

Topi Lehtipuu

Tenor, Artistic Director

The soloists were just excellent.. Topi Lehtipuu sounded deliciously nuanced despite the uncomfortably low range Haydn wrote.

Hufvudstadsbladet, Haydn *The Seasons*

Topi Lehtipuu enjoys a reputation as one of Finland's most highly individual artists. He has appeared in concert halls and opera houses throughout the world. An extremely versatile artist and a highly skilled stage performer, he is renowned equally for repertoire ranging from early music, through Bach, Mozart and classical composers, to contemporary creations. He enjoys close working relationships with directors and conductors alike – conductors include Ivor Bolton, Emmanuelle Haim, René Jacobs, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Riccardo Muti, Christophe Rousset, Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Daniel Harding, whilst he collaborates with directors including David Alden, Claus Guth, Nicholas Hytner, Yannis Kokkos, Barrie Kosky, Christof Loy, Laurent Pelly and Peter Sellars.

Topi also enjoys a career as artistic consultant and curator. He was Director of the Helsinki Festival from 2015 to 2018, a wide-ranging and innovative multi-arts festival and a major event in Finland's cultural year. He was also artistic director of Turku Music Festival from 2010 to 2015, as well as of Joroinen Music Days, a chamber music festival in eastern Finland.

Highlights in 2018-19 include the creation of the role of The Creature in *Frankenstein*, a new opera by Mark Gray, commissioned by La Monnaie/De Munt and the creation of a multi-disciplinary dance and vocal project with the renowned dance group Tero Saarinen Company, featuring music by Monteverdi.

In Europe he is a frequent guest in Berlin, Brussels, Glyndebourne, Savonlinna, London, Paris, Salzburg and Vienna. Past acclaimed performances include Glück's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Pylade) at the Salzburg Whitsun Festival and semi-staged performances of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with Peter Sellars, Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic, which toured extensively including to New York and to the BBC Proms. At the Salzburg Festival 2016, he appeared as the 'Stuttering Prophet' in the world premiere of Eötvös' *Oratorium Balbulum* with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Daniel Harding, touring the following months to Vienna, Budapest, Cologne, Zurich, and finally Sydney in November 2017. As a fervent champion of contemporary music, Topi is regularly invited to perform new works by composers including Peter Eötvös, Nico Muhly, renowned Finnish composer Jukka Tiensuu whose work *Mora* was written for Topi and recorded in Spring 2017 and Brett Dean's *From Melodious Lay* with Zürich's Tonhalle orchestra to be revived in Melbourne in 2018.

Topi also features on numerous recordings – notably the 2012 Grammy-nominated DVD of *The Rake's Progress* and the 2015 BBC Music Magazine award-winning DVD of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, both recorded at Glyndebourne. He also appears on multiple versions of the *St Matthew Passion*, including a DVD conducted by Sir Simon Rattle with the Berlin Philharmonic and a Grammy-nominated and ECHO Klassik prize-winning CD conducted by René Jacobs with the Academy for Ancient Music, Berlin.

Born in Australia to Finnish parents, Topi grew up in Finland, where he studied piano, violin, choral conducting and singing at the Sibelius Academy, with teachers including Peter Lindroos, Howard Crook and Elisabeth Werres. On leaving the Academy, he became a member of the Finnish Radio Chamber Choir, and made his operatic debut singing Albert Albert Herring with Finnish National Opera, leading to regular appearances with this company as well as at the Savonlinna Opera Festival and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. He was also the vocalist and violinist in a progressive rock band Höyry-kone ("steam engine") – a group that performed, toured and recorded a diverse repertoire, ranging from Gregorian chant to heavy metal. In addition, Topi has also worked as an actor, and has broad experience as a producer and arranger.