



Jack Price
Managing Director

220 West Pershing
Phoenix, AZ 85029

e-mail:
jp@pricerubin.com

phone:
1-800-848-3360

fax:
1-888-439-1186

web site:
www.pricerubin.com

ROBERT HART BAKER

CONDUCTOR



Contents:

- Biography
- Curriculum Vitae
- Critical Acclaim

BIOGRAPHY

Conductor Robert Hart Baker is currently Music Director of two American orchestras: the St. Louis Philharmonic in Missouri, and the York Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania. Under his leadership, his groups have experienced unprecedented artistic growth and enjoy a large following of devoted concertgoers. He is principal guest conductor with the Asheville Lyric Opera Company, music director and conductor of the Harrisburg Choral Society in Pennsylvania, and is also conductor laureate of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra in North Carolina.

A former student of Herbert Von Karajan and Leonard Bernstein and a graduate of the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Robert Hart Baker is one of the most experienced conductors of his generation, with a vast repertoire from Bach to Stravinsky. Among the more than 1000 concerts he has led have been complete cycles of the Beethoven, Brahms, Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky symphonies and Strauss tone poems, in addition to most of the orchestral works of Mahler, Dvorak, Schubert, Debussy, Ravel, Poulenc and Ernest Bloch. As a guest conductor he has appeared with many American orchestras, including Billings, Chattanooga, Flagstaff, Harrisburg, Muskegon, Providence, and Radio City Music Hall to name but a few.

His recent international guest conducting engagements have been with the Orquestra do Norte in Porto, Portugal, the State Philharmonic Orchestra in Vratza, Bulgaria, and the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra in Toluca, Mexico. He has also appeared as guest conductor with the orchestras of Szeged, Hungary; Sabadell, Spain; Messina, Italy; Pusan, Korea; and Zurich, Switzerland. Fluent in French, German and Italian, he is equally at home with opera. He has appeared as an opera conductor with the Spoleto Festival, Brevard Music Center, Connecticut, and Cullowhee Festival opera companies. He served as an assistant conductor to Christian Badea and Gian Carlo Menotti for six summers in Italy. He has conducted the North Carolina Dance Theatre ballet company on three occasions. He recently stepped in on short notice for Maestro Enrique Batiz to conduct a full ballet production of Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet* in Lecce, Italy with the Balletto del Sud. His upcoming schedule for 2005-06 includes guest conducting the Regina Symphony in Canada, the Quincy Symphony in Illinois, and appearances in Mexico and Bulgaria.

As a conductor, he has collaborated on multiple concertos with many of today's leading soloists, including pianists Andre Watts, Dickran Atamian, Misha Dichter, Claude Frank, Sergei Edelmann, Eric Himy, Alexander Peskanov, Jon Klibonoff, Richard Frank, Leonid Kuzmin, Constanine Orbelian, Christopher O'Riley, Thomas Pandolfi, Natasha Paremski, and Dmitri Ratser, violinists Daniel Heifetz, Pamela Frank, Mark Peskanov, Philip Quint, Eugene Drucker, Ilya Kaler, Xiang Gao and Pip Clarke, violists Paul Neubauer and Andy Simionescu, cellists Carter Brey, Yo-Yo Ma, Daniel Gaisford, Scott Kluksdahl, David Finckel, Richard Hirschl and Paul Tobias, French hornist Richard Todd, trumpeter David Hickman and English hornist Thomas Stacy.

Maestro Baker is committed to the training and education of young musicians. He served as Adjunct Associate Professor of Music and Interim Chair at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and has taught at Mars Hill College, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and the State University of New York at Purchase. He is the former Music Director of the New York

Youth Symphony at Carnegie Hall, and conductor laureate of the York (PA) Youth Symphony. He has also been a guest faculty member at the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem. He recently joined the adjunct faculty of Penn State York.

