E198

[00:00:00] Hey there. Welcome to the flute. 360 podcast. I'm Dr. Heidi K Begay and I'm a flutist, educator, coach, and podcaster. My God-given mission is to serve you. I am passionate about guiding you the modern day is to discover your unique voice on and off the stage. The goal of this podcast is to help you thrive both as an artist and as a music producer.

Go ahead and grab some espresso, your favorite notepad, and let's get to it. Today's episode 198 is titled Tempra Flute Fest with Karin Bonelli. Hi. Hello. Hi, how are you? Good. How are you? [00:01:00] Great. I'm fine. Thank you. Where are you? Actually? I'm in Dallas, Texas. Wow. That's a long way. Yeah. And you're in Vienna.

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. You have a lovely setup. I love the couch and the blanket and the picture. Yeah, my apartment here. It's just six minutes from the opera and from . Wow. I am so jealous. It's quite nice. And I saw that you also have cats, my cats much to up during the interview, not a problem. All fur babies are welcome.

Okay, good. Shoot. So how are you? I know it's like afternoon, evening over there. We have now it's four in the afternoon. Yeah. Yeah. Did you what did you do today? Wow. Today we already had our general rehearsal with John Williams [00:02:00] oh, not so bad tomorrow. And on Sunday, our concerts and yeah, in the evening, I'll play Solomon.

Oh, just another day at the office. How wonderful. Yeah, it's nice. It's nice. We just came back from the US last Friday, and this week is already fully. Wow. Where were you in the us? We were in New York and in Naples for.

Yeah, it was real summer. And here it's so cold. Well, over here, like in the states, especially in the Midwest and Texas, where I'm at the weather is so schizophrenia, like yesterday was 80 degrees Fahrenheit, and today. 30. And it's like, wow, come on. You hit this season. Yeah. Yeah. Same here now. It's really cold, but [00:03:00] yeah.

So your, you were born in Austria, correct? I was born in Austria. Yeah. Near Linz. That's like two hours from Vienna. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. So do you still have family nearby or have they moved. My father lives in Vienna and my mom still lives there in upper Austria, this two hours away. So yeah, I'm quite close to my family, but I don't have very much time to go home.

Yeah. I'm sure. So when you went to Naples and New York, I'm pretty sure you've traveled to New York a thousand times, right? Not a thousand times. It was my fifth time or something like that. Okay. Yeah, but I always love to go there. Yeah. Is it the food? Is it the culture? Like, what do you love about new. Yeah, it's just I don't know.

It's just the [00:04:00] feeling when you, when you walk the city. I don't, I can't, I can't describe it. It's multicultural. It's open. I mean, it's loud, it's chaotic, but it has so much flare and it's so special. I just, I, I love to be there and we don't go there very often. I mean, usually it's every year. Due to COVID.

We didn't go there for two years now. So it was really good to be back. And it was, yeah, it was a chaotic tour, as you might have heard, we had to dis-invite gag GIF and yeah. Yeah, there was, it was a very difficult period now for the orchestra. I think it's good now. Yeah. How are people? Cause I don't want to go down that rabbit hole for too long, but since you brought it up, I'm kind of, you've sparked my curiosity.

How have been the players in the orchestra? How have they been dealing with things like this? Like how are people coping? Well, you know, we have [00:05:00] many players from Russia. We have players from Ukraine, so. It was a difficult situation. In the end, there was a lot of confusion about the whole situation and, and at the end of the day, we'd just have to play together.

We have to play altogether. We have to make music together and. In the orchestra, there were no fights. There's no such thing as, I don't know, people being against each other just because they are from there or from there. So that's good. But of course the whole situation was not easy to deal with, but we stuck together and the, the orchestra is fine so far.

Yeah. I sympathize it's it's a rough time for everyone. Yeah, it is. But I last saw the last in the last settlement, there was the two string players before me. They were on one stand and one was for key Ukrainian and one was Russian. And that was just so [00:06:00] beautiful to see actually that they're, they're just playing together.

I mean, they're just people who love music and why can't we just all be like that? It's it's a crazy, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That is a beautiful moment. And remembering that music is so much bigger than all of us, and we have this common bond of this beautiful art, you know, and no matter the differences or culture or conflict that we, we can't come together to create art and, and say something beautiful through.

