

## Curriculum vitae of Larissa Groeneveld

'Larissa Groeneveld, remember this name', wrote the French daily Le Figaro in 1995. In 1990 Larissa graduated with highest distinction from the Conservatorium van Amsterdam where she studied with Dmitri Ferschtman. She continued her studies with Natalia Gutman at the Musikhochschule Stuttgart and followed master classes with Mstislav Rostropovich, Daniel Shafran and Yo-Yo Ma.

In 1988 she made her debut in the Main Hall of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw as a soloist in Beethoven's triple concerto. She has made solo appearances with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, the Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Berliner Symfoniker and the St. John's Smith Square Orchestra. In 2005 she performed Gulda's cello concerto with members of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Over the years, besides forging a solo career, Larissa has formed ensembles with the pianist Frank van de Laar and harpist Gwyneth Wentink and has been a member of

the Osiris Piano Trio for more than a quarter of a century. She has performed concerts with Giora Feidman, Natalia Gutman, Herman Krebbers, Reinbert de Leeuw and Giovanni Sollima.

Larissa has been with the Osiris Trio since its inception, performing in major concert halls such as Carnegie Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus, Kölner Philharmonie and Wigmore Hall. She has an extensive discography as a soloist and chamber musician, with repertoire spanning four centuries, including early classical and freshly commissioned works.

Larissa is a keen advocate of contemporary music. Many well-known Dutch composers have written compositions for her, including Theo Loevendie, Theo Verbey and Guus Janssen, who wrote a double concerto for Ernst Reijseger and her. At the 2010 Amsterdam Cello Biennale she played the world première of Theo Verbey's *Bandersnatch* for cello and pianola. During the 2012 biennale she premiered *Words and Song Without Words* by Yannis Kyriakides, who won the 2014 International Rostrum of Composers Award with this work.

A dedicated teacher, Larissa holds teaching posts for both cello and chamber music at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague. She teaches piano trio Master's students at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, as well as coaching young talent at the AMT (Musical Talent Academy) in Utrecht.

Larissa Groeneveld plays on a Domenico Busan cello from Venice, dated 1763.

## Curriculum vitae playing the cello combined with Alexander Technic:

Shortly after my study in at the Conservatorium Amsterdam with Dimitri Ferschtman and after my graduation in Stuttgart at the Hochschule with Natalia Gutman in 1994, I got a blessure in my arm. This made me think about the way I had been studying and playing cello. Because of this blessure I took private Alexander Technique lessons, first from Tessa Marwick at the Alexander Technique Centre Amsterdam and then from Stephan van Dijk in Amsterdam. Here started a long path of relearning my technic of playing cello, of thinking about how to study music and especially how to study the cello. From this moment I am convinced the Alexander Techniek can offer me the principles of how to think about playing cello.

From 2001 I have been a teacher at the Royal Conservatorium in Den Haag and of course my teaching has always been inspired by my work with the Alexander Techniek. Slowly I managed to implant principles of the Alexander Technique to the way I was studying and playing cello and giving lessons to my students.

This has been a very interesting journey.

My first student at the Royal Conservatory in Den Haag had some problems with tension. At the lessons we were working constantly at this problems, but we couldn't solve all of it. Of course we talked a lot about the Alexander Technique principles. In her fourth year of studying at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag a natural step for her was to go to the three year training at the Alexander Technique school in Amsterdam. At this moment I thought the best way for her to develop her playing, was to go to the Alexander Technique Centrum Amsterdam to train to become a Alexander Technique teacher. She would learn all the principles of the Alexander Technique from inside out, and would become a free and wonderful cellist/musician. But after the three years training, after her graduation Alexander Technique Centrum Amsterdam she played once more for me. I was surprised about the way she was playing. There hadn't been the change of playing I was hoping for. This was a big question for me, why didn't she get rid of all the unnecessary tension?

When I was studying in Amsterdam with Dimitri Ferschtman a dear friend of mine and student of Dimitri Ferschtman got a blessure and was forced to stop playing the cello. She had to find other ways of learning to play the cello. She wanted to combine the conservatory with the study at the Alexander Technique Centre Amsterdam, but here she was told to quit playing the cello completely while she was in the Alexander Technique training. We all didn't like this idea, but the teachers at the Alexander Technique school thought her, this would be the only way. They didn't want her to combine the training with her playing the cello. I must say this attitude has changed, if you want to become a Alexander Technique teacher at this moment you are not told to stop playing your instrument while being at the Alexander Technique training.

But this attitude didn't change completely. The application of the Alexander Technique has always been a personal development. Until now I haven't found a real integration of the Alexander Technique and the music education. You can follow individual lessons with a Alexander Technique teacher and with your music teacher, but I never found a real combination of the two.

When I read the book “Indirect Procedures” from Pedro D’Alcantara, a cellist and Alexander Technique teacher, I thought here I would find my teacher. With a lot of enthusiasm I made an appointment to have cello lessons from him in Paris. But I was very disappointed when I only got Alexander Technique lessons, as I was used to have from my Alexander Technique teacher in Amsterdam. There was no talking about music, nothing about how to practise, nothing of how to play the cello, only the basic AT principles were told to me. A real Alexander Technique lesson without application the cello specific, no combination of the two.

In my search for this combination I talked with Doris Hochscheid, a cellist who studied with Dimitri Ferschtman at the Amsterdam Conservatory and recently did the three year training course at the Alexander Technique Centre Amsterdam. Now she is the Alexander Technique teacher at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. When I asked her if she also gave cello lessons to the students, she made it very clear to me she only wants to give Alexander Technique lessons. She doesn’t want to give cello lessons combined with Alexander Technique, because in short, she told me, the application of the Alexander Technique is a personal travel, everybody has to find his own way how to apply the technic.