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JOHN COVELLI CONDUCTOR



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URL: <http://www.johncovelli.com>

BIOGRAPHY

Few conductors on the world stage today qualify more than John Covelli as a performer of multiple talents and diverse experience. One of the most versatile maestros of his generation and an international prize-winning concert pianist, he enjoys a substantial reputation here and abroad for the many dimensions of a full spectrum career.

His musical successes span the worlds of orchestra, solo piano, chamber music, opera, ballet, musical theatre, recordings, arranging, and the multi-faceted realm of pops. In addition to collaborating extensively with world-renowned classical artists, he has performed with the gamut of superstars from Broadway, Hollywood, jazz rock, and folk music.

The Covelli conducting career began as a teenage protege in Pierre Monteux's elite Master Class. Monteux described his student as "... an excellent conductor, a fine musician, an extremely talented pianist, and a gentleman" and later invited him to be a conducting assistant while the illustrious Maestro was director of the London Symphony Orchestra.

ORCHESTRAL

Performances touring Europe as youthful conductor/soloist of the acclaimed Seventh Army Symphony won unanimous praise from critics, and his selection as special Musical Ambassador in Europe for USIS was a unique distinction.

Following successes in Europe, he returned to the U.S. to become Music Director of the Brockton Symphony, conductor of the Wheaton Chamber Orchestra and a member of the Wheaton Trio. A dynamic interest in contemporary music won him a grant from the Rockefeller Fund for Music as a conductor specializing in American music. While performing regularly as a soloist, he held positions of conducting Assistant with the Saint Louis Symphony, Resident Conductor of the Kansas City Symphony, Associate Conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony, and Music Director of the Flint Symphony and Flint Institute of Music.

During a two decade tenure as Music Director of the Binghamton Philharmonic he has simultaneously served as Principal Conductor of the Glendale Symphony and Music Director of The Greater Palm Beach Symphony, all the while enjoying great popularity in a busy schedule of guest conducting throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia. Exciting performances conducted from the keyboard in a wide range of concertos add to his magnetism and popularity with both audiences and orchestras.

OPERA, BALLET, AND BROADWAY

In addition to the symphonic podium, Covelli's credits include chorus director of the Boston Opera, assistant conductor at the New York City Opera, Music Director of the Florentine Opera in Milwaukee, and guest conductor for the Rhode Island and Michigan Opera Companies.

He has also conducted the National, Harkness, Milwaukee, Flint, and Eglevsky Ballet Companies and collaborated in several Broadway productions.

COVELLI, THE BOSTON POPS, AND MORE POPS !!!!!

John Covelli added another dimension to his musical spectrum due to the popularity of his frequent appearances as guest conductor of the Boston Pops. Following an electrifying debut playing and

conducting (Rhapsody in Blue) to cheering, standing ovations, he became a top contender to succeed Arthur Fiedler, and found himself in great demand as a classical pops conductor.

FULL SPECTRUM MAESTRO

Maestro Covelli has fulfilled engagements worldwide with orchestras in London, France, Germany, Belgium, Russia, Holland, Denmark, Monte Carlo, Italy, Singapor, Korea, and over a hundred American orchestras including most major cities such as New York, Boston, Baltimore, Washington, Buffalo, Cleveland, Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Denver. Detroit, Miami, and innumerable others.

Drawing on a wealth of performing experience, John Covelli enjoys a well-earned reputation for maintaining the highest standards of taste and elegant music-making as conductor and soloist - always energized by the dynamic excitement of his personality. Substantial, innovative and colorful programs for diverse audiences have been his hallmark, offering a spectrum that includes developing original educational concerts, the introduction of multi-media programs to the concert hall, and events that often embrace hundreds of musical participants from the community and attracting audiences as large as 10,000.

Among many accolades and awards, Maestro Covelli hs received the Kennedy Center Alliance Award for Distinguished Service to the Arts.