Sure. Yeah. Yeah. But before we dive into and focus focusing a little bit more on this wonderful Tempra flute fast. Yeah. I just wanted to say I'm only in the jury actually. I won't be there. So not a real present guest artists, but I'm in the peak. Oh, wonderful. Yeah, that's wonderful. Yeah, we already had the first round and it was really amazing to hear those people play.

There were many participants and [00:07:00] very many very talented participants. It was hard to choose. Yeah. That's what my last guest had said yesterday. Lisa, she was judging another category and she said the age group was anywhere between, I believe she said. 10 and 16 or 12 and something around there. And she said her mind was blown.

She said, the musicality, the musicianship, the technique. She said she could not believe that some of these wonderful sounds were coming out of little bitty flute players, but she was just blown away. Yeah, it was the same for the Piccolo players for really high level. Wow. How wonderful. Yeah, it is. Yeah. So before we get into some questions, I'm curious about, and I can't wait to pick your brain.

Do you want to tell the listeners a little bit about yourself? Anything that you would like to share regarding your musical background, what you're doing currently and [00:08:00] anything about your bio that you want to share? You don't have to go in too much depth, but I, I mean, unless people have been living under the rock or living under a rock most people do know that your flutist is through the Vienna Philharmonic.

But anything else that you would like to do. Yeah, I'm in the orchestra since 2012 now. So it's my 10th season already. It seems like three years, but it's already 10. I can't believe it myself and yeah, I was raised by two flutists. So the flute runs in the family. Mother, my father, my uncle and my brother are all flutists.

And that's how I yeah. Came to this instrument and started my journey in different universities. And it took me to the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra, where I'm currently working and teaching at the university. I'm teaching audition, repertoire. So orchestra, [00:09:00] repertoire, it's called. And that's also why I then started to build my own academy because I saw the questions and the issues that the students have and the ways they're searching for in order to.

B themselves in the audition and be on their highest level. And that's why we created penicillium academy. I don't know if you want to go into that, but that's what I'm currently doing. Oh, that's wonderful. I'm so glad that you noticed. So I want to highlight something. You said you noticed. Certain students throughout the seasons or the years we're having particular problems, maybe it's, I don't know.

And I don't want to put words in your mouth, but like I'm guessing like performance anxiety, or having the right, like mental capacity going into a high pressured audition. Right. And you're noticing these problems that students were facing when it came to audition. And you want it to really dive in [00:10:00] deeper and finding solutions for them.

And so therefore you founded your academy. Yeah, that's right. It's not only the mental issues that we all have when we are on stage. It's also the. Bodily balance. We create four in this moment. And not only in this moment, it's also, if you get into the orchestra, you also have to keep your body healthy.

You have to stay in balance. And I know what I'm talking about because for three years I had tremendous problems with my tendons and I didn't know if I can do my job anymore. So I know what it feels like. And I want my students to really have. This kind of support and many, many solutions for different issues.

And of course everybody's different. And so we didn't want to just put out some group lessons and tell them how to do things, but we really focus on individual [00:11:00] lessons, not only in the artistic repertoire, which of course I am teaching but also in the psychological and the sessions and the bodywork, they're all very individual and yeah, customized for our students.

Oh, I love that. Yeah. That's so you can get into depth. Really. We didn't want something super fast. Now you can totally cut me off and say, Heidi, I don't want to talk about that. And I will not be offended, but since you brought up how you're telling me, I love that. Since you mentioned that you suffered two, three years with issues with your hand do you mind sharing with the listeners, like how you overcame that season in your life?

Hmm. Yeah, there is no specific tool. I can tell you which. What's the one that helped me then, because I did many, many different things. At the beginning, the doctor said, it's just a, how do you call it? Tendonitis no. Yeah. And I [00:12:00] felt it wasn't that because it wasn't an inflammation. I felt it wasn't inflamed.

So I went to many, many different people to many different doctors and. Physiotherapists. And somehow I then came to Femi, who is part of the academy. Now he does the body work for the academy and he is, well, he's a magician. Actually. He once was a background singer with Elton John and Michael Jackson.

He had an amazing career. He was a bodybuilder, he was an actor, he was everything. And then he came back. Ty T to go home Shaolin, Kung Fu, and she had to, and that is what he's doing, and he's really balancing the body. And I wanted my students to have that as well. So that's why he's part of the academy.

