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Mladen Tarbuk

CONDUCTOR



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BIOGRAPHY

Mladen Tarbuk, Croatian conductor and composer acclaimed a wide international recognition conducting *Tristan und Isolde* on the stage of Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb where he was by that time its general director. Leading European opera magazines wrote enthusiastically about his efforts to raise the artistic skill of this ensemble close to the highest international standards and values.

In the same time, after the great success of *Macbeth* at the German Opera at Rhine in Düsseldorf, he was invited to conduct next three titles at this theatre.

His international career brought him to many important opera companies and symphony orchestras all over the world. He conducted The State Opera Prag, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado Mexico, Orchestra da Camera Firenze, Orchestra Sinfonica Marchigiana Vincenzo Bellini, Heidelberger Philharmoniker, Orquesta Sinfonica Extremadura, Grazer Sinfonisches Orchester, Zagreb Soloists, Maribor Philharmonics, Belgrade Phylharmony Orchestra, Orchestra ICO Tito Schipa and ICO Venezia-Giulia-Friuli.

Since 2000 he works as the principal conductor of Symphonic Orchestra of Croatian Radio and Television. With this orchestra he recorded hours of Croatian classical and contemporary music. On its concert series he conducted many famous as well as less known works of XX century music, such as *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrouchka* or *Weill's 2nd Symphony*.

As experienced opera conductor, he worked with famous singers such as Burchuladze, Kern, Zhang, Araiza, Raftery, Neumann, Hadley, van Aken, Pospíš Baldani and Vejzović. At the concert stage his partners were Costa, Padova, Zeltser, Golan, Burato, Pedroni and Slokar.

He was awarded with the Special Award for the best interpretation of Janaček's *Sinfonietta* at the Smetana-Dvořak-Janaček International Conductors Competition in Olomouc, Czech Republic.

At the field of composition his first international success was performance of his *Medida del Tiempo* in Konzerthaus Vienna under baton of Friedrich Cerha. This composition was selected on the First International Composers Competition Vienna 1991 (artistic director Claudio Abbado). Later on he received numerous international and Croatian Prizes for composition. He wrote over sixty compositions in various forms, compassing from piano pieces to large symphonic and theatre forms. They have been performed at the most important festivals of contemporary music, such as Vienna Modern, Gaudeamus Amsterdam, Musikprotokoll Graz, Moscow Autumn, Europamusicale München, World Music Days 1997 Manchester, Musicora Paris, Trieste Prima and Zagreb Music Biennial. Finally, he drew particular attention of international audience with his ballet *A Streetcar Named Desire*, which opened World Music Days 2005 in Zagreb.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Premiere of Tristan und Isolde in Zagreb:

Mrs. Kohlhaas observed in "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung": "Mladen Tarbuk and his HNK orchestra made an effort to the best of their abilities to gain clearly delineated Wagner's sound. This was achieved always clearer, up to the miraculous flourishing of sound in Isolde's Love Death."

"Opernglas" wrote: "Tarbuk led orchestra with verve through the work and convinced with transparent, stringent and vivid sound."

Hans Gärtner in "Der Neue Merker" found that "Mladen Tarbuk is enormous deep musician who gave stimulus with flair for fine gradation and differentiated colouring."

Robert Jungwirth on Bavarian Radio 4 noticed: "Mladen Tarbuk heated his hard working orchestra with progressive drama and yearning fire...musicians and singers gave their best, letting themselves rousing through his musical zeal..."

Premiere of Madame Butterfly in Ottawa

Richard Todd said in "Ottawa Citizen": "Conductor Mladen Tarbuk...is quite a find. He kept things together and moving musically and saw that, as with so much else in this production, the overall musical profile had a poise and moderation that allowed the story to unfold naturally and convincingly."