Robert can count many of the music world's leading figures among his private teachers. Born in New York, he began playing the oboe at age 9, and continued his musical studies at the Manhattan School of Music and the Horace Mann School, where his teachers included Johannes Somary, Henry Bloch, and Henry Schuman. He holds a diploma in conducting from the Salzburg Mozarteum in Austria, where he made his professional conducting debut at age 17 after studies with Herbert von Karajan, and a diploma in oboe from the Summer Academy in Nice, France, where he studied with Lucien Debray. He is a cum laude graduate of Harvard, where he conducted the Bach Society Orchestra for two seasons, while studying conducting privately with Leonard Bernstein and James Yannatos, and oboe with Ralph Gomberg. His early training included conducting rehearsals of the Indianapolis, Baltimore, and Quebec Symphonies.

He holds two master's degrees and a doctorate in conducting from the Yale School of Music, where he studied conducting with Otto-Werner Mueller and Arthur Weisberg, and oboe with Robert Bloom and Ronald Roseman. Robert was the founding Music Director of the Connecticut Philharmonic Orchestra at age 22, receiving critical acclaim for its debut in Boston Symphony Hall. A scholar in American music, he worked closely on projects with composers Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber and Suzanne Bloch while at Yale, where he also gave lectures on score reading and analysis as a graduate assistant. He did extensive research on the manuscripts of orchestral works by Horatio Parker (better known as the teacher of Charles Ives) and Paul Hindemith. Robert is also an expert on the music of Caryl Florio (born William Robjohn), the London-born organist who became composer-in-residence at the famed Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC in the early 20th century.

Robert was awarded an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from York College of Pennsylvania, and has received two awards from the American Society of Composers, Publishers & Authors for contemporary music programming. He has recorded with several record labels, including Aurefon, Ernest Bloch Society, and Sonari. His arrangement of the Borodin Nocturne is currently available on compact disc from Vanguard Records played by the English Chamber Orchestra. While in London, he studied the symphonies of Haydn and oratorios of Handel from original manuscripts at the British Museum. Robert, an active oboist, is married to Barbra Duvall Baker, flutist and jazz vocalist. They have appeared in joint recital at the Palaces of St. Petersburg Chamber Music Festival in Russia, and recently performed on the Performers of Westchester Chamber Music Series in New York. The busy musical couple raises and rides Paso Fino and Andalusian horses in their spare time.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Home address: 880 Copenhaffer Road, York, PA 17404-8397
Tel (717) 266-0497; Fax (717) 266-0597; Voicemail (888) 873-0838
E-mail: RobertharB@aol.com

Objective: To be Music Director/Conductor of professional orchestras and opera companies; to teach at the college/conservatory level

Current Positions:

Music Director and Conductor, St. Louis (MO) Philharmonic Orchestra, 1982—present
Received 2004 Telly Award (national), best classical local cable TV production (HEC-TV Holiday Spectacular educational broadcast and DVD)

Conducted 5 classical subscription, 2 pops concerts per season
Raised level of musicianship of orchestra players and caliber of guest artists
Made commercial recordings of Dvorak: Symphony No.8 and Holst: Planets

Music Director and Conductor, York (PA) Symphony Orchestra, 1983—present
Received ASOL Volunteer Council Awards (national) for Saturday Morning Symphony (2005), and Student Song Contest (2003) educational outreach programs

Conducted 5 classical subscription, 3 pops, 1 educational concert per season
Helped increase annual budget from \$80,000 to \$500,000
Raised level of musicianship of orchestra players and caliber of guest artists

Principal Guest Conductor, Asheville (NC) Lyric Opera, 2004—present

Conducted 1 major staged opera production per season
Director of Music, Harrisburg (PA) Choral Society, 2004—present
Conducted 2 oratorio/major choral work concerts with orchestra per season

Previous Orchestral Positions:

Music Director and Conductor Laureate, Asheville (NC) Symphony Orchestra, 1981-2004
Conducted 6 classical subscription, 3 pops, 1 educational concert, 1 opera per season
Helped increase annual budget from \$100,000 to \$800,000