But with that, of course, I took great care of nutrition and exercise. Of course, all this area here, the muscles over here, they have to be. Yeah. And it's [00:13:00] something you don't usually do during your day, so you have to have special movements and yeah. Many different things. Yeah. So I hope this helps somebody.

Oh my goodness. Yes. And thank you for being so honest and open because I think. A lot of musicians, unfortunately feel like it's like a taboo, hush, hush topic, not to talk about it. And they feel like they're in the closet alone, you know, and going through injuries. Like I know exactly what you're talking about.

It can be very disheartening. You can feel lonely, scared, especially when it comes to your career. Of course, I was very scared. I really thought I can't do my job anymore, or at least not until I'm 65. If I have problems, I will. 27 back then at the age of 27, how will they be at 65? And I know from my mother who is also problems with her too, with her neck because she can't play anymore.

I knew that it's [00:14:00] important to do something now. And well, I managed to. Yeah, gladly. And I want to share this. Of course, I'm very open with this because I think people have to hear it that many of us, it's not only me. I have many colleagues who are now going to family because they all have some kind of imbalance, mostly in our job because.

Playing so much to be enough in the morning is actually two orchestras where the orchestra of the Vienna state opera. And we are the Vienna Philharmonic we're going on tour. We have in like three weeks off during the year, which is beginning of July and it's a very intense job and you have to take care of your body and your mind to, and that's why we also share this Penthesilea academy is doing an online program now, which will launch hope.

Two months where Femi will also share his wisdom online for everybody. So. Yeah, that's phenomenal. [00:15:00] Well, I kind of have, I got excited with everything you said, but a couple things, one we're coming up to episode 200 through flute to 360. So we've been doing this now for four years and I think in the 200 episodes, I can not remember anybody saying the word.

It really captured my ear. It's just a nickname for him. Yeah. That's wonderful. Well, kudos to you for having such a heart of servitude to say here's a problem. And what is the solution and really coming around your students in such a wonderful, warm, impactful way to say here, we need to look at the whole.

Person. Right. And that's why I'm so excited because that's literally like the foundation of 360 is looking at the human and of the human it's the mind it's the body. And then that helps the artists. [00:16:00] Right. And then that gets to help us what we do through our business. And what we do at, in our career, artistic growth is always also personal growth.

And it's not only mind and body. It's also spirit and you have to take all those three into consideration in order to really grow. And sometimes it takes pain to grow. And because I can say that from this period, which was really difficult on, on every level I, I gained so much. Of it. I learned so much about myself and also about the people around me about my supporting system.

And I met people, incredible people like semi who are now part of my life and a very important part of my life. And I think we all have to get vulnerable. And also the teachers have to show that we're all just humans and we all have to find our way and we can only. Be an example to the students. If we also show our whole being, if we only show what we can, [00:17:00] then they also miss out on something they could learn.

Maybe I don't know. It's just my point of view. No, I, I completely agree. And it's really interesting. I did not play. For this to happen, but within all four Tampere interviews, these last two weeks, everyone has used the word vulnerability. Being vulnerable. And that's really interesting because I love connecting dots.

Do you know what I mean? If like people from across the globe, whether from Austria or France or England, and we're all saying the same thing there's something to that. There should be something where some, some part of us kind of perks up and says, wait a second Karin and said this, and Sébastian said this and do you know what I mean?

And so it really. No, I couldn't agree more. Yeah. And it's interesting how everybody is, how everybody is kind of touching on that subject. Yeah. It's also [00:18:00] opening up now a little bit. I have the feeling in general, in the musical world that people are opening up more. It's not any more, this kind of perfect picture thing, but that it gets really more human.

Now at the moment. It's a very special moment in time for, for us artists. Oh, maybe because everything that's happening around us in the world, maybe that gets us closer together. I don't know. No, I completely agree. Do you think it was the pandemic, like only two years ago that made us start talking about these things?

Or do you think there was kind of a wave that was setting us up for this, but because I completely agree, like being a student, like even like 10, 15 years ago compared to now. I mean when I was 18, 19 years old working towards my undergraduate degree, even 15 years ago, it felt very like, you know, very formal and here's, you know, the [00:19:00] facade and very traditional.

