

**LUCERNE  
FESTIVAL**

HISTORIC  
PERFORMANCES

**audite**

# Géza Anda

**Bach** Concerto for Two Pianos, BWV 1061

**Bartók** Piano Concertos Nos. 2 & 3

**Clara Haskil**

**Swiss Festival Orchestra**

**Herbert von Karajan | Ferenc Fricsay | Ernest Ansermet**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)  
Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra  
in C major, BWV 1061

- I. 7:42
- II. *Adagio ovvero Largo* 4:28
- III. *Fuga. Vivace* 5:48

Béla Bartók (1881–1945)  
Piano Concerto No. 2, BB 101

- I. *Allegro* 9:25
- II. *Adagio – Presto – Adagio* 11:03
- III. *Allegro molto* 6:30

Piano Concerto No. 3, BB 127

- I. *Allegretto* 7:04
- II. *Adagio religioso – poco più mosso – Tempo* 9:20
- III. *Allegro vivace* 7:26

Géza Anda piano

Clara Haskil piano (BWV 1061)

Herbert von Karajan (BWV 1061)

Ferenc Fricsay (BB 101)

Ernest Ansermet (BB 127)

recorded live at Lucerne Festival  
(Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern)





### Géza Anda and the Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern

Lucerne and its famous music festival occupy a special place in the eventful biography of the Hungarian pianist Géza Anda (1921–1976). Choosing Switzerland as his home had not originally seemed likely – at the age of thirteen, he entered the Franz Liszt Academy in his home town of Budapest, where he studied with Ernst von Dohnányi. In 1941, having graduated with distinction, thanks to a state scholarship he moved to Berlin. Here, the young and charismatic pianist quickly built a successful career, giving concerts, making his first recordings and, above all, in January 1943 enjoying the accolade of being engaged as soloist under Wilhelm Furtwängler alongside the Berlin Philharmonic, performing the *Variations symphoniques* by César Franck. However, Anda was not to return from a concert tour to Switzerland and other European countries, some of which had already been occupied by Nazi Germany – possibly also to avoid the threat of being drafted into the army, since Hungary had joined the “Axis powers”, Germany, Italy, and Japan, in 1941. After crossing the border at Basel in June 1943, Anda initially settled in Geneva in order to continue his career from there in war-torn Europe. Following a deep personal and artistic crisis, he managed, with the help of a growing circle of admirers and friends, to put down roots in Switzerland. In 1945 he relocated to Zurich. This city, which was to remain the centre of his global activities for the rest of his life, would in 1953 grant Anda his much longed-for Swiss citizenship. In the same year he married Helene Winterstein-Bosshard, who had for several years already coordinated Anda’s steadily increasing concert and recording schedule.

It was probably in part thanks to the communication and negotiating skills of his first wife – in 1964 Anda was to marry the businesswoman Hortense Bührlé (1926–2014) – that in 1953 Anda made his first appearance in Lucerne, as the soloist in one of his lifelong “war horses”, Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto. Accompanied by the Swiss Festival Orchestra under the baton of Eugen Jochum, Anda gave a brilliant debut performance at the Kunsthaus Luzern, a venue that had seen some extraordinary performances since its opening concerts in 1938 by Arturo Toscanini, Ernest Ansermet and Alfred Cortot. Even after the war, the music festival at Lucerne was steadily able to expand its special musical and cultural-political position; and as at the Salzburg Festival, where he had made his debut in 1952, Anda was welcomed with open arms. From 1955 until 1969 he appeared each year in recitals or as a soloist in orchestral concerts: apart from Jochum and Ansermet, his musical partners were conductors such as Karl Böhm, Ferenc Fricsay, Carlo Maria Giulini, Herbert von Karajan, Joseph Keilberth, Otto Klemperer, George Szell, as well as fellow instrumentalists including Clara Haskil, Pierre Fournier and Wolfgang Schneiderhan. In 1964, Anda appeared with the English Chamber Orchestra as soloist and conductor. Four years earlier, he had been honoured to be nominated by Edwin Fischer to take over his masterclasses. Anda commented on his new task in the North German Radio series *Das musikalische Selbstporträt* (The Musical Self-Portrait): “It is great fun for me to produce a quintessence from all the development and struggles I have gone through myself, and not only to communicate this to others, but really to help them with it. I try to be very conscientious about that. Perhaps among my students is the great pianist of the future. If I am able to build bridges, however small,



and protect them from shocks, that would make me very happy.” (The intense atmosphere of Anda’s masterclasses is impressively captured in the film *Géza Anda – Pianist, Dirigent, Pädagoge*, made in 1965 by his friend and mentor Rolf Liebermann.)

