

KARL-HEINZ STEFFENS

Conductor

Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor: Norrköping Symphony Orchestra

Now in his fifth season as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, German conductor Karl-Heinz Steffens is recognised as a conductor of great distinction in both the symphonic and operatic worlds. Recent highlights include his Southern Hemisphere debut with the Auckland Philharmonia in May 2024, leading to further invitations in the 2024/25 season, and leading the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra on their Summer 2024 European tour, including their debut performance at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw.

In great demand as a guest conductor, recent seasons have seen Steffens work with ensembles such as the Bavarian Radio Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Orchestre National de Lyon, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony and Zurich Tonhalle Orchestras and with the Radio Symphony Orchestras of Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Hannover, Leipzig and Stuttgart. He is also a frequent visitor to the UK, making multiple appearances with the Philharmonia with whom he conducted a Brahms cycle in the Royal Festival Hall, as well as the BBC Scottish Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony and the Hallé Orchestra.

He recently relinquished his post as Music Director at the Prague State Opera, where productions included *Der fliegende Holländer* and Schreker's *Der ferne Klang*, amongst others. During his time there he initiated a four-year *Musica non Grata* series, dedicated to "unwelcome music" written by composers who fell victim to the despotism of the 20th-century totalitarian regimes; the series included a festival celebrating the 150th anniversary of Alexander Zemlinsky.

Elsewhere in the opera house, Steffens has appeared several times at the Teatro alla Scala leading performances of *Così fan Tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Götterdämmerung*, and has been regularly invited to the Berlin Staatsoper Unter den Linden. He led the Norwegian premiere of *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Norwegian National Opera where he has also conducted *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio* and Calixto Bieito's production of *Tosca*.

In his previous position as Music Director of the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, he and the orchestra were honoured with many accolades; they received the ECHO award for Best Orchestra in 2015 for their recording of works by B.A. Zimmermann and in 2016/17 were nominated prize-winners of the Best Concert Programme of the Season by the Deutsche Musikverlegerverband, the German Music Publishers' Association. Their recording of works by George Antheil, an addition to their extensive Modern Times series featuring an

array of 20th century composers, was designated Concert Recording of the Year by the Opus Klassik awards.

Prior to his conducting career, Steffens was a highly respected solo clarinetist who also held several orchestral positions culminating in the successive posts of Principal Clarinet with the Bavarian Radio and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras. Steffens has recently been awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz in Germany for his services to music.

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