

HELLO STAGE BLOG



THE ORANGE TWIST

2015-04-09

Maria Weiss

Enjoy April's first Orange Twist with mezzo-soprano Maria Weiss - discover a special musical fairy-tale as well as invaluable tips on recording, presenting and crowdfunding your album...

Austrian mezzo-soprano Maria Weiss debut solo album "**favola in musica**". **early new music**" is an entire music project and "fairy tale book"- Maria sings 3 early music world premieres (Caldara, Durón) as well as 2 premiere recordings of contemporary music inspired by early masters (Mitterer) and it also includes a music video... favola in musica (engl. "fairy tale in music") is a journey that leads to special places and is about **discovering what is new in the old and what is old in the new**.

We all know HELLO STAGE's favourite color! What's yours?

I like a lot of colours. It is the combination of different colours or the shades of a colour that make the difference for me in liking it or not.

My favourites are probably the GOLD of the Fra Angelico paintings and the calm GREEN of conifer trees of the forest.

ORANGE is a wonderful colour, powerful, full of life, sunshine and spirituality, as it reminds me on the clothing of Buddhist monks.

Colours mean a lot to me in music. Singing is full of colours. Passages of dark blue or brown accompanied by grumpily dark string notes, jumping yellow semiquavers, innocent walking white crotchets, or coloraturas pouring out like a rainbow... I even mark my scores with different colours for breathing or dynamics.

What was the best advice a teacher ever gave you?

"Go out on stage and sing because you have something important to say".

This was an advice from an elder colleague at the opera house Graz where I was working meanwhile studying at the music-university.

The best advice for a singer is nothing without having been taught a solid technique. I owe everything to Glenys Linos, my singing teacher.

How has your practice changed with time?

It got more structure and passion. Having a solid technique allowed me to walk back to the creativity engine of my childhood: JOY.

Within the years I have established a flexible structure of practicing and working that permits me to work with changing places and circumstances. This includes the practical singing part, the encounter with new repertoire, from starting with the text to consulting autographs. But there is a unique way for every musical piece and repertoire. What is wonderful but work: the voice is

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always developing with repertoire, performing or a pregnancy. I regularly work with my singing teacher and my coach. Singing is a top-level-sport on the physical level and nothing will work without your focus and mind. A strong mind, focus of your thoughts and working on it are essential to me for singing. The two basic things for me (amongst many others) in practice are putting the music "in my throat" and researching and finding my way of reading the music. What also changed with the years: silence has become more and more important.

What do you think is the most important trait of a successful artist in today's modern world?

Humility, curiosity, love, cooperativeness, being a hard worker, passion, a vision – or something that burns in you and "must be told or get out of you" and the non-stopping will power to realize it (sorry, this was more than one trait :>)

How much time do you spend every day on Facebook, twitter, and which other ways do you use to promote yourself?

I call it my "office-time": possibly 1 or 2 hours a day (holidays excluded) for answering E-Mails, Social Media and Self promotion. But there are of course times of concerts, travelling, my own project, which is not only the CD & digibook but a biannual musical project or my son (toddler age) which keep me sometimes "behind" my office-times. I use mainly Facebook and Twitter and am about to discover other Social Media as well. Hello Stage is unique in the landscape of this media – it is the future for us musicians to be connected in this way.

You recently held a successful crowd-funding project for your new CD "favola in musica" - tell us more about that experience.



Somehow I still cannot believe I reached the goal. My funding goal was very high, but it was the absolute minimum goal to reach as a high quality production of a 216 page CD Hardcover Digibook with a CD Extra (the CD includes a music-video) made by Sony DADC is extremely expensive. But I wanted to make it in the best way: high quality and environmentally friendly or not at all.

Despite all of the up's and down's, I kept my inner "mantra" going and I kept consequently imaging that I would reach my goal. That so many people have been touched by the music and the project and supported it makes me deeply grateful and thankful. The whole idea of "**favola in musica. early new music**" is not to be only reproductive, but to create something that inspires people, invites to reflection and more openness and creates a jumping light of joy. I actually already preparing the next project :)

What tips would you give someone looking to fund their album in this way?

Consider this: a crowdfunding campaign is a lot of work: before, meanwhile and after the campaign.

You should love "making the campaign" as well, not only loving: "reach your goal".

Go deep inside: make a plan, prepare with as much advance as you can and prepare very well, be authentic and realistic, listen to your inner voice as well when defining your goal, and then "go" and trust: concentrate on your fans, welcome the ups and downs and also enjoy it: it is an adventure.



You had a very charming video made to support your project - can you give us some practical tips on making a great pitch video?



Thank you so much for the feedback! I was horrified at the thought of making the pitch video: how can I tell the story of "favola in musica"? I had to film and edit this myself,

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I ended up filming nearly everything, cutting, editing on my own without having any idea of "final cut" before :) The only advantage I had is that I studied acting as well (Lee Strasberg in New York) and have a lot of experience in front of the camera as an actress of publicities, shorts and films.

The pitch video is essential for the crowdfunding campaign.

Some tips:

- First: **watch as many pitch videos as you can**: good one's, bad one's: you will soon realize: within the first seconds you decide to click away from a video or you keep watching it. This is how it will be with your own video. Try to make it exiting. Consider that we are used to best quality filming and cutting. Making a publicity spot or a trailer normally involves a huge team of excellent professionals. But even if you are not a cutter or director of photography, like me, you are a musician and have a feeling for rhythm and music – which is important for cutting and the video. Think of composing some music - it helps.

- **Tell a story**: go deep inside: why are you making this project? Be authentic and tell the story that burns in your heart.

Follow [Maria Weiss on HELLO STAGE!](#)

You can purchase the 216 page CD Hardcover Digibook at: [Exando-Music](#), [favolainmusica](#), [Amazon](#) or as Mp3 Download: i-tunes, Qobuz, Amazon and Exando-music.

Here is a short video about "favola in musica": [vimeo.com](#)

[favola in musica. early new music from Maria Weiss](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Author: edited by Nina HELLO STAGE



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