

Iskandar Widjaja / press clippings

»Widjaja, with his captivatingly handsome stage presence, combines musical linearity and sentiment of the orientals with power and muscularity of the westerners in his playing [...]. He is able to push the deeply impressed audience into the world of Beethoven and make them rediscover the work through his personal touch. Solemn, vast, brilliant, jubilant, [...] he displays the style of a new generation of violinists with his own personal strength.«

Shanghai eastern broadcasting company, November 2018

»Iskandar Widjaja with his furious violin, animated with urgency and fire and highly sensitive lyricism. It is very unique playing with splinters and disruptions, with intangible and crackling sounds. It's his complexity of style, which is remarkable. His violin never rests, always floating within the sound of the piano, the vibrations of the orchestra. Iskandar Widjaja is sort of a butterfly. He's passing from one phrase to another, from idea to idea. I was never bored a single second listening to this marvelous CD.«

Francemusique.com, September 2018 // SCHUMANN (CD)

»Iskandar Widjaja[...] fascinates. He can create colours, which are rarely heard. [...] Iskandar Widjaja- a name to watch. Much will be heard of him.«

rbb, Broadcast Berlin-Brandenburg, July 2015

»Isaac Stern couldn't have wished for a brighter spotlight. If Widjaja has been received as a sort of pop star, then he's succeeded on an even higher level in bringing rich musical values to the marketplace. His versions of Bach sound like no others. He weds strong timbral individuality to comprehensive technical command and deep musical insight. Urgently recommended! A young violinist, synthesizing much of value from the past with much of value from the present. Intensely interesting – and riveting .«

Fanfare, August 2014

»His genuineness and his very personal view [...] put a spell on the listener. And maybe this "young rebel", who takes many liberties in between the musical lines, is a more authentic role model for the next musical generation than some of his "smoothed" senior colleagues, who have long lost their youthful curiosity.«

Bavarian State Broadcast, March 2014

»Hailed as 'a true force of nature' for his debut disc, Iskandar Widjaja extends his beguiling sense of fantasy to two of Bach's solo sonatas . He [...] maps out the polyphony of the fugues with clarity, virtuosity and musical purpose. His unabashedly romantic, expressive approach involves a wide tonal and dynamic range and pinpoints harmonic tension and emphasis [...] rapt thoughtfulness and expressive intensity. [...] his artistic imagination and interpretative freedom are refreshing [...].«

The STRAD , Oktober 2014

»...a true force of nature. [...] Without in any way losing the structural focus and grip [...] he plays with a Grappelli-like fantasy and freedom, that is deeply beguiling. [...] There is no doubting the hypnotic intensity of the results, nor Widjaja's engrossing imperativeness.«

The STRAD, December 2011

Iskandar Widjaja / biography

Labeled both as “Worldclass-Violinist” (Stuttgarter Zeitung) and “Rockstar” (The Jakarta Post), ISKANDAR connects worlds. The »*complexity of his style, his musical imagination with the most varied sonic nuances and facets, as well as his flawless technique and great charisma*« [Christoph Eschenbach] mark his fascinating artistic personality with individual profile. The son of Arabic-Dutch and Chinese-Indonesian parents refuses compartmentalization.

In his second homeland of Indonesia, he is perceived like a “pop” phenomenon; his media presence resulted in a “trending topic” status (most frequently mentioned term) on twitter©.

Last season saw CD releases on SONY Classical with the RSO Vienna, recital debuts in Zurich with Fazil Say, as well as debuts with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra.

ISKANDAR started winning international prizes early on. He won the LOTTO promotional prize 2013 of the Rheingau Music Festival, a prize awarded annually to a young soloist of the “next generation” scheme. In addition, he won the gold medal at the 1st International Hindemith Violin Competition, “Best Bach” and “Best Beethoven Sonata” at the 21st Concorso Violinistico Internazionale Andrea Postacchini, the First Federal Prize at “Jugend Musiziert” a number of times, the “Julius Junior” in the category “Young Talent” awarded under the patronage of the Mayor of Berlin to outstanding personalities in municipal life, as well as scholarships of the “Deutsche Stiftung Musikleben”.

Nowadays, he collaborates with first rate classical artists such as Zubin Mehta, Christoph Eschenbach, Cameron Carpenter, Itamar Golan, Rolando Villazón and Fazil Say.

ISKANDAR's activities as a soloist have taken him to five continents.

