Kent Nagano

Conductor

Kent Nagano is renowned for interpretations of clarity, elegance and intelligence. He is equally at home in music of the classical, romantic and contemporary eras, introducing concert and opera audiences throughout the world to new and rediscovered music and offering fresh insights into established repertoire. He has been Music Director of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal since September 2006. In September 2015, he took up the position of General Music Director of the Hamburg State Opera and Chief Conductor of the Philharmoniker Hamburg. Kent Nagano will start the 2017/18 season in Hamburg with the premiere of Wagner’s *Parsifal*. In January 2018 he will conduct the new production of Beethoven’s *Fidelio*.

Highlights of Kent Nagano’s first two seasons in Hamburg were the premiere of Berlioz‘ *Les Troyens*, the world premiere of Toshio Hosokawa’s *Stilles Meer*, Messiaen’s *Turangalîla* with the Hamburg Ballet and John Neumeier, the “Philharmonische Akademie” – a project in the tradition of musical academies of the 18th/19th century –, the South America Tour with the Philharmoniker  Hamburg, the world premiere of Jörg Widmann’s oratorio ARCHE, composed on the occasion of the inauguration of the Elbphilharmonie in January 2017, and the premieres of Alban Berg’s *Lulu* and Strauss‘ *Frau ohne Schatten.*

A milestone in Kent Nagano’s collaboration with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal was the inauguration of the orchestra’s new concert hall *La Maison Symphonique* in September 2011. In October 2016, he conducted the world premiere of José Evangelista’s *Accelerando*, commissioned by the orchestra on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Montréal’s metro. In November of the same year he conducted a semi-staged production of the St Matthew Passion. Further highlights with the orchestra include the complete cycles of Beethoven and Mahler symphonies, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, concert versions of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Das Rheingold*, Honegger’s *Jeanne d’Arc au Bûcher*, Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*, and concert series featuring the works of Dutilleux (2010-11) and Boulez (2011-12).  Nagano has taken the orchestra on a coast-to-coast tour of Canada and also on tours to Japan, South Korea, Europe and South America. Their last tour was in spring 2016 through the US, with stops in Washington, Boston and New York. Their recordings together include Mahler’s *Orchestral Songs* with Christian Gerhaher, Beethoven’s Piano Concertos Nos. 4 and 5 and a complete recording of all the Symphonies by Beethoven of which the album “Ideals of the French Revolution” with Symphony No.5 won a Juno award. In March 2015 Kent Nagano conducted the North American Premiere of *L’Aiglon*, a rare opera of Honegger and Ibert. This production was recorded and released by Decca and has won an ECHO Klassik 2016. *Danse Macabre* followed as second production with Decca, with works by Dukas, Dvořák, Mussorgsky, Balakirev, Saint-Saëns and Ives in October 2016.

As a much sought after guest conductor, Nagano has worked with most of the world’s finest orchestras, just as the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Münchner Philharmoniker, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Concerto Köln, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. From 2014 to 2016 Maestro Nagano was leading his own festival as part of the AUDI Sommerkonzerte, called Vorsprung-Festival. He has an ongoing relationship with Decca and Sony Classical and has also recorded for Analekta, Erato, FARAO Classics, Teldec, Pentatone and Deutsche Grammophon. With harmonia mundi he has won Grammy awards for the recordings of Busoni’s *Doktor Faust* with Opéra National de Lyon, *Peter and the Wolf* with the Russian National Orchestra and Saariaho’s *L’amour de Loin* with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

As Principal Guest Conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra he recorded Richard Strauss’ *Alpensinfonie* with the label FARAO Classics. For this CD he will receive the ECHO Klassik 2017 as ‘Conductor of the Year’.

At the Bayerische Staatsoper, where he was General Music Director from 2006 to 2013, Kent Nagano commissioned new operas such as *Babylon* by Jörg Widmann, *Das Gehege* by Wolfgang Rihm and *Alice in Wonderland* by Unsuk Chin. New productions have included Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, *Idomeneo*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Die Schweigsame Frau*, *Les Dialogues des Carmélites*, *St François d’Assise, Wozzeck*, George Benjamin’s *Written on Skin* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. With the Bayerisches Staatsorchester Nagano has toured throughout Europe and in Japan and together they have recorded Bruckner Symphonies No.4, 7 and 8. In January 2014, Kent Nagano returned to the Bayerische Staatsoper to conduct a revival of Widmann’s *Babylon*.

A very important period in Nagano’s career was his time as Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, from 2000-2006. He performed Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron* with the orchestra (in collaboration with Los Angeles Opera), and took them to the Salzburg Festival to perform both Zemlinsky’s *Der König Kandaules* and Schreker’s *Die Gezeichneten*, as well as to the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden with *Parsifal* and *Lohengrin* in productions by Nikolaus Lehnhoff. Recordings with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin for harmonia mundi include repertoire as diverse as Bernstein’s *Mass*, Bruckner’s Symphonies Nos.3 and 6, Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge*, Wolf Lieder, Mahler’s Symphony No.8 and Schönberg’s *Die Jakobsleiter* and *Friede auf Erden*, as well as Brahms’ Symphony No.4 and Schönberg’s *Variationen für Orchester* Op.31. In June 2006, at the end of his tenure with the orchestra, Kent Nagano was given the title Honorary Conductor by members of the orchestra, only the second recipient of this honour in their 60-year history. To this day he has a close friendship to the orchestra.

### Season 2017/18

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