

Petra van der Heide – harpist

Petra van der Heide studied with Erika Waardenburg in Utrecht, Maria Graf in Hamburg and Charlotte Cassedanne in Berlin. In addition, she has participated in masterclasses with Susann McDonald and Tanya Tauer. In 1987, at the age of 16, she played in the 'Focus on Youth Concerts' during the 3rd World Harp Congress in Vienna and in subsequent years, won several prizes in national and international competitions.

During her time in Germany (between 1993 and 2003) she played in many of the major German orchestras such as the Gewandhaus Orchester Leipzig, Bamberger Symphoniker and the Bayerische Rundfunk (Bavarian Radio Orchestra), Munich. She also held the post of solo harpist in the Darmstadt Opera for 5 years, before ultimately returning to Holland.

She has been the principal harpist of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam since 2003, and has worked with conductors such as Mariss Jansons, Riccardo Chailly, Bernard Haitink, Lorin Maazel and Kent Nagano.

Also active in the field of chamber music, she has given concerts in many combinations of instruments; for example Brass and Harp, Harp with Strings and Voices, and Harp with Woodwinds. She always tries to encourage composers to write new works for harp and has played in several different Festivals for modern music in Germany; Donaueschingen, Darmstadt (Ferienkurse) and Düsseldorf.

She is a guest-teacher at the conservatory in Amsterdam, and gives special training in orchestral auditions.