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## **Crossover is key, says pop violinist David Garrett**



Garrett likes everything from Pink Floyd to Rachmaninoff

**David Garrett is considered one of the fastest violinists in the world. Add good looks and a crossover style and he's any agent's dream. Garrett told DW why he wants to interest young people in classical music.**

**Deutsche Welle: Your success is not just measured in the many concert appearances you make, but also in the fact that you can't walk around Germany's big cities without being recognized. How does this kind of popularity make you feel?**

David Garrett: Of course, I meet a lot of people who just want to be around me because of my success. But I just have to know that they won't be there anymore if the success goes away.

**While Nigel Kennedy made a name for himself as a punk violinist in the 1980s, you're considered more of a pop violinist who reaches people between 12 and 20 years old with classical music. Do you see that as your mission?**

"Mission" sounds a little bit exaggerated. I just want to give the people in the concerts a good feeling. I think classical music has suffered a bit over the past few decades, since everything has taken place in a kind of ivory tower and the connection to daily life has been missing. That's why young people have to be reintroduced to classical music and given the opportunity to just relax in a concert.



David Garrett gives classical music a different image

**Your father is German and your mother is American - in which culture do you feel more at home?**

I don't think I feel more at home in one place or the other. Now I'm just as at home in Germany as in the US and I enjoy going back and forth. That's special and it's a treat that I get to do that for professional reasons.

**You recorded your first CD at the age of 13. On the cover, you're pictured in a black suit - but you don't look particularly happy.**

At that time, everything was decided by other people. But now I'm far enough along that I - and that's the great part - can say what I like and what I want and that makes the whole thing a lot more fun.

**After shedding your child prodigy image, you turned to pop music. You've arranged Michael Jackson songs and written your own. Do you have any role models?**

As far as classical music goes, there are violinists like Nathan Milstein, or conductor Arturo Toscanini and pianist Arthur Rubenstein. As for pop music, I like the big names, of course, like Pink Floyd and Jimmy Hendrix. And, as for newer stuff, I think Green Day is really good - but there are lots of role models.

**In the last few months, you've been on tour practically non-stop and there's not a lot of time left over. But when you do have time to listen to music for fun, what do you listen to?**



The German-American violinist travels frequently between both countries

I really like listening to Rachmaninoff, but, unfortunately, he didn't write anything for violin. I'm a big fan of the late Romantic period, I like Tchaikovsky as well. It runs in my blood because it's such incredibly passionate music.

**Where do you prefer to see your photo - on the cover of a pop magazine for teens or in a classical music magazine directed at the traditional concert audience?**

I like to see my picture in both because I think that both are really important these days. And if you manage both, then you're on the right track.

Interview: Claus Fischer (kjb)

Editor: Sean Sinico