

HEIKO MATHIAS FÖRSTER

Heiko Mathias Förster has been chief conductor and artistic director of the Janáček Philharmonic Ostrava since 2014.

In recent years he has set many extraordinary musical accents in the musical life of the Czech Republic.

His performance of the “Glagolithic Mass” of Leoš Janáček, a series with the early symphonies of Antonín Dvořák, but especially the interpretation of Bedřich Smetana's "My Fatherland" became a triumph for Heiko Mathias Förster and the Janáček Philharmonic.

A milestone for the musical world was his conducting of Antonín Dvořák's first opera “Alfred” in Prague.

The live recording of the opera was awarded by MusicWeb-International with the prize "Recording of the Month".

Heiko Mathias Förster has conducted the Prague orchestras for many years and is a welcome guest at the Prague State Opera. Here he directed performances such as “Madama Butterfly”, “Otello”, “The Magic Flute”, “The Three Pintos”, “La Traviata”, “Don Quixote” and “Salome”.

Furthermore, Heiko Mathias Förster is a popular and successful conducting partner with opera stars. In the course of his career, he has accompanied singers like: Rolando Villazón, Diana Damrau, Barbara Frittoli, René Kollo, Renée Fleming, Siegfried Jerusalem, Anna Tomawa-Sintow, Hildegard Behrens, Francisco Araiza, Angelika Kirchschlager, Miina-Liisa Väreälä, Thomas Mohr, Kirsten Blanck, Abbie Furmansky, Simon Keenlyside, José Cura, Gerhard Siegel, Nicolas Teste, Simone Kermes, Chen Reiss, Christian Franz, Deborah Polaski, Stefan Vinke, Christian Hübner, Burkhard Fritz, Tomasz Konieczny, Brit-Tone Müllertz, Evelyn Herlitzius, Vladimír Chmelo, Elena Elena Moşuc oder Joseph Calleja, Angela Gheorghiu und Elīna Garanča.

He founded the Prague Royal Philharmonic in 2017 and since then has been a regular guest with his orchestra in the Czech Republic, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

In his performances, Heiko Mathias Förster conducts the core repertoire of classical and romantic music, all Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, Bruckner, Tchaikovsky, Mahler and Dvořák symphonies, the dance music by Johann Strauß, but also rarely performed works such as the Violin Concerto by Erich Jaques Wolff and world premieres such as the Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra "Sisyphos" by Enjott Schneider.

In recent seasons he has conducted concerts in Seoul, Bratislava, Berlin, Beijing, Hull, Zurich, Munich, Santander, Suwon, Leeds, Rome, Essen, Tokyo, Cardiff, Shenzhen, Dortmund, Tongeren, Macau, Logroño, Bristol, Palermo, Frankfurt, Hangzhou, Salzburg, Hamburg, Bilbao, Grafenegg, Daegu, Baden-Baden, Brno, Zaragoza, Bregenz, Taipei, Edinburgh, Stuttgart, Katowice, Cambridge, Vienna, Milan and London.

Many of his concerts are broadcast on the radio and on television. Regularly appearing new CD productions. With his orchestras he recorded for Universal Music, Sony Music, Brilliant Classics, Gramola, Naxos and Solo Musica.

He accompanied soloists such as Mischa Maisky, Alfredo Perl, Maximilian Hornung, Martin Kasík, Pavel Šporcl, Reinhold Friedrich, Lars Vogt, Julian Rachlin, Justus Frantz, Sophia Jaffé, Ivo Kahaneč, Arabella Steinbacher, Thomas Albertus Irnberger, Alessandro Taverna, Shirley Brill, Joseph Moog, Sayaka Shoji, Matthias Kirschnereit, Natalia Gutman, Herbert Schuch, Stewart Goodyear, Natalie Clein, Ewa Kupiec, Alban Gerhardt, Gabor Boldoczki, Chloe Hanslip, Li Biao and Midori.

Heiko Mathias Förster even activates in the development of own concert projects: In the past he realized together with Vicco von Bülow, aka Lorient the project "The Ring on one evening". Inspired by this collaboration, Heiko Mathias Förster arranged the highlights of the four operas for a purely orchestral version, "The RING without words".

Also for the young audience Heiko Mathias Förster edited works of Richard Wagner. On behalf of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra he realized „The Flying Dutchman for Children" and also his project "The Ring in 120 minutes" was performed in a family concert with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Heiko Mathias Förster makes regular guest appearances with orchestras all over the world.

Orquestra Sinfonica de Santiago de Chile, Israel Symphony Orchestra, NDR Radio Philharmonic Hannover, Czech National Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica di Palermo, Bavarian State Orchestra, Orchestre Colonne Paris, Taiwan National Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro di Gran Liceo Barcelona, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, China National Symphony Orchestra Beijing, Duisburg Philharmonic, Munich Radio Orchestra, Bremer Philharmonic, State Orchestra Halle, Orchester des Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz München, Slovak Philharmonic Bratislava, Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen, Berliner Symphony Orchestra, Ulsan Philharmonic Orchestra, Neubrandenburger Philharmonic, Baden-Baden Philharmonic, Brandenburg State Orchestra Frankfurt, KBS Symphony Orchestra Seoul, Stuttgarter Philharmonic, State Orchestra Weimar, Nürnberg Symphony Orchestra, Dortmunder Philharmonic, Gwangju Symphony Orchestra, WDR Radio Orchestra Cologne, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, Tiroler Symphonieorchester Innsbruck, Tonkünstler Orchester Vienna.

Heiko Mathias Förster studied Conducting, Piano and Percussion at the Musikhochschule "Hanns Eisler" Berlin.

Heiko Mathias Förster debuted at the opera house in Brandenburg at the age of 23. He took over the artistic direction of the house directly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and led the Brandenburg Symphony Orchestra until 1999.

From 1999 to 2007 he was Chief Conductor of the Munich Symphony Orchestra and established his orchestra as a fixture in the musical life of the city. Every year in the summer months he guested with the Munich Symphony Orchestra at the International Opera Festival in Chiemgau and conducted there the performances of “Don Giovanni”, “Otello”, “Carmen”, “La Boheme” and “Fidelio”.

In 2007 he was elected General Music Director of the New Philharmonic Orchestra of Westphalia. He conducted the State Orchestra of Nordrhein-Westfalen until 2014. At the Opera house of Gelsenkirchen Heiko Mathias Förster led the world premiere performance of Isaac Albeniz's opera "Merlin" and enjoyed great success with Verdi's "Otello", "The Dead City" by Erich Wolfgang Korngold and "Samson and Dalila" by Camille Saint Saëns.