



OLLI LEPPÄNIEMI, CLARINET

Olli Leppäniemi is one of the leading clarinetists of our time. His international soloist career was launched after winning the 1st Prize in the 2009 Carl Nielsen Clarinet Competition in Denmark. Leppäniemi is also considered one of the finest and most established orchestral clarinetists of his generation, having held three principal clarinet positions by the age of 29. He is a great favourite with the audiences.

Leppäniemi studied clarinet with Yehuda Gilad in Los Angeles, Hans-Christian Bræin in Oslo, and with Reijo Koskinen in the Sibelius-Academy. He also gives big importance in his first teacher, Jorma Lautanen in the Lappeenranta Music Institute, Finland.

Leppäniemi works as Principal Clarinetist in the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. Previously he has held Principal Clarinet positions both in Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra in Norway and in Lahti Symphony Orchestra in Finland. He has also been a member of the Oulu Symphony Orchestra where he held the principal e-flat clarinet position. Leppäniemi has appeared as a guest principal clarinet in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra in London, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Norwegian National Opera and Finnish National Opera among others.

In 2009 Leppäniemi was the first Finnish musician ever to have won the first prize in the prestigious Carl Nielsen International Clarinet Competition. He also received two special awards in the competition; the best interpretation of Danish music, and the Odense Symphony Orchestra prize. In addition to the Nielsen competition Leppäniemi has been a prize winner in the international Prague Spring - clarinet competition, in the international Verdi Note - competition in Italy, as well as the Lahti National wind

instrument competition in Finland. Leppäniemi is also recipient to several award prizes, such as the 2010 Danish Music Critics Artist of The Year Award and the most recently awarded Finnish States Artist Grant for the year 2014.

Recently Leppäniemi has appeared with critical acclaim as soloist with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Copenhagen Tivoli Symphony Orchestra and Danish National Symphony Orchestra, including the Danish Premiere of John Coriglianos Clarinet Concerto.

Leppäniemi is devoted to playing chamber music and has appeared in several of the most important chamber music festivals, including the Risør Kammermusik, Lyckeby Festival, Chamber Music in Lake Tuusula, Oulu Music Festival, Murten Classics and Copenhagen Chamber Music Festival as well as the Crusell - Festival. He frequently plays chamber music with musicians such as Francoix Leleux, Jaques Zoon, Janne Saksala, Ilya Gringolts, Tatyana Masurenko, Severin von Eckardstein, Laurent Lefèvre, Trio Con Brio Copenhagen, Faure Quartet and the Danish String Quartet.

As a keen interpreter of contemporary music Leppäniemi has premiered concertos and other works works by Kimmo Hakola, Olli Kortekangas, Sampo Haapamäki and Aki Yli-Salomäki.

In addition to being one of the prominent clarinet performers of our time, Leppäniemi has made a long term commitment to music education as well. He currently serves as clarinet teacher in Malmö, Sweden, as well as in Sibelius-Academy in Finland. Previously Leppäniemi has served in the faculty of the Grieg Academy in Bergen, Norway. He has been invited to give masterclasses in the Crusell Festival in Finland, Vitoria Festival in Spain, Raudaskylä Woodwind and Brass Festival in Finland, the Royal Danish Music Academy, the Sibelius-Academy, University of Southern

California and Nurmes Music Festival in Finland.

Most recently Leppäniemi has served in the jury for the Carl Nielsen Clarinet Competition in 2013, one of the biggest music competitions for clarinet worldwide, alongside with Yehuda Gilad, Sabine Meyer and Philippe Berrod.

Olli Leppäniemi is a Buffet Crampon artist, and Rico Reeds Artist.