In addition to guest conducting, he is currently Music Director of "A Company for Chamber Opera", Artistic Director of SMART (Science, Music and Art) Concert Productions, Conductor Laureate of the Binghamton Philharmonic, and Director of New World Classics Festival.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Conducting Positions Held

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

Seventh Army Symphony - Europe, Conductor

Brockton Symphony, Music Director

Wheaton Chamber Orchestra, Director

Saint Louis Symphony, Assistant Conductor

Kansas City Philharmonic, Resident Conductor

Milwaukee Symphony, Associate Conductor

Flint Symphony and Flint Institute of Music, Music Director

Binghamton Symphony Music Director

Glendale Symphony, Principal Conductor

Greater Palm Beach Symphony Orchestra, Music Director

Binghamton Philharmonic, Music Director

Binghamton Philharmonic, Conductor Laureate (current)

OPERA COMPANIES

Boston Opera, Choral Director

New York City Opera, Assistant Conductor

Florentine Opera, Music Director

A Company for Chamber Opera, Music Director (current)

BROADWAY: "Cyrano" production with Christopher Plummer

Guest Conducting Appearances

BALLET COMPANIES

National Ballet ~~~ Milwaukee Ballet ~~~ Eglevsky Ballet

Flint Ballet ~~~ Harkness Ballet (46 city tour)

