitar festivals and at concert halls like the Berliner Philharmonie are highlights of classical guitar performance and his playing is compared with masters of the guitar like A.Segovia and John Williams.

He was born on 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1965 in Langenfeld (Germany) and received his first guitar training from his father who is an amateur player as well as from Judith Schumacher at the Musikschule Langenfeld. Later he studied guitar at the Musikhochschule Köln/Wuppertal (Cologne School of Music) with Prof. Dieter Kreidler and also at the Athens Conservatory with Kostas Kotsiolis.

Private studies with Odair Assad, member of the famous Brazilian Assad Duo, influenced his playing as well as lessons with Manuel Barrueco, Alexandre Lagoya and Karl Scheit.

His debut performance was a solo recital in Düsseldorf at the age of 15, whereas his international reputation started years later after winning the International Guitar Competition of San Juan/Puerto Rico in 1989. Since then until now Gerhard has been spending his time touring successfully in Europe, being invited for solo recitals to places like the Berliner Philharmonie, the Saal Bulgaria, Sofia, the Megaro Mousikis in Thessaloniki (Greece), the Philharmonies of Tallinn, Tartu and Pärnu (Estland), the Gävle Konserthuset (Sweden), the Forum Gitarre Vienna, , and many more. He is an often invited guest at almost all the important guitar festivals in Europe, as there are: Iserlohner Gitarrensposium, Nürtinger Gitarrenfestspiele, Internationales Koblenzer Pfingstseminar, Gitarrenfestival Frechen, Remscheider Gitarrentage, Darmstädter Gitarrentage, Aschaffenburg Gitarrentage, Guitar Festival Weikersheim (Germany) , Forum Gitarre Wien (Austria), guitar festivals of Pordenone, Siracusa and Parma (Italy), Gitarrenfestival in Gävle (Sweden), Dundee Guitar Festival (Schottland), Enschede Gitarrensposium (Holland), Guitar Art Festival Belgrad (Serbia), Guitar Fest Banja Luka (Bosnia), Sinaia Guitar Festival (Romania), Festival Guitar with Orchestra of the Radio Symphony Orchestra Bucarest (Romania), European Music Festival of Classic FM Sofia (Bulgaria), Velingrad Guitar Festival (Bulgaria), Varna Music Summer (Bulgaria), Volos Guitar Festival (Greece), Corfu Guitar Festival (Greece), Zory Guitar Festival (Poland) , Krakauer Gitarrentage (Poland), Guitar Festival Gliwice (Poland), Estonian Guitar Festival Tartu (Estland), Bratislava Guitar Festival (Slovakia), etc.

Gerhard Reichenbach has an active concert repertoire of more than 35 absolutely different solo recital programmes, some chamber music programmes (flute/guitar, violin/guitar, voice/guitar, string quartet/guitar) and 13 concertos with guitar and orchestra.

A passionate advocate of the contemporary guitar repertoire, he performed premieres or first performances of composers like Hans Werner Henze, Leo Brouwer, Rossen Balkanski, Manfred Trojan, Ulrich Leyendecker, and many more. Composers dedicated pieces to Gerhard (such as Gerard Drozd, *Concerto op.87*, Rossen Balkanski, *Balkan Sonata*, Buck Wolters, *Samba de Lobo*, etc.).

During the last years he performed some important first performances of works for guitar and orchestra:

- the Estonian premiere of Hans Werner Henze's „*Ode an eine Äolsharfe*“ together with the Pärnu Philharmonic Orchestra and Jury Alperthen conductor in Pärnu (as well as in the cities Tallin und Tartu)
- the polish premiere of Arvo Pärt's „*Fratres*“ in the version for guitar and string orchestra together with the Philharmonia Wienawska in Lublin and conductor Cheng Chau
- the Romanian premiere of Arvo Pärt's „*Fratres*“ in Bucarest with the Radio Symphony Orchestra Bucarest and maestro Gian Luigi Zampieri
- the Polish premiere of Boris Assafiev's *Concerto G-Major* for guitar and string orchestra with the Philharmonia Wienawska in Lublin and Cheng Chau
- the German premiere of Boris Assafiev's *Concerto G-Major* for guitar and string orchestra together with the Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie at the Aschaffenburg Gitarrentage

Apart from many performances of Rodrigo's famous *Concierto de Aranjuez* and his *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre*, he also performed the rarely played *Tres Danzas concertantes* for guitar and string orchestra by Leo Brouwer and Gerard Drozd's *Concerto op.77*.

Gerhard Reichenbach appeared in European TV and broadcasting many times. He recorded 4 CDs for the labels Dabringhaus&Grimm, Aurea Vox and GegaNew.

In 2000 he recorded all the guitar works by Frederico Mompou in their original version, together with some piano transcriptions of the same composer and two folksong arrangements by Narciso Yepes. This recording has remained unpublished.

Some of his transcriptions have been published at Schott and BalkaNota, Sofia.

Teaching is an important part of his artistic life. Apart from giving master classes and lessons at guitar festivals and at universities in Europe, Gerhard Reichenbach taught at the Guitar Department of the Hochschule für Musik “Franz Liszt” in Weimar (Weimar School of Music) from 1994 up to 2000. In 2000 he moved to Greece, where he became professor for classical guitar at the State Conservatory Thessaloniki. Many of his students from all over Europe won prizes at international competitions. In October 2009 he was appointed as a professor for classical guitar at the Cologne University of Music.

He gives lectures at Guitar Festivals and Universities about “practicing the right way” and “stage preparation for the instrumentalist” or “mental techniques for memorizing music”, but also subjects of general musical interest like “ornamentation in baroque music”.

In 2000, the celebrational year of J.S.Bach, he gave a three weekend lecture about the lute works by J.S.Bach. In this lecture he analyzed and performed all the lute works on the classical guitar. Gerhard also is the director of the International Guitar and Mandolin Festival of Vissani, Greece.

For 17 years he has been playing on a guitar made by the American luthier Thomas Humphrey.