Raised level of musicianship of orchestra players and caliber of guest artists
Made commercial recordings of Brahms, Mahler symphonies and Strauss tone poems

Music Director and Conductor Laureate, York (PA) Youth Symphony, 1987-1999

Conducted 3 classical subscription, 3 educational/run-out concerts per season
Performed on tour in Heinz Hall (Pittsburgh), Carnegie Hall (New York)

Music Director and Conductor, New York Youth Symphony at Carnegie Hall, 1977-1981

Conducted 3 classical subscription, 3 educational/run-out concerts per season
Introduced chamber music and contemporary music commissions for young composers

Music Director and Conductor, Putnam (NY) Symphony Orchestra, 1979-1981

Music Director and Conductor, Danbury (CT) Little Symphony, 1978-1980

Founding Music Director and Conductor, Connecticut Philharmonic Orchestra, 1976-2001

Music Director and Conductor, Bach Society Orchestra, Cambridge, MA, 1972-74

College Teaching Experience:

Director of Orchestral Activities, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, 1985-1990
Conducted 3 classical full orchestra and 2 classical chamber orchestra concerts per season

Adjunct Associate Professor of Music, University of North Carolina at Asheville, 1981-2001
Taught music history, aural skills, orchestral conducting, oboe; interim chair 1995-96
Gave special seminars on Hindemith, Stravinsky, Verdi, Puccini, Wagner, & chamber music

Director of Choral Activities, State University of New York at Purchase, 1978-1980
Visiting Adjunct Professor of Music, Mars Hill College, NC, 1996-1998
Taught music history and oboe

Guest Conducting:

American: Billings, Flagstaff, Chattanooga, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Radio City Music Hall (NYC), West Shore (Muskegon, MI), Quincy (IL) and Harrisburg (PA) Symphony Orchestras;
Chamber Orchestras: Cumberland Valley (PA), South Carolina Philharmonic; Pennsylvania Centre Orchestra (State College, PA)

International:

Orquestra do Norte (Porto, Portugal); Sabadell (Barcelona, Spain); Symphonic Orchestra of Zurich (Switzerland); Virtuoso Strings of Messina (Sicily); Pusan Symphony (Korea); Szeged Philharmonic (Hungary); Vratza State Philharmonic (Bulgaria); State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra (OSEM); Regina Symphony (Canada, 2006)

Opera and Ballet Conducting:

Asheville (NC) Lyric Opera—Carmen, La Boheme, Pirates of Penzance, La Traviata;
Madama Butterfly (2006)

Brevard Music Center—Carmen; Connecticut Opera—Madama Butterfly
Cullowhee Music Festival—Music Director & Conductor, 1987-1989

La Traviata, Rigoletto, Marriage of Figaro

Festival of the Two Worlds, Spoleto, Italy and Charleston, SC—Assistant Conductor, 1977-1983
Worked on productions with Gian Carlo Menotti, Christian Badea & Joseph Flummerfelt

The Medium, La Cenerentola, The Merry Widow, Amahl, Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk
Conducted performance of Samuel Barber's Anthony and Cleopatra

Lecce, Italy--Prokofiev: Romeo & Juliet [complete ballet] (Tito Schipa Opera Orchestra, 2003)

Other Experience:

Baroque music editor and arranger, English Chamber Orchestra, London, 1970-73
Wrote ornamentation for Handel Water Music & Royal Fireworks Music, Vanguard Records
Oboe soloist, Brevard (NC) Chamber Orchestra, Abendmusik Chamber Orchestra, York, PA
Oboe soloist, Palaces of St. Petersburg Chamber Music Festival, Russia, 1995-1997

Orchestral oboist (substitute), North Carolina Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of New England
Orchestral English hornist, Yale Philharmonia (under Solti, Boulez, Jalas, Copland, Penderecki)