Jean Jacques Van Vlasseaer emphasized in "Le Droit": "Finally, one should attribute this fluency and staging efficiency to the function of musical flow and profound interpretation, done by an excellent conductor who comes from Croatia, Mladen Tarbuk...He conducted in articulated and intense manner, yielding without haste, not only lyrical tissue with profound and not lukewarm emotion, but the post-Wagnerian unheard harmonisations that transcend work too. He proved also an important skill for an opera conductor, namely, how to push to the front and support voices...Because of high integration of staging with the musical work and because of the first-rank conducting, this Madame Butterfly is a corner stone of these past twenty years of existence of Opera Lyra.

Opera Concert on Castle Festival in Heidelberg

Rainer Kohl wrote in "Rhein-Neckar": "...one could feel with pleasure how he outstandingly well worked with Heidelberg Philharmonics. Routine is unknown word in Tarbuk's understanding of music. His main idea is to reveal unheard aspects of often played works...With every fingertip of his left hand he formed and created, he filled every phrase with meaning and eloquent expression. Orchestra playing was characterized with transparency, and in it reached inner subtlety as well as striking fire...Singers were accompanied with delightful orchestra rubati... Heidelberg Philharmonics accompanied singers with extreme inspiration. And how they understood to play encouraged was remarkable in charmingly zestful and thrillingly brilliant "Dance of Watches" by Ponchielli, as well as in lyrical inspiration of "Intermezzo" from Pagliacci.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Mladen Tarbuk (1962) is Croatian conductor and composer.

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Work in opera and ballet

2005	<p>Performances of Abduction from Serail and La Wally at German Opera at Rhine in Düsseldorf</p> <p>Premiere of Tristan and Isolde at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb</p> <p>Directed by Jochen Zoerner Erb</p> <p>Patrick Raftery and Barbara Schneider Hofstetter in the leading roles</p>
2004	<p>Performances of Macbeth and Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci at German Opera at Rhine in Düsseldorf</p> <p>Premiere of Swan Lake at the Teatro Politeama in Lecce/Italy, with Baletto del Sud and ICO Tito Schipa</p> <p>Choreographed by Freddy Franzutti</p> <p>Premiere of Andre Chenier at the Teatro Pergolesi in Jesi/Italy</p> <p>Directed by Eike Gramss</p> <p>Ignazio Enchinas in the leading role</p> <p>Premiere of Madame Butterfly in Ottawa with Opera Lyra</p> <p>Directed by Michael Cavanagh</p> <p>Liping Zhang and Marc Heller in the leading roles</p> <p>Premiere of Lady Macbeth of Mcensk District at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb</p> <p>Directed by Thomas Schulte Michels</p> <p>Vlatka Oršanić and Frank van Akken in the leading roles</p> <p>Performances of La Valse, Pavane and Bolero at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb</p>
2003	<p>Premiere of Simone Boccanegra at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb</p> <p>Directed by Petar Selem</p> <p>Igor Morosov and Neven Belamaric in the leading roles</p>
2002	<p>Premiere of Werther at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb</p> <p>Directed by Zlatica Stepan</p> <p>Francisco Araiza and Dunja Vejzović in the leading roles</p> <p>Premiere of Barber of Seville at the Croatian National Theatre I. Zajc in Rijeka.</p>

	Premiere of Figaro's Marriage at the Folks Theatre Sarajevo Performance of Carmen on the May Opera Festival at the Macedonian Folks Theatre Skopje
2002-05	General director of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb.
1999	Premiere of Händel's Julius Caesar with the Zagreb Soloists.
1994	Premiere of the Croatian national romantic opera Nikola Šubić Zrinski at the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb. This opera was then presented in his revised version; in 2000, he made a very successful guest appearance with this opera at The Hungarian National Opera, Budapest . Premiere of Minkus's Don Quixote at the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor
1993	The world premiere of Schwertsik's Café Museum oder die Erleuchtung at the Musikprotokoll Graz. Performances of Tannhäuser and Così fan tutte at The State Opera, Prague .
1991	Premiere of Udo Zimmerman's White Rose at the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor
1989-91	Permanent guest conductor at the Croatian National Theatre, Zagreb. He conducted Electra, Rheingold, Così fan tutte, Tosca, Norma, Trovatore, Barber of Seville , and many ballets: e.g. Giselle, Nutcracker, Swan Lake and The Sleeping Beauty

Concert activities

2004 concerts with **Orquesta Sinfonica Extremadura, Orchestra da Camera Firenze, Belgrad Philharmonic Orchestra** and **Heidelberger Philharmoniker**.

