



CONDUCTOR

Okko Kamu

ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Okko Kamu, "....a conductor of great energy and insight" (Rad Bennet: ClassicsToday), enjoys a reputation for spontaneity tempered by sensitivity and disciplined feeling. He ended an incredibly successful period as chief conductor of the world famous Lahti Symphony Orchestra in his native Finland in June '16 having finished recording a complete Sibelius cycle for BIS which followed an earlier one he shared with Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmoniker for Deutsche Grammophon. He remains Principal Guest Conductor of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra with many previous titles which have included chief conductorships with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Oslo Philharmonic and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestras as well as the Nederlands Radio Symphony Orchestra alongside positions with the Finnish National Opera, Swedish Royal Opera and as Principal Guest Conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra.

Okko Kamu has been a member of the Swedish Royal Music Academy since 1994.

PERFORMANCES

Okko Kamu's guest appearances read as a roll call of major orchestras and opera houses around the world including Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, the Berlin Philharmonic and Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Stuttgart Radio, Vienna Symphony, Zurich Tonhalle, Israel Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, Russian Philharmonic, the Yomiuri, Sapporo, Metropolitan, Japan Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic and Tokyo Symphony orchestras in Japan as well as the LPO, LSO, Philharmonia Orchestra and RPO in London alongside The Hallé Orchestra ("Any conductor that gets a non-Czech orchestra sounding like one is exceptional and Kamu achieved the feat " May '10), CBSO and RLPO, Scottish Chamber and English Chamber orchestras in the UK. Amongst the opera houses are New York's Metropolitan, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, The Bolshoi and Kirov in Russia plus Zürich and Göteborg. Today he conducts in the world's musical centers, although unusually amongst conductors he also insists on having a life outside music making which has led to him appearing regularly in interesting places which feed his inner spirit and brought him titles with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, Sjaelland Symphony Orchestra and Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

RECORDINGS

He has recorded more than 100 CDs for labels like Finlandia and Musica Sveciae, amongst others, and his recordings of Berwald's four symphonies and piano concerto for Naxos have both received the distinguished and rare "Diapason d'Or" award. Recorded repertoire of music outside the mainstream has included Aulis Sallinen's "Complete Music for String Orchestra" and flute concertos by Penderecki, Takemitsu and Sallinen alongside more central music of the classical and romantic eras.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

He came to prominence in 1969 by winning the first Karajan International Conducting Competition in Berlin, an achievement which led to engagements in Europe and the USA and the first recordings he made with the Berlin Philharmoniker.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Okko Kamu was born into a musical family in Helsinki. His father played double bass in the Helsinki Philharmonic and he began playing the violin at the age of two with his first teacher, Väinö Arjava, who led his father's orchestra, before he continued lessons with Onni Suhonen at the Sibelius Academy where he also studied the piano. Later he became leader of the Suhonen Quartet and, at the age of 20, concertmaster of Finnish National Opera Orchestra before becoming a staff conductor there.

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