

BIOGRAPHY

It all starts with a great deal of curiosity. As a child Hiyoli Togawa plays the violin but cannot resist the temptation to play secretly on her father's valuable old viola although explicitly told not to do so. This is how she finds a way to give her life its voice.

As a young student, Hiyoli Togawa first studies with Rainer Moog and later with Antoine Tamestit. With the Artemis Quartett she acquires first-hand and comprehensive knowledge of quartets. Her most important mentor and teacher, however, will be Hariolf Schlichtig.

After early successes in competitions – among others she won the 1. Bundespreis of “Jugend musiziert” – she gets awards at various other competitions as well: at the Internationaler Viola-Wettbewerb in Markneukirchen, the Internationaler Brahms-Wettbewerb in Pörschach and, repeatedly, at the “Musikinstrumentenfonds” of Deutsche Stiftung Musikleben.

Already from an early age on curiosity and open-mindedness have been the guiding principles of Hiyoli Togawa's life. Grown up in the Rhineland and having Japanese and Australian roots, Hiyoli Togawa speaks her three “mother tongues” German, Japanese and Australian fluently. Building bridges between people, cultures and art by means of words and sounds is a primary concern of the cosmopolitan artist. In her concerts Hiyoli Togawa does not only use the viola but also presentations to speak to her audience. She even developed novel types of concerts, in which she places music in new contexts by combining it with graphic art, literature, video and dance. An example thereof is “Brush and Bow – about colour tones and tone colours”, a programme for viola solo and video installation with colours and brushstrokes.

Hiyoli Togawa travels around Europe and Japan to give chamber music concerts and solo recitals. She performs together with artists such as Igor Levit, Jörg Widmann, Alexej Gerassimez or Hariolf Schlichtig and is a regular guest performer at renowned festivals like the Schleswig Holstein Musikfestival, the Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern or the Heidelberger Frühling.

As a soloist she performs together with the Hamburg Camerata, the Nordic Chamber Orchestra, the Lahti Symphony Orchestra or the Klassische Philharmonie Bonn. Various foundations sponsor the innovative projects of this extraordinary artist, as for example: Oscar und Vera Ritter Stiftung, Orlandus Lassus Stiftung, Alfred-Töpfer-Stiftung, Werner Richard-Dr. Carl Dörken Stiftung and Yehudi Menuhin's “Live Music Now”.

Hiyoli Togawa's viola playing inspired the prestigious Finnish composer Kalevi Aho to write a superb work for viola solo: “Solo XII – In memoriam EJR”. In 2017 Hiyoli Togawa premieres this composition, which is dedicated to her, and also records it for BIS.

During the pandemic, Hiyoli Togawa has 11 composers (e.g. Kalevi Aho, Toshio Hosokawa and Tigran Mansurian) around the world write solo viola pieces for her

that distill the isolation that we globally experienced due to the lockdowns into sound. This album „Songs of Solitude“ was released in 2021 by BIS and enthusiastically praised by critics. Hiyoli Togawa teaches at the „Hochschule für Musik und Theater“ in Munich.