



## MARC ALBRECHT Conductor

Marc Albrecht is one of the most interesting conductors on the current opera and concert scene. A man who goes his own way and has thus concentrated primarily on his posts as Chief Conductor of the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam, Europe's Opera House of the Year for 2016, and the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra/Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. What little time remains he devotes to selected guest conducting engagements; during the 2016/17 season he appears at the Zurich Opera, the Theater an der Wien and La Scala in Milan.

Although he is in great demand internationally as a conductor of late Romantic German and Austrian repertoire ranging from Wagner to Strauss to Zemlinsky, Schreker and Korngold, he convincingly and successfully covers the entire spectrum from Mozart to contemporary music. "This Beethoven sounded thrilling, evocative and exciting," according to a review from Vienna in 2014, for example. *Die Welt* critic Manuel Brug called Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, which Albrecht conducted in 2012, "an exemplary operatic evening." Otto Paul Burkhardt said of Berg's *Lulu*: "Marc Albrecht makes the music surge, flow, swing as though in a dance club, sparkle seductively and luxuriate in extra-large format à la Wagner: twelve-tone music as a sensuous listening experience."

Marc Albrecht's musical training began while he was still in school. As the son of George Alexander Albrecht, the long-time General Music Director of the Hanover State Opera, he gained deep insights into the conducting profession at an early age. He played trombone in the orchestra, but the piano became his instrument of choice. He still appears from time to time as a chamber musician in concerts with his orchestra colleagues.

The chamber music approach also characterizes his work with orchestras. Albrecht loves the large orchestra format and is able to exploit the almost endless sound possibilities of the orchestra like few other conductors. At the same time, however, he always attempts to make the symphonic texture as transparent as chamber music. Even in the densely orchestrated symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler, he amazingly succeeds in making the structure clear and allowing the music to breathe, despite the opulent sound. An analytical approach and emotional music-making go hand in hand for Marc Albrecht. He intellectually penetrates and studies every work he conducts in depth, in order to be able to make music without restraint and with all his heart during the concert. He is neither a cerebral nor an intuitive musician, but a happy combination of both.

He was clearly influenced in that regard by his mentor Claudio Abbado. Following his studies in Vienna and his first positions as répétiteur with the state opera companies in Vienna and Hamburg, he served as Abbado's assistant, helping to launch the Mahler Youth Orchestra, which he conducted for five years. He was subsequently appointed Principal Conductor of the Saxon State Opera in Dresden and in 1995, at the age of 30, became one of Germany's youngest General Music Directors, at the Darmstadt State Theater.

In 2006 Marc Albrecht assumed the post of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra, then went to Amsterdam in 2011, where opera again became the focus

of his work. He conducted such operas as *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni* by Mozart, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Verdi's *Macbeth*, Wagner's *Meistersinger*, *Elektra* by Strauss, *Der Schatzgräber* by Schreker, Prokofiev's *The Gambler* and the premiere of Manfred Trojahn's *Orest*. In September 2014, a milestone of his career was the first staged version of Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder*, with Pierre Audi as stage director.

As a guest conductor he has presented operas by such diverse composers as Berlioz and Messiaen, Stravinsky and Martinů, B.A. Zimmermann and Zemlinsky, Berg, Henze and Wagner at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, in Brussels, Paris and Barcelona, at Covent Garden, the Salzburg Festival and, from 2003, for four summers at the Bayreuth Festival.

In general, Marc Albrecht likes to collaborate with unconventional directors; he has conducted successful projects with Katie Mitchell and Christof Loy, Claus Guth, Herbert Fritsch and Krzysztof Warlikowski.

In addition, he has conducted the symphony orchestras such as Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome, the Orchestre National de France, the NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo and the orchestras in Cleveland, Dallas, Stockholm, Oslo, Turin, Rotterdam and Birmingham.

Marc Albrecht's CD recordings with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra (including works by Korngold, Ravel, Dukas, Koechlin, Berg, Schumann, Dvořák, Mahler, Strauss, Brahms/Schoenberg) have been released on the Pentatone label, and live recordings of his productions at the Dutch National Opera Amsterdam are available on Challenge Records.

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