

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **BEETHOVEN ACADEMY**

#### **The 6th International Beethoven Award for PATTI SMITH**

**“I am always the same person ... I evolve but I do not change.”  
- Patti Smith -**

US-American singer, writer, activist and artist receives the 6<sup>th</sup> International Beethoven Award 2020 – in the year of Ludwig van Beethoven’s 250<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**The International Beethoven Award for Human Rights, Peace, Freedom, Fight against Poverty and Inclusion**, initiated by Torsten Schreiber and Andreas Lösch, is being awarded for the 6<sup>th</sup> time. The award is endowed with 10,000 Euro. It is again being sponsored by the Auditing Firm and Tax Consultancy Solidaris from Cologne. Like in the previous years the price trophy “Evolute” made of alabaster is being crafted by the artist Dirk Wilhelm.

Due to Corona virus the ceremony will take place at a later date, presumably within Patti Smith’s guest performance on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 on the island of Grafenwerth, Bad Honnef, Germany.

**Patti Smith – writer, singer, artist – admirer of Beethoven.** They call her punk poet. A female rebel, she is one of the first punk rock singers and an icon of the feminist movement. She is a powerful poet and energetic rock lady. Born in Chicago in 1946 she has been singing for decades, songs always loaded with energy, fury, love, passion and authenticity.

She is an activist – in her books, her songs and her whole life. Patti Smith has always stood for human rights, peace, freedom, liberty, fight of poverty, inclusion and for climate protection.

She appeared in innumerable charity and protest concerts – for the victims of AIDS, for the democratic movement in the US, in electoral campaigns for democratic and green candidates. She spoke and sang at protests against the war in Iraq, at the General Assembly of the United Nations, she led politically motivated “crowd singings”. She wrote protest songs, two of them in 2006 against the American-Israeli foreign policy regarding Lebanon. “Without chains” was written for Murat Kurnaz, born in Turkey, raised in Germany and a prisoner in Guantánamo. “Peaceable Kingdom” was dedicated to the activist Rachel Corrie. In her honour and 10 days after her passing away in March 2003 she gave an

anti-war concert in Austin, Texas. A special version of her song "People have the Power" was dedicated to the Iranians in 2009 and in the text she included the words "Where is my vote". Every year she supports the Tibet House US at their annual charity concert in Carnegie Hall.

On June 5, 2020, the World Environment Day, Patti Smith signed the "Beethoven Declaration", a declaration of intent in which 240 artists commit themselves to put their work in the service of an environmentally friendly, sustainable, ecologically compatible company.

Patti Smith is an overt Beethoven fan. He not only was the favourite composer of her husband, Fred Smith. At a concert on July 9, 2012, at the Bonner Kunstrasen she explained that Beethoven's passion when composing was exemplary for her own musical creativity.

On June 7, 2021, Patti Smith will be performing on the island Grafenwerth in Bad Honnef, invited by E.L. Hartz Promotion GmbH and the Tour Organiser Berthold Seliger. The concert is part of the Festival "Lieder.Freude.Miteinander" which the city of Bad Honnef organised on occasion of the Beethoven Jubilee BTHVN 2020, supported by the Beethoven Jubiläums GmbH (Beethoven Jubilee Association).

The **International Beethoven Award for Human Rights, Peace, Freedom, Fight against Poverty and Inclusion** is presented by the Beethoven Academy. It was founded by **Torsten Schreiber**, Director of the Beethoven Academy, and the President of the Festival of Young Artists Bayreuth, **Andreas Lösch**, who is also a shareholder of the Beethoven Academy. Also a shareholder of the Academy is the pianist Martha Argerich.

The **Beethoven Academy** was founded on March 13, 2016. The declared guidelines are Human Rights, Peace, Freedom, Fight against Poverty and Inclusion. In the context of these guidelines and in addition to the annually presented Beethoven Award, the Beethoven Academy organises a variety of cultural projects: a) The program **MUTE (MUSik und TEilhabe – Music and Participation)** which organises concerts in hospitals at the beds of patients whose physical and mental mobility is reduced and other groups of people who have no access to music, b) Events in the format **LET'S TALK BEETHOVEN**, which combines and coordinates music performances of different genres with lectures, along the guidelines of the Academy and c) Cultural projects in areas of conflict.

The Beethoven Academy sees Beethoven as a social utopian and visionary of a different society and as such he stands in the focus of all the Academy's projects. The aim is to enlarge the reception of the composer with new concert concepts in order to attract a much larger audience to

the works of the great composer. In this context the Beethoven Academy engaged in a pioneering role and the Beethoven Jubiläums GmbH, founded in the summer of 2016, declared these goals to be the focal point of their program.

The main sponsor of the Beethoven Award is the **Auditing Firm and Tax Consultancy Solidaris in Cologne**. This company's history are 85 successful years in their field of business and it is one of the few enterprises in Germany specialised on the counselling of non-profit organisations and institutions of health care and social services as well as of the free social welfare. Being one of the leading Auditing and Consultancy enterprises in Germany, represented in nine locations, Solidaris offers future-oriented expertises concerning all economic and legal issues for non-profit organisations of different size and legal structure.

Further supporters and partners in this cooperation are several cultural organisations from the Bonn region: Colloquium Humanum Bonn e.V., Johannes Wasmuth Gesellschaft e.V., Richard-Wagner-Verband Bonn/Siegburg e.V., Kulturring Bad Honnef e.V., ArtDialog e.V., KuKuG – Kunst und Kultur Bad Godesberg e.V. etc.

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