

Benjamin Schwartz

Conductor

Benjamin Schwartz was a sensation... With his clear insight and perfection of technique, together with the highly motivated orchestra, he produced an air of excitement and cultivated sound

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Critics have hailed Benjamin Schwartz for the intensity of his music making and the clear vision of his interpretations. These qualities, applied to a strikingly broad repertoire, flow naturally from the conductor's profound musicianship and insatiable curiosity.

Schwartz served as Music Director of the NFM Wrocław Philharmonic from 2013 to 2016. He oversaw the acclaimed Polish institution's move to the National Forum of Music and was closely involved with its work during Wrocław's turn as 2016 European Capital of Culture. In March 2017 he released the first instalment of a series of recordings of works by Paweł Mykietyn on the NFM's own label. Formerly Resident Conductor at the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the San Francisco Youth Orchestra, he is conductor of Mercury Soul, the pioneering music project co-founded in 2008 with composer and DJ Mason Bates and visual artist Anne Patterson (www.mercurysoul.org).

Schwartz's repertoire choices in Wrocław and the range of his work elsewhere reflect his anti-dogmatic, open-minded approach to programming, embracing everything from Adams's *Chamber Symphony* to Mahler's Symphony No.4, Brahms' Symphony no.2 to Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*. Since 2015, he tours *Age of Anxiety*, a project developed in collaboration with the sculptor, painter and stage designer Alexander Polzin. The production, based on the poetry of W.H. Auden, employs music and paintings to show how the tumultuous events of early 20th century, culminating in the First World War, irreversibly altered music and perceptions of life.

Opera has been a mainstay in recent seasons. Schwartz did his Oper Köln debut in 2016 with Bernstein's *Candide*. Earlier productions include *Die Fledermaus* and *La bohème* at the Royal Swedish Opera, Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte* at the Deutsches Nationaltheater und Staatskapelle Weimar, Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims*, Bellini's *La sonnambula* and Gounod's *Faust* at the Curtis Institute. Later in 2017, he will be conducting the Orquestre de l'Opéra National de Paris in a choreographed production of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Salonen's Violin Concerto.

Schwartz has performed with, among others, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the BBC Scottish Symphony, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Tokyo Symphony and the Göteborg Symphony orchestras, the Orquestra Gulbenkian, the St Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestre National de Lille.

Recent and forthcoming recording projects include works by Albert Schnelzer with the Göteborg Symphony Orchestra for BIS, Poul Ruders' latest opera with the Odense Symphony Orchestra and music by Vasco Mendonça with the Gulbenkian Orchestra.

www.benjamin schwartz.com