MUSIC FESTIVALS

Meadowbrook Festival ~~~ Round Top Festival ~~~

Chautauqua Festival ~~~ Blossom Festival ~~~

Belleayre Festival

ORCHESTRAL & OPERA

~~~ALABAMA SYMPHONY ~~~ ALBANY SYMPHONY ~~~ BOSTON POPS ~~~ BUFFALO  
PHILHARMONIC ~~~ BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ~~~ BOCA POPS ~~~ BIRMINGHAM-  
BLOOMFIELD SYMPHONY ~~~ BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ~~~ BROOKLYN  
PHILHARMONIC ~~~ CHAMPAGNE-URBANA SYMPHONY ~~~ CHAUTAUQUA  
ORCHESTRA ~~~CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA ~~~ COLORADO SPRINGS SYMPHONY ~~~  
DETROIT SYMPHONY ~~~ DALLAS SYMPHONY~~~ DENVER SYMPHONY ~~~  
EVANSVILLE PHILHARMONIC ~~~ FLORIDA PHILHARMONIC ~~~ FORT WORTH  
SYMPHONY ~~~ FLINT CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ~~~ GLENDALE SYMPHONY ~~~  
GREENVILLE SYMPHONY ~~~ HALIFAX CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ~~~ HARTFORD  
SYMPHONY ~~~ HOUSTON SYMPHONY ~~~ HOUSTON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ~~~  
HUDSON VALLEY PHILHARMONIC ~~~ LOS ANGELES POPS ~~~ LONG BEACH  
SYMPHONY ~~~ MIAMI SYMPHONY ~~~ MIAMI BEACH POPS~~~ MICHIGAN CHAMBER  
ORCHESTRA ~~~ MICHIGAN OPERA ~~~ MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ~~~ NEW ORLEANS  
SYMPHONY ~~~ NORTHEAST PHILHARMONIC ~~~ NEW WORLD SYMPHONY ~~~  
NASHVILLE SYMPHONY ~~~ NY STATE YOUTH SYMPHONY ~~~ ORLANDO SYMPHONY  
~~~ PASADENA POPS ~~ PALM BEACH OPERA ORCHESTRA ~~~ QUEENS SYMPHONY  
~~~ RHODE ISLAND PHILHARMONIC ~~~ RHODE ISLAND OPERA ~~~ ROCHESTER  
PHILHARMONIC ~~~ SEATTLE SYMPHONY ~~~ SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ~~~ SAN  
DIEGO SYMPHONY ~~~ SAN JOSE SYMPHONY ~~~ STAMFORD SYMPHONY ~~~  
SPRINGFIELD SYMPHONY ~~~ SYRACUSE SYMPHONY ~~~ TOLEDO SYMPHONY ~~~  
TOLEDO CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ~~~ VIRGINIA BEACH POPS ~~~ WESTCHESTER  
SYMPHONY ~~~ YOUNGSTOWN SYMPHONY ~~~

L'ORCHESTRE DE LILLE \* MOSCOW PHILHARMONIC \* LONDON

FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA \* MONTE CARLO PHILHARMONIC \* SINGAPOR

SYMPHONY \* SEOUL PHILHARMONIC \* STUTTGART ORCHESTER -

VERREIN \* ROTTERDAM SYMPHONY

## REVIEWS

"Covelli proved to be an artist of the first rank. He walked on stage bearing his baton like a magician with a wand and brought some nearly 200 musicians to life! Covelli, a sound sculpture magician...reached out through every section of the orchestra with such command and such subtlety that he made his players, yielding under his spell, respond to every nuance."

- **Buffalo**

### SSO, COVELLI SPARKLE IN HOLIDAY CONCERT

"It was a glowing evening from beginning to end, perhaps the best of these concerts that the orchestra has ever put on... no small part of the evening's success had to do with the triple-threat activities of conductor John Covelli. Covelli showed himself to be a leader with much more than ordinary flair. His beat - his whole style - is marked by the kind of variety that makes him as interesting to watch as his music-making is to listen to."

Covelli is also personable. His comments, never too long, never too short, were always marked by flashes of wit. ....It was his performance of the famous Gershwin piece however, that really set Covelli apart. Conducting from the piano, he showed in his playing the same kind of incisive control that he had shown all evening on the podium. The same kind of crisp definition and clarity were there too. Add to this a really improvisatory flexibility in those passages in which the piano was playing alone - a quality which emphasized the piece's jazz origins. Covelli made this all-too-familiar music sound fresh and full of the kind of spontaneous vitality that made it an instant success."

- **Syracuse**

"This New Year's Eve Gala brought enjoyable orchestral playing and a good bit of quick-witted commentary from Covelli....his snappy humor flavored the evening with a festive spirit."

- **Houston**

"New Year's Eve Concert Mixes Fun, Fine Music and Covelli's wit a la Victor Borge"

- **Milwaukee**

"Guest Conductor John Covelli led the orchestra through a program of superbly done favorites and it was a treat to hear them done with a measure of taste and the keen edge of musicianship."

- **Alabama**

### PHILHARMONIC OPENER PICKS A WINNER

"The Rhode Island Philharmonic picked the right man when it brought guest conductor John Covelli to open its 44th season. Covelli, presiding over an all-Gershwin program, turned out to be a solid stickman, a bit of a standup comic, and a whale of a pianist."

.....Covelli, longtime Philharmonic fans will recall, was a leading contender for the conductor's job here 10 years ago....at the close of the performance Saturday listeners were overheard asking why on earth Covelli wasn't hired!"

- **Providence**

"Covelli may find he has created a tough act to follow."

- Flint

"COVELLI'S STYLE AND TALENT DAZZLE AUDIENCE"

- Detroit

"COVELLI VISIT BRILLIANT "

### **COVELLI SPARKS C-U SYMPHONY TO MEMORABLE PERFORMANCE**

"Sparks flew on a cold night at the Champaign-Urbana Symphony. With a program of short works and movie music, it was a pops concert in the best sense of the term. It avoided the cliched and hackneyed in a program of both obscure and well-known compositions. Guest Conductor John Covelli dazzled on the podium. Animatedly exciting, he avoided flamboyant excess with his professional demeanor - directing with precision, not pretense. "

- Urbana

