

Press Release

## JANOSKA ENSEMBLE

### An exciting and adventurous journey to the final frontiers where no musician has gone before ...



New directions in music are currently trending under imaginative names, fusion and crossover categories are constantly expanding. But the classically trained Janoska Ensemble crosses all boundaries with its polyglot musical language. Its debut CD, which climbed to gold within a few months, bears the apt title “Janoska Style” (Deutsche Grammophon 2016). Summing up the special quality of the Janoska arrangements in a few words is no easy task: they are parallel incursions into classical territory and into far distant realms of musical repertoire, in which the musicians exercise their spontaneous creativity to fashion first-class, innovative, thrilling music that lives and breathes. These incomparably audience-friendly transformations are the work of three brothers from Bratislava – Ondrej and Roman Janoska playing violins and František Janoska at the piano – together with their Konstanz-born brother-in-law Julius Darvas on double-bass.

One thing the two families have in common is their active tradition of musicianship. The Janoskas have been making music for six generations, Julius Darvas builds on three generations and more of double bass playing. Another quality shared by the ensemble’s members is a first-rate classical education and prizewinning solo achievement.

***“The members of the Janoska Ensemble are wonderful musicians and I have always loved hearing them perform live.”*** - Anna Netrebko, soprano

Selectively enriching their programs, often with evocative titles, compositions of their own serve as emotional visiting-cards that shed a revealing light on the personalities of these outstanding artists. In their own individual styles, the four musicians join in expressing their love of improvisation with enthusiastic abandon and consummate virtuosity and are rewarded for their achievement at live performances on four continents to date with rapturous applause from a discerning audience. The Janoska Ensemble is – in pop jargon – a “live band”. The emotional intelligence and subtle humour of the artists’ interaction with their audience and their masterfully staged play on familiar melodies and surprise effects in the musical numbers they have newly created can be relied upon to stir listeners from their seats, who almost invariably, at the end of the concert, show their appreciation in enthusiastic standing ovations.

Their Janoska Style, their never merely superficial virtuosity and their ability to engage with one another and their audience in quick-fire musical dialogue have brought the artists invitations from big-name stage personalities such as Anna Netrebko, Al Jarreau, Bobby McFerrin, Juan Diego Florez, Brian McKnight, Julian Rachlin, Randy Newman, Bireli Lagrene and Lalo Schifrin.

***“The Janoska Ensemble is one of the most original groups of extremely talented musicians, who are very unique in performing classical music, jazz, Latin and other genres. Their inspiration is inexhaustible and they deserve everyone’s attention and enthusiasm.”*** - Lalo Schifrin, Hollywood composer

The Janoska Ensemble transmits an inexhaustible passion for making music, despite their full calendar of engagements and tours, and the four musicians are constantly working on new programmes and projects. Their unique “Janoska Style” forms the basis for all that is yet to come, representing the seal of approval for one of the most thrilling and universal music ensembles of the present day.

## **Janoska style: each musical number is unique, born from the magic of the moment.**

It takes more than one sentence to describe what exactly constitutes the Janoska style - simply listing all its biographical and artistic ingredients would take too long and wouldn't do it justice. But what is it, exactly? Classical works in new arrangements, influences that extend into today's music! One key element is the lost art of improvisation, especially based on classical music. The Janoska Ensemble creates new, never-before-heard synergies, bridges between the original and its modern interpretation paired with a fusion of improvisation and creativity: in short, the Janoska style.

***“I was very impressed upon discovering the Janoska Ensemble with their unique sound combined with extremely high-quality virtuosic playing. Their exciting interpretations and creative arrangements in their own very individual style produce a very innovative and refreshing new approach to music-making. I wish them the great success that they deserve!”*** - Mischa Maisky, cellist

The four members of the Janoska Ensemble completely fulfill all the criteria of the “Janoska Style”: A solid classical education, decades of playing practice from childhood on, their drawing from a deeply rooted musical tradition, the highest level of technical perfection and a deep joy of playing and performing, including the art of free improvisation. All this makes the ensemble more than the sum of its parts, rather it is a perfectly well-balanced musical family of sorts.

The man on the double bass, Julius Darvas, doubles as the program's MC. He describes the “Janoska effect”, as he calls the interaction during a concert, as follows: “The mood of the audience has a direct effect on our enthusiasm for playing, especially when it comes to improvisation: We give - we receive - we give more - we receive more ... and it goes on and on. Then the energy begins to circulate properly in the concert hall!”

***“As an ensemble they are a whiff of fresh air, combining their outstanding, individual talents with their family ties. They have become successful in performing in a variety of genres in their unique ‘Janoska style’, which is creating a new hybrid genre.”*** - Julian Rachlin, violinist

This concentrated versatility of the Janoska Ensemble now allows it to break new ground in the choice of its musical material on the album REVOLUTION, which was released internationally at Deutsche Grammophon in March 2019.

In homage to the four ingenious Liverpoolers, the Janoska Ensemble has arranged four top Beatles hits in Janoska style for their album. At the same time, something comes into play that puts the CD title in the intended frame of interpretation: “We do not want to compare ourselves imprudently with the Beatles,” says Julius Darvas, “but what they have achieved in pop music at the time is what we strive for today classic area. In a sense, we want to revolutionize classical music, just as the Beatles revolutionized pop music. We revive free improvisation when interpreting classical works, something that was taken for granted in the baroque era, for example.”

The Janoska Ensemble is also in a kind of continuous “improvisation mission” in terms of workshops and master classes: This teaching activity led the four musicians, among others to the Kronberg Academy or to the Menuhin Festival in Gstaad. The reactions of the course participants were euphoric throughout: The collaboration with the Janoska Ensemble – so their general opinion - gave them much more confidence to improvise freely in the classic context. [rcs]

In July 2022 the current Album "The Big B's" was released under the Deutsche Grammophon label.

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Janoska Ensemble \* [office@janoskaensemble.com](mailto:office@janoskaensemble.com) \* Kramergasse 3/2/14, A-1010 Vienna \* [janoskaensemble.com](http://janoskaensemble.com)  
Dr. Reinhard C. Seifert, Artist Manager \* +43 676 7065758 \* [rei@janoskaensemble.com](mailto:rei@janoskaensemble.com)

- Ondrej Janoska plays a 1760 Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi violin, kindly loaned to him by Goh Family Collection.

- Roman Janoska plays a Ferdinandus Gagliano Filius, Nicolai fecit Neap. 1769, kindly loaned to him by Dr. Christian Kuhn Collection.

- František Janoska is Bösendorfer Artist.

- Julius Darvas, Roman Janoska and Ondrej Janoska are Thomastik-Infeld Artists.

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