And even in my last degree, I, I think I started seeing things shifts where we were talking about health more and there was more of this vulnerability aspect to it. Within probably like the last five years. So maybe around like pre pandemic pandemic, this door started opening. I can't tell the moment when it did, but yeah, definitely this time during the pandemic where everybody was more alone with himself or herself, it gave us time to reflect and maybe it also opens up.

Additional doors, but I think that the whole movement, if you call it, like that started already before, as you said, I don't know, like, yeah. Maybe eight, five years ago. I can tell. Yeah. It makes you think because you're right. Like we are seeing the winds of change happened like right before our eyes.

And I think it is [00:20:00] a really exciting time. Cool. So the one thing, well, I want to circle back to your academy again, if there was a flutist out there or a musician out there listening to this conversation and they're thinking, oh my goodness, like how amazing, like she opened up her own academy. I want to do something similar.

What piece of advice would you give this person? If they have an idea in their, you know, in their noggin and they're thinking, Ooh, I would like to implement this, but I just don't know how anything, any advice around. Do it anyway, do it, of course, everything that comes to you as an idea is maybe something you should do.

I don't know, but be careful because it's a lot of work, much more than I thought it to be. And I have a very, very nice team now helping me where now it's not only my partner. Michael's car. Help [00:21:00] you start this thing, but also another person who's helping us now, but it's still a lot of work. Advice?

I don't know if you do it wholeheartedly, it's gonna be great. Yeah. But you have to put a lot of time, love and effort into it. And yeah, I think that everything that opens musicians up more to this holistic. View helps, helps us all actually helps the musical words in general. So I would encourage everybody to do something.

Oh, wonderful. Yeah, just do it a lot of times. I say you have to just rip off the band-aid. Yeah. And if it doesn't work, it doesn't work. So we now have our first year and we had a feedback questions for our students. So amazing because I was just, I was really I'm honest. I was exhausted after the first edition because it was just so much work and, and I loved, I loved it.

I enjoyed it so much, but [00:22:00] after this week I was just, and then the season started at the opera and then came the feedback from the students. And it was so amazing and heartwarming that how they said. It's so good to have a place where you can be yourself and where you can learn so much about really a specialized thing, like audition training, and to have this holistic view with all the other people involved.

And that gave me so much energy to go on and even expand because this year it's not only for fluids, but it's also for trumpet players this year, we have an amazing coach for trumpet and who does also the Wim Hof method. And it's yeah, it's going to be. So we're expanding and I'm excited. That's wonderful.

So, because you mentioned this, I want to kind of explore this area with you a little bit more. You said you learned so much, you know, being a founder of this academy and directing it and teaching through it. What's one of the, if you can choose, cause I know [00:23:00] there's probably a ton of lessons you learned going through the process, but what is like the number one thing that you learned.

Going through the process of establishing this academy. Yeah. Maybe it's that, that this openness and showing the vulnerability can help students so much because then they open up. Then they really show what they're searching for. Then you have very different conversations with them. Then as if you're just teaching, teaching, teaching, you, you can really talk about the core of the problems and that helps the students a lot.

And that also made me learn a lot about myself because then I, I don't know. I realized the things that made me a musicians that not only are about the repertoire, but all the experiences I had came up again. And again, Tell them maybe some new ways of thinking. And so that I didn't even know I had in [00:24:00] me.

So that was, that was great. My advice would be to just be open with people. That's always number one. Mm. I love that. So I was kind of perusing through your website and different social media platforms. And the one thing on your website that you said, I'm going to have to read it verbatim, or I'm going to mess it up.

But the one thing on your website that really caught my eye is you said that your task is to help young people find. Their own form of expression, their own voice through music. Now I know it's a loaded question, but how do you start students? And I think we've already touched on it, maybe the vulnerability aspect, but how do you start students towards finding their own voice through music?

Hmm. Yeah, that's a difficult question. So the first step is to, to really see the distant. And there hang lists and to [00:25:00] get to know them. Of course, I'm not only on a musical level. I mean, you don't have to tell me your childhood trauma, but I have to get a feeling of the student and what he's searching for.

So I'm often asking many questions to the students. So what are you searching for? Which kind of sound do you want to produce? Are there any. Fluid is you adore? What is your, what is your ideal flute sound? Where do you want to go? Because I know where I want to go. I even know where I would love you to go, but maybe you have a totally different concept of your floodplain than I have.