"With direction by John Covelli ...the orchestra has not sounded any finer all season. Covelli seems more connected to the orchestra than others who have taken the center spot. He is also unquestionably watchable as a performer, offering a sense of immediacy with the music and sense of dynamic. ...There is no doubt all will keep their eyes on him when he returns to the orchestra to both conduct and play."

- Glendale

### **COVELLI EXCELS AS CONDUCTOR, PIANIST IN SYMPHONY SEASON OPENER**

As expected, the high point of the evening was the performance of the Shostakovich Piano Concerto No.2 with John Covelli performing as pianist and conductor. Covelli is an excellent pianist, particularly suited to this kind of music. His playing was crisp and light and brought the music to life with remarkable wit and spirit. The piano led the way throughout the concerto and Covelli was able to bring the orchestra along with him to great effect. The pensive second movement was particularly beautiful. This segment's limpid melody rose effortlessly from the piano and brought out the best playing of the evening. The neat, dancing last movement was also brilliant. Covelli (leads) his orchestra delineating with drama and making sure the drama of works are brought out in an almost theatrical, colorful way. This approach favors the brilliance of the music he conducts, serving to produce excitement and a professional sense of design."

- Palm Beach

### **COVELLI'S PALM BEACH SYMPHONY PERFORMS REMARKABLE CONCERT**

"John Covelli, the new maestro of the Greater Palm Beach Symphony, achieved something quite remarkable - an outstanding recreation of the New Year concerts of Vienna. This was a wonderful concert! Covelli showed he has the rare touch that can make Strauss waltzes work. Because of their great popularity and charm, it is often supposed that this is easy music to perform, but it is not. This is notoriously difficult music with the lilting rhythms of the Viennese waltz often becoming heavy and the swirling melodies becoming sentimentalized, even vulgar. The highlight of the evening was the orchestra's performance of the Emperor Waltzes, which was wonderful. Our area's major orchestra performed this same set only weeks ago with none of the elegance and sophistication of this playing. The orchestra has rarely sounded as good as this."

- Palm Beach

"...Put this music in the hands of the Florida Philharmonic and it would just sound bloated. But here it sounded transparent, lilting, even comic. Much of the credit belongs to Conductor John Covelli, who was careful to find the right balances and accentuate the airy textures in all four scores. His Ravel came off smart and sassy, not like the pea soup so many maestros make of it. His accompaniment of the Mozart was both rugged and gentle where it needed to be. but it was the cosmopolitan and colorful Ibert that rightly stole the show. A work that manages to mix delicious orchestral effects and parodies of other composers, it was served up by Covelli and company on a silver tray of engaging bedlam. Spike Jones would have loved it."

- Palm Beach

"Under the invigorating baton of guest conductor John Covelli, the Symphony performed a judicious balance of light classics and show tune medleys with panache and urbane conviction. It was indeed the same ensemble that plodded through a program the night before, so the heartening conclusion must be that the man on the podium makes the difference!"

- San Diego

"Leading the way was John Covelli, a debonair figure who was as smooth as he was authoritative, but what really distinguishes him was his manner. He has an understated dignity as well as a sense of humor."

- San Diego

"The return of John Covelli to lead the Virginia Symphony Pops offered the same excitement as when he fronted the orchestra last season. He still puts on a good show. Covelli and the Pops created sparks in a challenging program well-executed to make the evening an unqualified success."

- Virginia Beach

### **"COVELLI CONDUCTS, LEADS SYMPHONY TO NEW, GREATER HEIGHTS**

"I feel very secure about my headline because I attended Saturday night's concert when the Glendale Symphony sounded "as good as it really is." Recognizing that an orchestra is only as good as its conductor, no small measure of Saturday night's success goes to John Covelli who was not only conductor, but piano soloist.

Every piece on the program was done with finesse and expertise, but the crowning glory was Covelli's finale, Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." Never have I seen or heard such perfect synchronization of musical thought and action. Covelli played and conducted in perfect timing, not disturbing his pianism or disrupting his conducting skills, but making them in an orderly sequence. There was beauty not only in his tone, but in the way he led the orchestra and then gently, almost tenderly, segued into his solo role. It was astounding and fascinating to watch and to hear. At the close of the piece there wasn't a moment's pause before the whole audience rose to its feet and orchestra members began to applaud and stomp their feet. This is the first time I've seen the orchestra so overcome with admiration...One orchestra member said later "Covelli is an honest musician....he handles an orchestra with respect and artistry, he leads with an up feeling - he is a superb conductor and artist."

- Glendale

"Guest conductor and pianist John Covelli brought a breath of fresh air Saturday Night with a sparkling concert. This was no run-of-the-mill program. Covelli's magnetism, his understated but exacting baton technique, and creative programming set the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra on fire. They played with a spirit that matched their virtuosity."

- Youngstown