Education:

Studies (piano, theory, oboe) at Manhattan School of Music Preparatory Division, NYC, 1969-71
Diplomas in Oboe & Chamber Music, Academie Internationale d'ete, Nice, France, 1970
Diploma in Conducting, Mozarteum Conservatory, Salzburg, Austria, 1971
High School Diploma, Horace Mann School, Riverdale, NY, 1971
A.B. cum laude, Harvard College, Cambridge, MA, 1974
M.Mus. in orchestral conducting, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 1976
M.M.A. in orchestral conducting, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 1978
D.M.A. in orchestral conducting, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 1987
Doctor of Humane Letters (honorary), York College of Pennsylvania, York, PA, 1999

Awards and Honors:

George Jellinek and Beethoven (John Green) Medals in Music, Horace Mann School, 1971
Leonard Bernstein Music Scholarship, Harvard College, 1972-74
National Federation of Music Clubs, Composition Award, 1977
ASCAP contemporary music programming awards
1977, New York Youth Symphony; 1986, York (PA) Symphony Orchestra

Private conducting teachers:

Herbert von Karajan (1971), Henry Bloch (1969-71), Johannes Somary (1969-71), Leonard Bernstein (1972-74), James Yannatos (1971-74), Aaron Copland (1975-76), Otto-Werner Mueller (1974-78), Arthur Weisberg (1986-87)

Conducting masterclasses:

Lorin Maazel, Sergiu Commissiona, William Steinberg, Harold Farberman, Morton Gould, Maurice Abravanel, Morton Gould, Jorge Mester

Private oboe lessons:

James Byars (NYC Ballet), Henry Schuman (Manhattan School of Music), Ralph Gomberg (Boston Symphony), Thomas Stacy (NY Philharmonic), Robert Bloom and Ronald Roseman (Yale School of Music)

Publications/Recordings:

Arranger, Borodin—Nocturne for String Orchestra, LP and CD released on Vanguard Records

Conductor, Liszt—Piano Concertos, Szeged Philharmonic, Hungary, CD on Aurefon Records

Conductor, Brahms—Symphonies Nos.1&3, Mahler Symp. No.4, Dvorak Symp.No.8, Strauss Till Eulenspiegel, works of Caryl Florio, Asheville Symphony Orchestra CDs on Sonari Records

Conductor, Holst—Planets, Wagner Rienzi Overture, Ravel Daphnis & Chloe Suite No.2, St. Louis Philharmonic CDs on Sonari Records

Conductor, Mendelssohn—Violin Concerto with David Perry, Cullowhee Music Festival Orchestra CD on Sonari Records

Conductor, Liszt—Malediction, Strauss Don Juan, Cullowhee Music Festival Orchestra CD on CMF label

Conductor, Bloch—Symphony in C-sharp minor, St. Louis Philharmonic Orchestra, LP released on Ernest Bloch Society Records

Musical References with Address, Phone and E-mail:

Pamela Frank,
concert violinist, 52 Junard Drive, Morris Township, NJ 07960 tel (973-656-0948) cell (347) 262-8002 fax (973) 656-1942 [no e-mail]

Daniel Heifetz,
concert violinist, 2658 Legends Way, Ellicott City, MD 21042 tel (410) 461-1890 (home)
office tel (410) 480-8006 Sept-May office@jadeproductions.com / (603) 515-3156 June-Aug
office@heifetzinstitute.org

Dr. Joyce Dorr,
professor of music (retired), UNC-Asheville, tel (828) 258-1206 (home)
169 Cherokee Road, Asheville, NC 28804 jdorr@charter.net or jdorr@unca.edu

Employment References with Address, Phone and E-mail:

Henry Nixon,
executive director, York Symphony Orchestra, tel (717) 812-0717 (work)
10 North Beaver Street, York, PA 17401 [home (717) 845-7609]
executivedirector@yorksymphony.org

