Stefan Asbury

Conductor

A regular guest with leading orchestras worldwide, Stefan Asbury’s 2019/20 season starts with his return to the Copenhagen Philharmonic to conduct Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique, followed by engagements with the MDR Sinfonieorchester Leipzig for Tchaikovsky Symphony No.4 and Ensemble Modern with works by Schönberg. In North America he appears with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Nova Scotia, whilst further collaborations include the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester and Britten Sinfonia at the Tongyeong International Music Festival in Korea.

The 2018/19 season saw Stefan debuting with several orchestras across the world, including the Auckland Philharmonia, China National Symphony Orchestra, Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, Orquestra Sinfônica do Paraná, Orquesta Sinfonica de Peru and Szczecin Philharmonic. He returned to the MDR Sinfonieorchester Leipzig as part of Beethovenfest Bonn, as well as Ensemble Musikfabrik and the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Asbury has particularly strong relationships with many living composers including Steve Reich, Wolfgang Rihm, Unsuk Chin and Mark-Anthony Turnage. In 2015/16, he conducted the world premiere of Bernd Richard Deutsch’s Organ Concert at the Musikverein in Vienna. In the 2014/15 season he conducted the world premiere of Sir Harrison Birtwistle’s Piano Concerto with Pierre-Laurent Aimard and Sinfonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, and also gave the US premiere with Aimard and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Following the sad passing of Oliver Knussen, a very close mentor, Stefan conducted his last completed composition with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group in November 2018.

As a recording artist, Stefan’s album with works by Jonathan Harvey was awarded a Monde de la Musique CHOC award, and his complete cycle of Gerard Grisey’s Les Espaces Accoustiques with WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln won a Deutschen Schallplattenkritik award.

Other collaborations include the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln and hr-Sinfonieorchester; and appearances at festivals such as Munich’s Biennale, Salzburger Festspiele, La Biennale di Venezia and Wien Modern. He also works with Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Musikfabrik and London Sinfonietta. Recent guest engagements include the London and Tokyo symphony orchestras, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dresdner Philharmonie, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s.

In October 2013 he conducted the world premiere of Michael Jarell’s Siegfried Nocturne at the Wagner Geneva Festival. Other recent opera engagements include Porgy and Bess at the Spoleto Festival, John Adams’ A Flowering Tree for the Perth International Arts Festival, Wolfgang Rihm’s Jakob Lenz for the Wiener Festwochen, Britten’s Owen Wingrave with Tapiola Sinfonietta and Knussen’s Where the Wild Things Are at Tanglewood. He also collaborated with Copenhagen Phil and the Danish Dance Theatre on a new production of The Firebird, the Mark Morris Dance Group in productions of Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet, and Virgil Thomson’s Four Saints in Three Acts with performances at the Lincoln Center in New York, London’s Barbican and the Brooklyn Academy of Music amongst other venues.

Since 1995 Stefan Asbury has served on the faculty of the Tanglewood Music Center and has held the Sana H. Sabbagh Master Teacher Chair on the Conducting Faculty since 2005. In addition to his regular summer teaching he has given masterclasses at the Hochschule der Kunste (Zürich), Venice and Geneva Conservatoires, and with the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Inside the TMC.