Kent Nagano

Conductor

Kent Nagano is renowned for interpretations of clarity, elegance and intelligence. He is passionate about introducing concert and opera audiences throughout the world to new and rediscovered music and offering fresh insights into established repertoire.

Nagano opens the 2019/20 season, his fifth as General Music Director of Staatsoper Hamburg, with a new production of Shostakovich’s *The Nose*. Other new productions this season include Strauss’ *Elektra* and, in collaboration with Georges Delnon, Messiaen’s *Saint Franҫoise d’Assise*, a work Kent has been closely associated with since its premiere. In his parallel position as Chief Conductor of Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, he will tour Japan with the orchestra in November with concerts featuring Beethoven, Liszt, Mahler, Widmann and Brahms.

His opening concerts with Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) mark the start of the final season for him as Music Director. Since the beginning of this collaboration in 2006, Nagano has conducted commissions by OSM and has also seen the inauguration of the new concert hall La Maison Symphonique. In autumn 2019, OSM and Nagano embark on a tour of South America with violinist Véronika Eberle.

Later in the season features a return to Japan for Nagano, this time with NHK Symphony Orchestra to conduct Jorg Widmann’s *Arche*, a work commissioned for the inauguration of Hamburg’s Elbphilharmonie Concert Hall. This season, Nagano will continue his relationships with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (of which he is Honorary Conductor), Munich Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (of which he was Principal Guest Conductor from 2013 – 2019) and Concerto Koeln, with whom he has embarked on a landmark “Wagner Lesarten” project.

Nagano started last season with an OSM tour into arctic Quebec. In January 2019, he went on tour through Spain with Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg whilst back at Hamburgische Staatsoper he conducted the premieres of Schumann’s *Scenes from Goethe’s Faust* and George Benjamin’s *Lessons in Love and Violence* as well as performances of the entire *Ring* by Wagner in autumn 2018. Other highlights from the 2018/19 season included guest engagements with Sinfonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Orquestra Simfonica de Barcelona, Munich Philharmonic, SWR-Sinfonieorcehster, and the Detroit Symphony and Minnesota Orchestras.

At the Bayerische Staatsoper, where he was General Music Director from 2006 to 2013, Nagano commissioned new operas including Babylon by Jörg Widmann and Alice in Wonderland by Unsuk Chin. In addition to Bruckner's Symphonies Nos. 4 and 7 (Sony), Nagano has released several opera performances with the Bavarian State Orchestra on DVD including Unsuk Chin's opera Alice in Wonderland (2008) with unitel classica/medici arts. As a successful recording artist with over 100 releases on CD and DVD, one of Kent’s most recent releases is the live recording of the premiere concert of Widmann’s Arche with Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg. Nagano has recorded with many leading soloists including Diana Damrau, Christian Gerhahern, Rafał Blechacz and Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Born in California, Nagano maintains close connections with his home state and was Music Director of the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra from 1978-2008. His early professional years were spent in Boston, working in the opera house and as assistant conductor to Seiji Ozawa at the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Nagano’s success in America led to European appointments: Music Director of Opéra National de Lyon (1988-1998) and Music Director of the Hallé Orchestra (1991-2000). Nagano is honorary doctorate of Concordia University and San Francisco State University.