Engagements lead to performances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Munich Philharmonic, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the Deutsche Symphonieorchester Berlin, the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna, the Orquesta Filarmonica de Gran Canaria, Orquesta Sinfonica de Galicia, the Maggio Musicale Firenze, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Brandenburg State Orchestra, the Collegium Musicum Basel, the Oslo Camerata, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the Shanghai Philharmonic and others, at venues like the Berlin Philharmonic Hall and Konzerthaus, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Laeiszhalle Hamburg, Munich Gasteig, Tonhalle Zurich, Vienna Konzerthaus, Philharmonie Essen, Konzerthalle Bamberg, Casino Basel, Aula Simfonia Jakarta, Hong Kong City Hall, Guangzhou Opera House or the Tel Aviv Opera House.

He has concertized repeatedly at renowned festivals such as the “Kissinger Sommer”, Dresdner Musikfestspiele, Moritzburg Festival, Rheingau Musik Festival, Movimentos, AUDI Summer Concerts (DE), styriarte Graz (AT), Valdres Sommersymfoni (NO), Festival de St. Prex (CH) and Keshet Eilon (IL).

In Showbiz, ISKANDAR collaborated with “Hit Man” David Foster or Superstar Anggun. He opened the APEC Conference in Bali in attendance of many Asian leaders and has played for Chancellor Merkel, Presidents Yudhoyono and Joko Widodo. He has performed at the Davis Cup to millions; as well as at the Fashion Week in Paris, the EXPO in Milan and the Miss World and Miss Earth contests in Bali and Manila. Furthermore he played John Williams’ “Across the stars”-Suite at “Hollywood in Vienna” with worldwide broadcast.

Being a man of his time, the musician adds to his profile by brand- and media cooperations. He was the face of Indonesian luxury-coffee brand "JJ Royal", as brand ambassador and TV commercial model. Furthermore he has collaborated with the *Volkswagen* Group on diverse culture projects. His concert wardrobe has been sponsored multiple times by *Tommy Hilfiger*. Brand cooperations also occurred with *John Hardy Jewelry* and *Jade Chiu Jewelry*. ISKANDAR has been featured on the covers of the *High End* magazine, the *fashion-tv* magazine and the *Jakarta Post* and appeared in photo editorials and profiles for *Cosmopolitan*, *inStyle*, *mens folio*, *the Peak*, *Indonesia Tatler* or the *Volkswagen* magazine.

In addition to the traditional repertoire, he stages the concept-concert "Bach and Zen" in collaboration with a Zen-Master and works as a composer and songwriter. His compositions don't have a particular genre, with influences ranging from film music, baroque and pop to HipHop.

Furthermore, ISKANDAR is musically committed to charitable organizations such as the WWF and *Live Music Now e.V.* His exclusive charity concert in Bali for the UNICEF supported educational opportunities for children in the Asia-Pacific region. Another charity event, "*Musik yang Membebaskan*" in collaboration with KOMPAS Gramedia, Indonesias largest media conglomerate, sponsored musical instruments and instructions for street children. With the "*besharp foundation*" he continues to organize Charity Concerts for free Suzuki-Music lessons for destitute schoolchildren.

Born in Berlin, ISKANDAR began playing violin at the age of four, at first with the Suzuki method under Susan Mann. Aged eleven, he was accepted as an extraordinary student at the College of Music in Berlin, where he studied with Ursula Scholz and Joachim Hantzschk. Furthermore he studied at the Julius Stern Institute Berlin – the pre-college division for the highly musically gifted. After completing secondary school, he studied violin at the University of the Arts in Berlin with Prof. Uwe-Martin Haiberg and Prof. Ilan Gronich, which he completed in 2010. He received valuable artistic impulses from Dora Schwarzberg, Christian Tetzlaff, Shlomo Mintz, Midori, Ana Chumachenko and Ida Haendel.

To date he has released 6 albums with different labels:

- „Bach'n'Blues“ (OehmsClassics)
- „Precious refuge“ – works by J. S. Bach (OehmsClassics)
- „Tango Fuego“ with Trio Cayao (OehmsClassics)
- „Schumann: Sonata & Phantasie“ DSO Berlin, Chr. Eschenbach (OehmsClassics)
- „Mercy“ (Neue Meister/EDEL)
- „1001 nights at the harem“ – works by Fazil Say (Sony Classical) –

For 2020 he plans single releases of his own compositions.

He plays a Jean Baptiste Vuillaume from 1875 and a Stradivarius "Stephens" from 1690.