

## Topi Lehtipuu

Tenor, Curator

*The greatest hero of the performance was Topi Lehtipuu, whose holistic expression was captivating.*

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Topi Lehtipuu enjoys a reputation as one of Finland's most highly individual artists. Extremely versatile and a highly-skilled stage performer, he is renowned for repertoire ranging from early music, through Bach, Mozart and classical composers, to contemporary creations. His collaborations include conductors such as Ivor Bolton, René Jacobs, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Riccardo Muti, Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Daniel Harding, and directors including Alex Ollé, Claus Guth, Yannis Kokkos, Barrie Kosky, 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, and Joroinen Music Days, a chamber music festival in eastern Finland.

Recent highlights include the creation of the role of The Creature in *Frankenstein* by Mark Gray, commissioned by La Monnaie/De Munt, as well as participation in a new multi-disciplinary dance and vocal project featuring music by Monteverdi - *Third Practice* - with renowned dance group Tero Saarinen Company. Other recent projects included the role of The Witch in *Hänsel & Gretel* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Sir Andrew Davies, as well as a return to MozartWoche, Salzburg.

In Europe he appears regularly in Berlin, Brussels, Savonlinna, London, Paris, Salzburg and Vienna. Recent premieres include Eötvös' *Oratorium Balbulum* (written for him) at the Salzburg Festival with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Daniel Harding, with subsequent performances in Vienna, Budapest, Cologne, Zurich and Sydney. As a fervent champion of contemporary music, Topi is regularly invited to perform new works by composers including renowned Finnish composer Jukka Tiensuu whose work *Mora* was written for him and Brett Dean's *From Melodious Lay* with Zürich's Tonhalle orchestra and later in Melbourne with Dean conducting. Other highlights include 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 the BBC Proms, before being recorded for DVD.

Topi 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 appears on multiple versions of the *St Matthew Passion*, including 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. On leaving the Academy, he became a member of the Finnish Radio Chamber Choir, and made his operatic debut singing Albert Herring with Finnish National Opera. In addition, Topi has worked as an actor and has broad experience as a producer and arranger.