The circumstances surrounding the end of Anda’s Lucerne teaching career were less happy: in 1968, at the height of the student unrest, there was a disagreement with the festival management, against the background of a struggle over the festival’s programmatic direction. In the conflict, which was even reflected in a polemic article in the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Anda and his wife Hortense, a festival sponsor, belonged to the conservative faction who rejected demands for a democratisation and popularisation of the festival. In his letter to the festival president, Anda described himself as a conveyor of “genuine musical and human tradition”, suppressing the fact that he himself had championed contemporary music during the early 1950s under the influence of his friend Pierre Boulez. After stepping down as director of the masterclass, Anda was to perform twice more at Lucerne, in 1969 and 1973, giving piano recitals to a knowledgeable and loyal audience.

Unfortunately, only three recordings of Géza Anda’s Lucerne concerts have survived in the archives of the Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen (SRF). It is therefore all the more gratifying to be able to present them together for the first time in this release on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in November 2021 and, moreover, in the case of the Bach Concerto and Bartók’s Third Piano Concerto, as discographic premieres. In all these works he performed alongside the Swiss Festival Orchestra, which existed from 1943 to 1993. The evening of 10 August 1955 marks the beginning with the Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra in C major, BWV 1061, by Johann Sebastian Bach, which was flanked by Arthur Honegger’s Third Symphony, “Liturgique”, and Brahms’ Second Symphony, as part of the festival’s second symphonic concert. In Zurich in 1954, with Herbert von Karajan and Clara Haskil, Anda had performed Mozart’s Concerto for Two Pianos in E-flat major, K. 365, having maintained a particularly fruitful artistic relationship with them since the early 1950s. (Anda and Haskil then also performed the Mozart concerto in 1959 in Lucerne under the direction of Joseph Keilberth). The Lucerne concert recording, despite some acoustic infelicities and minor orchestral untidinesses, demonstrates why the Columbia recording of both double concertos, produced in London in 1956 with the Philharmonia Orchestra under the accomplished conductor Alceo Galliera, became a steady seller well into the CD era. Karajan’s accompaniment is discreet, and Anda and Haskil cultivate a lively and clearly contoured Bach style that is neither motoric nor emotionally exaggerated; its qualities are particularly palpable in the slow movement, unaccompanied by the orchestra, and in the opening fugato of the finale.

In the following year, on 22 August, Anda and his favourite, almost brotherly, partner Ferenc Fricsay, performed Béla Bartók’s Second Piano Concerto as part of the third symphonic concert (paired with Kodály’s *Dances of Galánta* and Beethoven’s *Eroica*), presenting an enthusiastic Lucerne audience with a masterpiece which they both championed tirelessly. The breakthrough was marked by a performance on 27 June 1952 at the 26<sup>th</sup> festival of the Salzburg-based International Society for Contemporary Music with Fricsay and the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra (audite 23.410). Dur-



ing the preceding weeks, Anda and Fricsay had already successfully performed the concerto with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra in Brussels and at the Paris festival *L'Œuvre du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, and in 1953 they recorded it for the first time at the Jesus-Christus-Kirche in Berlin for RIAS (audite 21.407). The Lucerne recording demonstrates how much both interpreters had in the meantime penetrated the tonal and spiritual world of this concerto and the facets which they were able to extract from its fascinating stylistic diversity; the orchestra, here undoubtedly stretched to its limits, was also carried by this. It was not until 1975 that the concerto was played again at Lucerne, this time by the star of the young generation of Hungarian pianists, the 23-year-old Zoltán Kocsis.