Marilyn Humiston,
president, St. Louis Philharmonic, tel (636) 537-0405 (home)
14772 Timberbluff Drive, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [cell (636) 346-3844]
mhumiston@pkwy.k12.mo.us

Karen Wix,
volunteer council member, American Symphony Orchestra League,
2895 Lehigh Road, York, PA 17402 (717) 757-4472 (home) kandrwix@blazenet.net

Steven Hageman,
executive director, Asheville Symphony Orchestra, tel (828) 254-7046 (work)
P.O. Box 2852, Asheville, NC 28802 [cell (828) 275-3027] srhageman@ashevillsymphony.org

Personal Management:

Christopher Ling, CHL Artists, Inc., 8425 West 3rd St., Suite #300, Los Angeles, CA 90048; tel (323) 655-2020; fax (323) 655-2810; e-mail chris@CHLartists.com

{Testimonials from Daniel Heifetz and Joyce Dorr viewable on website: www.CHLartists.com}

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Quotes from Reviews...

“Conductors like Mr. Baker do not happen every day, unfortunately.”
Christian Science Monitor

“The performances of the evening were all of superior quality.”
The New York Times

“His beat is economical and clear, and he got some splendid playing from the orchestra. The highlight of the evening was a near stupefying performance of Copland’s Organ Symphony--- much better, in fact, than the one extant recording of it [by Leonard Bernstein]”
The New York Daily News

“As Copland wrote it [Symphony for Organ and Orchestra], and these players delivered it, this is a manifesto that all but tears the walls down. It was, in more than one sense, a blast! These people certainly made beautiful music together; it was on the forceful side of beautiful, out of proportion to their numbers or age or anything else.”
The Boston Globe

“Baker is recognized as one of the most promising young conductors in the country.”
The Arts Journal, NC

“Baker is a conductor of economic gesture and clear intentions. He knows exactly what he is after and how to achieve it, keeping an eye on the large design without slighting the details. His own and the orchestra’s abilities were further demonstrated in concise, well-tailored accounts of Wagner’s Rienzi Overture and Schubert’s Symphony No.5.”
Musical America - May 1984

“Baker got the Bach Society Orchestra to make the kind of resonant attacks that one associates only with a highly sophisticated kind of orchestral technique.”
The Boston Globe

“We are deeply indebted to the orchestra and to its conductor Robert Hart Baker for making available a work [Bloch Symphony in C-sharp minor] that knowledgeable listeners have been clamoring to hear for years. His conception of the piece is quite convincing.”
Fanfare, Vol.9, No.3 - January 1986

“A smooth controlled style of conducting is his strongest talent.”
Chattanooga News-Free Press

“The St. Louis Philharmonic has struck gold in Robert Hart Baker.”
St. Louis Globe-Democrat

“Robert Hart Baker’s stable leadership has transformed the [St. Louis] Philharmonic into an ensemble worthy of a serious listener’s attention...His conducting technique is a model of clarity

and precision.”

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

“Baker’s conducting technique is a model of clarity and precision. Whatever went on in rehearsal, however, must have really been something to behold.”

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - March 17, 1986

“The production of La Boheme was in every way a success, with fine performances from New York [City] Opera as well as Asheville filling the hall with uniformly superb Singing. And the Asheville Symphony, under the direction of Robert Hart Baker, fully realized the sparkling beauty of Puccini’s score.”

The Asheville Citizen-Times - January 26, 2000

“Music director Robert Hart Baker demonstrated again that he has the fine ability to give shape to the works he conducts. All of his readings were imaginative and he certainly was successful in getting the players to perform.”

Asheville Citizen-Times

“The Asheville Symphony has strengths everywhere. Chief among them may be its disciplined but highly expressive conductor, whose every tempo seemed perfect.”