And. Of course, if I think that's technically and musically, not really good. We will have to discuss that, but I want to know where you want to go. So that's the first step I think. And then you can, I don't know, like, yeah, like a guide a little bit. You can show them the way, how they can find their voice [00:26:00] and not my voice because I have mine, but they have to find theirs.

Yeah. And you're essentially, and I totally agree, because we only have so much time with our students throughout the day, an hour here, maybe an hour, once a month, or however long you see them, but they have to be their own best teachers. Like they have to get the resources from, you know, teachers like yourself.

But if you don't ask them these questions to get those wheels turning in their head, You know, then it's going to be harder for them when they're practicing, you know, a couple hours out of the day without that guidance, they need to be thinking of these things because they need to guide their practice session and guide their voice.

Outside of lessons, I was curious because I wouldn't be there forever. So at one point you are your own team. And the only thing that gets you more and more head is a vision. And you have to have a vision to [00:27:00] where you want to go. Of course, there are things that are general technical things are also questions of style that I won't discuss.

You won't play back. Like Khachaturian that's great. But. In that, for example, if you play in bath, you have to have a really clear vision of how you want to sound like in Baroque music. What is your sound for Baroque music and what is your sound thing for Katchadourian, but you have to have a picture in your mind.

And sometimes it happens that I asked my students, what do you want to say in this place? And how do you want to sound. I've never thought about it. Okay. And do you know what to do? Yeah. You start thinking about it. Yeah. Because some students also are waiting there and I'm hoping that the teacher will tell them how to play, but that's not my mission.

Yeah. No, I love it. [00:28:00] Wonderful. So besides. Adjudicating through Tempra Flute Fest. Are you getting a masterclass or anything like that? Sorry. For this year, I'm just in a jury of the Piccolo competition. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. So, because you are touring right now and there's lots of concerts and things like that.

Are there any upcoming concerts or recitals or other events that you would like to let people know about? Are on your scheduling docket? Well, now in April, there is the flute festival of the. Austrian flute association, which will be a great thing where many Austrian, great flute players, colleagues of mine will play.

And me included. I've lost gift, a small masterclass. And then there are in June, some concerts with the Klan collective we Veem with whom I will record all the motors concertos. So we will start that in June. And well, I don't know if I'm allowed to [00:29:00] talk about it because thanks to COVID it's a little bit, not so sure, but I have a plan recital in Sydney, opera house on the 3rd of July, and I hope that we will be able to do that.

And then we have to start this book festival, of course. And then it's already academy end of August. We're starting on the 27th of August until the 5th of September. Wow. Those are next big. Yeah. Wow. How, how amazing. So I know that we've talked about a lot today from the festival to your academy to finding your own artistic voice.

Is there anything that we. Left out that you want to bring up. Like, is there something that you're really passionate about and you just want to shout it out from, you know, the rooftops because I would hate to end this conversation and you're like, oh my gosh, Heidi. I wanted to talk about that. The dot.

So [00:30:00] yeah, any last sentiments that you want to offer? The listeners. I think we've touched on many, many things. It was a quite intense conversation for that short time. We were going deep and I loved that. No, I'm I'm yeah, that was maybe my message. And I just hope that the world will come to, to a peaceful togetherness again.

Yeah. That we can do our music making without borders again, because of course, many concerts in Russia and were canceled. That's not the biggest issue of course, but I'm really thinking about, about my Ukrainian colleagues and friends and we should stick together. That's what I want to shout in the room.

Mm. Hmm. Thank you. Yeah, well, I so appreciate your time and your expertise and thank you for [00:31:00] sharing your wisdom with us and we don't take it for granted. Thank you so much. I enjoyed it a lot. Thank you. Thank you so much for tuning into today's episode. I hope that the content has served you. The thing that I would love for you to do right now is go to my website@heidikbigay.com.

That's H E I D I K A Y B E G A Y.com go to the right-hand side of my website and you will see eight tab called subscribe, click that bad boy and typing your information. The reason being is because I send out a weekly newsletter and it jammed, packed with value. These past two months alone, I have sent out discount codes on my friends classes.

I [00:32:00] have sent out links to free eBooks and so much. So, if you're not on that newsletter thing, you can't get those perks and discounts, links, and codes. So go to heidikaybegay.com joined that mailing list. And I can't wait to see you there. Thanks.

Let's talk about flute.