From today's perspective, the release of the performance of Béla Bartók's Third Piano Concerto on 25 August 1965 as part of the festival's fourth symphonic concert may be called historic in a double sense: not only did Anda's partner, Ernest Ansermet, take to the Lucerne stage for the final time, but he had also conducted Bartók's Second Piano Concerto at the Budapest Academy in 1938 with Bartók at the piano – and almost certainly with the spellbound young Géza Anda in the audience. In the Lucerne programme, which also included Haydn's Symphony in C minor, Hob. I:95, and "Ibéria" from Debussy's Images, the Third Piano Concerto was undoubtedly the highlight. Ansermet and Anda, who had last performed the Schumann Concerto in Zurich in 1963, succeeded in creating an interpretation of the last work Bartók was able to complete before his death which was both powerful and sensitive, classical in the best sense of the word, and permeated by subtle farewell gestures. Hedy Salquin, the music critic of the Swiss newspaper *Vaterland* (today's *Luzerner Zeitung*), summarised her impression of Anda's playing: "The spread of his flawless pianistic armoury with the radiant forte in octaves and in chords, the ethereally dematerialised demisemiquavers, the dynamically finely graded legato and the energetic pulsating rhythms – executed as a matter of course by the highly gifted pianist – were an enormous pleasure in themselves. As an artist closely connected with this music, who seems to breathe it, to live it, Géza Anda succeeded in a Bartók interpretation of the highest order. [...] And alongside Ansermet, Anda's performance became the highlight of the evening."

Anda's achievements as a Bartók interpreter have been widely appreciated, but the Lucerne recordings once again shed a different light on his ability to make the Second and Third Concertos (which he played regularly) sound as if they were being heard for the very first time at that moment. The risk involved in such a commitment to the creative act is considerable, for it demands sacrifices in the pursuit of perfection. Géza Anda's Lucerne concert recordings make an impressive case for taking such a risk, the results being all the greater and more precious with equal musical partners and in front of an audience that values their courage.

Wolfgang Rathert  
Translation: Viola Scheffel

**100<sup>th</sup>**  
ANNIVERSARY  
GÉZA ANDA  
(1921-1976)



GÉZA-ANDA FOUNDATION  
CONCOURS GÉZA-ANDA

**LUCERNE  
FESTIVAL**



recording: live recording at Lucerne Festival  
(Internationale Musikfestwochen Luzern)



Swiss Radio and Television SRF, all rights reserved

recording date: August 10, 1955 (Bach) | August 22, 1956 (Bartók Concerto No. 2) |  
August 25, 1965 (Bartók Concerto No. 3)

recording location: Kunsthhaus, Lucerne

executive producer: Dipl.-Tonmeister Ludger Böckenhoff

rights: audite claims all rights arising from copyright law and competition law in relation to research, compilation and re-mastering of the original audio tapes, as well as the publication of these tracks. Violations will be prosecuted.

The historical publications at audite are based, without exception, on the original tapes from broadcasting archives. In general these are the original analogue tapes, which attain an astonishingly high quality, even measured by today's standards, with their tape speed of up to 38 cm/sec. The remastering – professionally competent and sensitively applied – also uncovers previously hidden details of the interpretations. Thus, a sound of superior quality results. Publications based on private recordings from broadcasts cannot be compared with these.

photos: © Archive Géza Anda Foundation:  
cover: Géza Anda and Clara Haskil, Lucerne 1955 | p. 5: Géza Anda with Hortense Anda-Bührle and Ernest Ansermet, Lucerne 1965 | p. 6: Géza Anda in Lucerne  
© Archive Lucerne Festival:  
p. 2: Géza Anda in Lucerne | p. 3: Géza Anda in Lucerne, 1969 / J. Koch |  
p. 4: Géza Anda with Ferenc Fricssay / Paul Weber

art direction and design: AB•Design

**audite**

e-mail: [info@audite.de](mailto:info@audite.de)  
© 2022 + © 2022 Ludger Böckenhoff

LC 04480

**HD-DOWNLOADS**  
available at [audite.de](http://audite.de)