The Gaffney Ledger

“Conductor Robert Hart Baker and the Asheville Symphony Orchestra gave one of their finest performances when they played Mahler’s Symphony No.4. Baker and his forces were able to surmount the technical difficulties of the piece with finesse and yet have reserves to deliver the emotional wallop of Mahler’s music to the large audience that seemed quite moved. Baker’s view of the symphony was a spacious one, lingering over the rusticity of the folk-elements but finding tautness for the intense climaxes.”

Asheville Citizen Times - February 11, 1991

“Baker’s thorough immersion in the style and meaning of the work [Mahler’s Symphony No. 2] enabled him to produce a performance that had shape, cogency and spiritual uplift.”

Asheville Citizen-Times

“[Baker] delivered floods of musical excitement in the final ASO concert for the season. Baker paced the performance [of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony] to achieve the maximum rugged strength and electric tension complemented by moments of persuasive warmth and sweetness.”

The Asheville Citizen-Times - April 23, 1990

“Robert Hart Baker glided into his third York Symphony season on strings of silk.”

York Dispatch

Testimonials...

“Your recording of Papa Bloch’s 1st Symphony is GREAT! I hadn’t heard the music since my childhood and the effect was fantastic! All the themes came back and move me each time I listen to the music.”

Lucienne Bloch Dimitreff (daughter of Ernest Bloch) - November 20, 1985

"Robert is a most capable conductor, he is always aware of all the facets of the music making. He has a vast musical and general culture and has a desire and talent for musical research which he successfully incorporates later on in performance."

Christian Badea (staff conductor) Metropolitan Opera - May 5, 1984

"[Mr. Baker is] a truly wonderful musician. He has warmth and sensitivity, combined with a very good stick technique. His command of the orchestra is excellent and he generates a great deal of respect and enthusiasm from the members."

Daniel Heifetz (concert violinist) - March 26, 1984

"Baker directs music with passion, pain"

"Nearly 200 years ago, Ludwig van Beethoven wrote the music which embodies so much of the passion and pain the world has experienced this past week. Last night, for those who were fortunate enough to have heard the performance of the Beethoven "Fifth Symphony" by the Asheville Symphony under the direction of Robert Hart Baker, numerous facets of that passion and pain were dramatically crystallized. The concert was electrifying from beginning to end but the "Fifth Symphony," performed as it was with breathtaking but magnificently controlled energy and emotion, served to impart and to encourage an attitude of reasoned, rational passion. The evening's performance, dedicated to those thousands suffering from this week's tragedy, was indeed a stunning musical projection of Beethoven's own resolution: "I will grapple with Fate; it will not overcome me." Every beat of this music was symbolic of a universal heartbeat quickened by a determination to alleviate pain and suffering throughout the world without being overcome by the struggle. The Asheville Symphony has launched its 2001-2002 season with a renewed and intensely charged musicality. Our gratitude to all involved."

Asheville Citizen Times - September 20, 2001

Dr. Joyce R. Dorr (former professor and Music Dept. Chair) UNC-Asheville

"On June 12, 2003, I collaborated as violin soloist with Maestro Robert Hart Baker, both as guests, with the Vratza State Philharmonic in Bulgaria. On the program, the "Roman Carnival Overture" of Berlioz, the "Little Violin Concerto" of Tchaikovsky (Serenade Melancolique, Melody in E-flat, and Valse-Scherzo), and the Symphony No.1 of Brahms. We worked together for the dress rehearsal and concert. Working with Maestro Baker and the outstanding, well-prepared orchestra was for me a great joy. Beyond his great earnestness and most intensive internal understanding of the musical processes, the unmistakable sound and the personal style in shaping the musical form impressed in his interpretation of the majestic first symphony of Brahms. I wish for my dear colleague Maestro Baker, whose phenomenal capacities to accompany and whose sensitivity to intentions of musical interpretation in the capricious Tchaikovsky pieces were impressively manifested in sound, much success and artistic fulfillment."

Professor Vesselin Paraschkevov

Essen Conservatory (Germany)

Former Concertmaster, Vienna Philharmonic