

MARCH 2023

NEWS COMMUNIQUÉ I



MAESTRO JAAP VAN ZWEDEN

Introduction

New beginnings can feel daunting, but also exciting if you imagine the possibilities they bring. I remember feeling the disconcerting mix of nervousness and exhilaration when I became the youngest concertmaster in the history of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at the age of 19, and again when I started my conducting career in 1997. It was an entirely new experience for me, but one that has given me the opportunity to create inspiring and moving performances for audiences around the world.

I believe that music possesses a unique, indescribable power. Music can bring people from all walks of life together, to feel and experience the world in a way that transcends words. As a conductor, it is an immense honour for me to be able to draw on this power of music to bring people together. That is why I am excited to announce my collaboration with CLINUVEL as an ambassador in the CLINUVEL Intriguing Personality (CUVIP) network for the next two years, in which I get to share my journey, passion for music, and global experiences with an even broader audience.

GLOBAL OBSERVATIONS, EXPERIENCES

In the course of my career, I have had the privilege of working with many talented musicians from different parts of the world – Europe, the United States, and Asia. But my recent appointment to the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra is more than a mere professional opportunity; it is a personal journey that has come full circle, evoking fond memories of my formative years at The Julliard School with Kang Hyo, who played an indispensable role in moulding me and my development as a musician.

In the last decade, Korean culture has gained considerable attention across the globe, with K-Pop and dramatic television and movies capturing the hearts and minds of many. My view is that the classical music talent is equally worthy of the world's attention, and it is my wish to help build a grander stage for this talent.

Commencing a new role within an orchestra requires considerable preparation time and energy, planning to ensure success. Audiences and ambitions differ – something I've learnt from time playing with and leading orchestras across Europe, America and, since 2021, my role as Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic. From an early stage, you must reflect on the successes and shortcomings of past performances, both artistically and commercially, and consider how you can express your creative vision through the performances, while also extracting as much as possible from the talented individuals around you. It is exciting to consider how this may be achieved in Seoul from January next year.

PLANNING



My schedule for the first half of this year reflects the joyous return of complete seasons and packed concert halls for orchestras globally. I started 2023 in the familiar surrounds of the Concertgebouw before taking the podium in Seoul, an unplanned opportunity to get to know the orchestra some six months early. As I write, I am preparing for a tour with the Wiener Symphoniker, featuring pieces from Brahms and Beethoven, followed by an appearance at the Antwerp Symphony in my role as conductor emeritus with Beethoven's seventh symphony.



A major focus is on the season with the New York Philharmonic, including the iconic Concert in the Park series, which returned in 2022 to great acclaim and for which we are in deep planning. I will conduct four New York Philharmonic concert series between now and the end of June, exploring the themes of spirit and earth which, together with liberation, are central to the 2022–23 season and exploring the idea of home, reflecting the Philharmonic's return to David Geffen Hall.



Selection of musical pieces to meet such ideals requires considerable reflection, ensuring the orchestra and soloists connect with the concepts and can convey this to audiences, many of whom are returning to concert halls for the first time in two or more years. One must also consider what the orchestra is best arranged to perform and what can be drawn from them to meet the exacting standards expected. It is a wonderful intellectual and artistic challenge each year.

UPCOMING GLOBAL PERFORMANCES



- Antwerp Symphony **9, 11 March**
- New York Philharmonic **17–25 March**
- Bern Symphony **31 March**
- Antwerp Symphony **21–22 April**
- Orchestre de Paris **26–27 April**
- New York Philharmonic **1–3, 8–10 June**
- New York Philharmonic in Shanghai **29 June**

HEALTHCARE COMMITMENT

Like many people, COVID-19 left an indelible impact on both the personal and professional realms of my life, and while I am fortunate to have come through with good health, the pandemic triggered me to re-evaluate my focus. Beyond the podium, I must consider where else my energy can help others. I am of the belief that one must have a purpose in life, and to that end, I am determined to do good where I can.

Those who know me well will know my ongoing commitment to the Papageno Project (<https://www.papageno.nl/en>), a foundation my wife Aaltje and I established in 1997 to help children and young people with autism. We have been fortunate in our lives to learn how families impacted by autism can benefit from musical therapy and safe spaces and are working to share this with as many as possible through Papageno. We also raise funds to contribute to research into the effects of music therapy in autism, with an annual benefit concert a highlight for the project.

More recently, I have come to learn more about the mission of CLINUVEL, having gotten to know the CEO Philippe Wolgen and understand the company's focus. The topics of skin cancer and cancer prevention are quite personal to me, having seen close friends impacted. I see logic in the link between health and music. Whether it's a performance of Wagner's Parsifal or the prevention of skin cancer, one needs to be consistent and meticulous about the preparation, and vigilant in the approach. There is more to music than just the score and there is more to health than just science. CLINUVEL have understood this very well, which is why I am excited to support them as part of the CUVIP program, lending my voice to help reduce the impacts of photodamage, photoageing and skin cancer. Using the touch points I have with people's lives through music, I will advance CLINUVEL's mission with this important issue.

It is my hope that you will join me on these journeys and perhaps attend events in future to aide both.

EPILOGUE



This Communiqué is a new approach for me, and I appreciate the opportunity to express myself and share my stories with a global audience. Having reached great heights in my professional career, I set challenges for myself to ensure the pathway ahead makes a similar impact. I am indeed an ambassador on a mission. By my next Communiqué, in May, I expect to have much of the spring season concluded and hope to share highlights with you, as well as delving deeper into the work of Papageno. Until then, I wish you good health.

KEY WORDS THIS WEEK

Klimt

Melanoma

Energy

Crisis

WHAT MOVED ME

- Beethoven Frieze during a recent visit to the Secession Building
- Kapuzinergruft (Capuchin Crypt)
- Stephansdom
- Fascination with the concept of targeted technology translation

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A recent trip to the Secession Building in Vienna brought me up close with the Beethoven Frieze, Klimt's masterful work painted over 120 years ago – well recommended for any visitor to the city.