

Henrik Schaefer – Conductor



Henrik Schaefer is the Music Director of the orchestra of the Opera of Gothenburg, Sweden. This opera house with its 86 member strong excellent orchestra, the good ensemble, one of the best choirs of Sweden (46 members) and the internationally praised dance company is one of the leading houses in Northern Europe. He is also Artistic Director of the Masters in Orchestra Performance at the University of Gothenburg.

Henrik Schaefer studied viola with Prof. Ulrich Koch and Kim Kashkashian in Freiburg. At the age of 22 Henrik Schaefer joined the Berlin Philharmonic; the then youngest member of the orchestra. He played in the orchestra for 13 years and worked with all the great conductors of the time, including Carlos Kleiber, Ricardo Muti, Simon Rattle, Seiji Ozawa, Zubin Mehta, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Bernhard Haitink and Sergiu Celibidache. In Leipzig he studied conducting and in the year 2000 he was chosen by Claudio Abbado as his assistant with the Berlin Philharmonic. Due to Abbado's health at the time he got the chance to conduct his own orchestra on many

occasions including the entire *Tristan and Isolde* in Tokyo and numerous Mahler and Bruckner Symphonies. He was also Abbado's assistant with the Mahler Youth Orchestra for the *Parsifal* production at the Edinburgh Festival.

His own conducting career began with a ballet production of “*Le Sacre du Printemps*” with the Leipzig Ballet and the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig. Quickly he became a sought-after guest conductor with orchestras in Europe, South America and Asia. From 2007 to 2014 he was the Principal Guest Conductor of the Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra. In 2009 he was chosen as Music Director for the Wermland Opera in Sweden after a production of *Parsifal*. In the 5 years that he lead the house he earned international acclaim with the 5 entire cycles of Wagner's “*Der Ring des Nibelungen*” (all four operas premiered in the same week!).

In 2014 he was chosen as Music Director at the Gothenburg Opera where he had conducted his first production in 2007.

Alongside his work at this house he keeps up an impressive career as a guest conductor with the Gävle Symphony, Danish Radio Symphony, Osaka Philharmonic, Helsingborg Symphony, Tokyo Symphony, Norrköping Symphony, Sapporo Symphony, Arctic Philharmonic, Sendai Philharmonic, Rouen, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Tokyo Metropolitan, Volksoper Wien, Bogota Philharmonic, New Japan Philharmonic, Nederlands Philharmonisch, Hongkong Philharmonic and the orchestras in Nürnberg, Curitiba, Aalborg, Antwerpen, Porto Alegre, Enschede, Kristiansand and Belo Horizonte.

His opera repertoire includes *The Magic Flute*, *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Eugen Onegin*, *Faust*, *La Traviata*, *La Bohème*, *Falstaff*, *Hamlet*, *Les dialogues des Carmélites*, *Hänsel and Gretel*, *Daphne*, *Elektra*, *Ariadne*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Rheingold*, *Walküre*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Tristan and Parsifal*.

He has recorded numerous symphonic works by Brahms, Mahler, and recently the first opera by the romantic Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar with the Norrköping Symphony for the label Sterling.