



James Oesi – double bass

“A sensitive and knowledgeable musician who has much to share and a very natural and confident performer.” **Gary Karr, world renowned bass soloist**

“If you have a man like James Oesi, then you know it’s there, it sounds good, and the bass is a solo instrument.” **Hans Haffmans, host of Dutch NPO Radio 4**

“Here was a young musician of uncommon intelligence and insight, clearly destined, given the right encouragement, to contribute to the world of music not only as a player but a creative force.” **Geoffrey Simon, acclaimed conductor and record producer**

The 2015/2016 Season has already included a solo concert in the prestigious Grachtenfestival in Amsterdam, two tours with the Asko|Schönberg Ensemble under Reinbert de Leeuw, two solo performances on Dutch NPO Radio4 as well as recording the soundtrack (new music written for him by Wilko Sterke) to a new theater work by ToneelSchuur Haarlem, *Wachten op de Barbaren*, based on J.M. Coetzee’s novel *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Having begun his musical studies on the piano and violin James Oesi began studying the double bass under Marike Prins in 2001 in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was principal bassist for the Simfonia Juventi Orchestra in 2002 (with whom he later appeared as a soloist in 2005) and for the Sasol National Youth Orchestra in 2003. In the same year James won first place in the Roedean/Yamaha Centenary Music Competition and in 2005 he achieved a distinction for the Diploma examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. In 2004, at the age of 15, James was awarded a scholarship to attend the Interlochen Arts Camp in Michigan, USA, where he was placed in the World Youth Symphony Orchestra and in 2005 he was selected to attend the Perlman Music Program in New York under the supervision of Itzhak and Toby Perlman and the staff of the Juilliard String Faculty. James returned to the Perlman Music Program in the summer of 2006 and again in 2009 for the 15 year anniversary celebration.

At the age of 16, with the financial support of the Apollo Music Trust (and later the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust and the National Arts Council of South Africa) James travelled to Russia to study under professor Lev Rakov at the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatoire, where he was the youngest student and only foreign double bass player. In November 2006, after one year at the Conservatoire James took second prize at the 3rd International Competition for Young String Players, held in Moscow.

During his time in Moscow James also performed as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player in the Rachmaninoff Hall, Small Hall and Great Hall of the Conservatoire.

James has participated in Master classes given by Leon Bosch, the pre-eminent South African solo double bassist, Satoshi Okamoto of the New York Philharmonic, Klaus Trumppf, and Thomas Martin.

In March 2009 an audition for the Swiss Global Artistic Foundation in Montreux resulted in James working with world-renowned double bassist Gary Karr at his summer program Karr Kamp in Victoria, British Columbia, where he performed in concert as a soloist with Gary Karr.

It was this same audition that led to James' relocation to The Netherlands where he continued his studies at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag under Quirijn van Regteren Altena of the Asko Schoenberg Ensemble.

With the support of The Countess of Munster Musical Trust (UK) and as a recipient of the prestigious Huygens Scholarship (awarded by the Dutch Government). James completed his final phase of studies in May 2012, achieving a 10 with distinction for his final exam and later being awarded the Fock Medal for the best solo exam of the year by the Koninklijk Conservatorium.

James regularly performs with Combattimento, Asko|Schönberg, Nieuw Ensemble, Insomnio and the Ives Ensemble and since graduating has performed in Shanghai, New York, Amsterdam and Witten among other places. Since December 2013 James has been the teaching assistant to Quirijn van Regteren Altena at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag.

In the summer of 2015 James was awarded a generous grant by the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds in the Netherlands which has allowed him to acquire a double bass made in 1872 by Giuseppe Baldantoni.