



JUKKA-PEKKA SARASTE

Conductor

“Saraste and the BBCSO gave superbly concentrated performances of Sibelius’s symphonic thinking at its most distilled [...] in the exuberant momentum of Saraste’s direction.”

The Times

Jukka-Pekka Saraste has established himself as one of the outstanding conductors of his generation, demonstrating remarkable musical depth and integrity. Born in Heinola, Finland, he began his career as a violinist before training as a conductor with Jorma Panula at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki.

An artist of exceptional versatility and breadth, Saraste feels a special affinity with the sound and style of late Romantic music. Equally, he maintains a strong connection with the music of our time, such as that of Dutilleux, Lindberg, Salonen and Saariaho, among others. He recently conducted world premieres by Wolfgang Rihm, Friedrich Cerha, Pascal Dusapin, Philippe Schoeller and Carmine Emanuele Cella.

Saraste has served as Chief Conductor of the WDR Symphony Orchestra, Cologne since 2010. In April 2015 he extended his contract until the 2018/2019 season. He was Music Director and Chief Conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra from 2006 to 2013, and at the end of his tenure there was made Conductor Laureate, the very first such title bestowed by that orchestra. His previous positions have included BBC Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. He founded the Finnish Chamber Orchestra, of which he is still Artistic Advisor, and the orchestra’s annual Tammisaari Festival, of which he is Artistic Director.

His guest engagements have led him to the major orchestras worldwide, including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Dresden Staatskapelle, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and the leading Scandinavian orchestras, among others. In the USA he has conducted the Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and New York Philharmonic.

Jukka-Pekka Saraste’s extensive discography includes the complete symphonies of Sibelius and Nielsen with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. He has made a number of critically acclaimed recordings for Toronto Symphony Orchestra of works by Bartók, Dutilleux, Mussorgsky and Prokofiev for Warner Finlandia, most notably a recording of Dutilleux’s Second Symphony. His recordings of Mahler’s sixth symphony with the Oslo Philharmonic and Mahler’s ninth symphony with the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne have received widespread acknowledgement. His recordings with WDR Symphony Orchestra for Hänssler have earned him high critical praise, and include Schoenberg’s Pelleas and Melisande, Stravinsky’s The Firebird, Brahms’ Symphonies No. 1 and 3 as well as Mahler’s 5th Symphony.

Jukka-Pekka Saraste has received the Pro Finlandia Prize, the Sibelius Medal, and the Finnish State Prize for Music. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from York University, Toronto and an honorary doctorate from the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki.

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