

Jari Hämäläinen

Conductor



Maestro Jari Hämäläinen is one of the newest conducting stars to come out of Finland. Recently named the Artistic Director of the Savonlinna Festival as of 2008, he has conducted such prestigious orchestras as the Munich Philharmonic and the Mexico City Philharmonic, and leading opera companies such as Frankfurt and Opera Australia.

Recent engagements include conducting Verdi's *Rigoletto* in Macau; Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Opera Ireland; and Puccini's *Il Trittico*, again in Macau. He was also invited to Opera Australia to lead Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. In Savonlinna, he recently conducted Puccini's *Turandot* and Boito's *Mefistofele*; and he also performed an almost miraculous feat when he learned and conducted *Lohengrin* there with only 24 hours notice, to very positive reviews. Other recent engagements include Verdi's *Macbeth* at the Beijing Music Festival; *Die Zauberflöte* for Opera Hong Kong; Wagner's *Die Walküre* for Hawaii Opera Theatre; and *La Traviata* at Fundacio Teatre Principal de Palma de Mallorca. Upcoming engagements include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Boston Lyric Opera.

Educated in Finland, Mr. Hämäläinen studied at the Sibelius Academy. He quickly was engaged by the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki in 1985 as an assistant to the General Music Director, while at the same time as a coach and conductor by the Savonlinna Festival. He remained there until 1990 in both capacities.

After engagement in Hildesheim and Braunschweig as Kapellmeister, in 1997 Mr. Hämäläinen became the General Music Director and Musical Director of the Stadttheater Pforzheim and city orchestra. In 2003, he was named Opera Director and Intendant of the Opera, the first Finn to hold such a position in Germany.

Maestro Hämäläinen's operatic repertoire is vast, having conducted over 45 operas, from Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Hindemith's *Cardillac* to Verdi's *Don Carlo* and Puccini's *Tosca*. In 1999 he debuted with the Frankfurt Opera conducting *Don Giovanni*, and he made frequent guest appearances at the Finnish National Opera in 2002 and 2004, conducting *Carmen* with Agnes Baltsa in the title role along with Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

Maestro Hämäläinen's orchestral repertoire is even more expansive, having led the prestigious Munich Philharmonic, Mexico City Philharmonic, Stuttgart Philharmonic, Orchestra of Teatro Carlo Felice Genova and Orchestra of Opera National De Lorraine.

In addition to acting as opera director and conductor, the maestro has maintained an active career as a Lied accompanist.