2003 concerts with **Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado Mexico, ICO Venezia-Giulia-Friuli, Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra** and **ICO Tito Schipa**.

2000 he conducted the world premiere of Villardi's oratorio **Judas** in Theatre Saint Michel in Brussels with the Zagreb Soloists.

Since **1990** he appeared frequently with **Croatian Radio Television Symphony Orchestra**, and since **2000** holds the position of **principal conductor** of this orchestra.

Through this fruitful collaboration he recorded dozen hours of Croatian contemporary and classical music, which is often broadcasted by European **Notturmo Program**.

With this orchestra he recorded his own **A Trip Around Austria, Fiddles Are Broken, Concerto Grosso, Concerto for Flute, Concertino for Saxophone** and **Concerto for Four Saxophones**.

At concerts he conducted major works of symphony repertoire, such as Stravinsky's **Fairy's Kiss, Petrushka** and **The Rite of Spring**, Beethoven's **3rd** and **6th Symphony**, Dvorak's **9th Symphony**, Tchaikowsky's **4th** and **6th Symphony** as well as **Manfred Symphony**, Respighi's **Vetrata di Chiesa**, Schubert's **3rd Symphony**, Mozart's **Symphony in G minor** as well as **Jupiter Symphony**, Korsakov's **Capriccio Espagnole**, an evening of French music with the great mezzo-soprano **Dunja Vejzović**, Prokofiev's **Classical Symphony** and **2nd Piano Concerto** with Mark Zeltser. Special event was the performance of **Songs and Dances of Death**, sung by Paata Burchuladze.

Particular attention is drawn to the concerts for **young audience**, which were held regularly since 2000. Through these concert series Tarbuk speaks and conducts teaching youngsters the basic elements of

orchestration and musical comprehension, sometimes conducting and narrating even in the same time, as in the example of *Peter and the Wolf*.

1993-2000 he was chief conductor of the **Croatian Symphonic Wind Orchestra**, a prestigious state ensemble. Under his artistic direction, the orchestra has its own concert season in the Vatroslav Lisinski Large Concert Hall, Zagreb, with eminent conductors and soloists such as Lajovic, Bareza, Sutej, Vlatkovic, Slokar and Hilgers. He has carried out many interesting projects with the orchestra, such as recording a CD of **Croatian Masses**, the first Croatian performance of Handel's **Fireworks Music**, Bruckner's **E minor Mass**, Weill's **Concerto for Violin and Wind Instruments**, Mozart's **Gran Partita**, Schubert's **German Mass** and the inaugural concert of the **Dubrovnik Summer Festival**. With this orchestra too he has recorded his own **Zildjian Concerto** for percussion and orchestra for **Honey&Rock**, which was released in 1999.

1993-1996 he has regularly conducted at concerts of the **Graz Symphony Orchestra** (Schumann's **4th Symphony**, Kodaly's **Dances from Galanta**, Haydn symphonies, Rachmaninoff's **4th Piano Concerto** and so on), also assisting their chief conductor, Fabio Luisi.

His first concert appearances were with the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra (Brahms's **3rd** and **4th Symphony**, Schumann's **4th Symphony**, Mozart's **G minor** and **Jupiter Symphony** and other works). He has also conducted **The Slovene Philharmonic Orchestra**, **The Moravian Philharmonic**, **Olomouc** and **The State Philharmonic, Halle**.

Education

School

After graduating from the Mathematics High School in Zagreb, he went on to read physics at Zagreb University.

Musical Studies

1987	He graduated from the conducting course at the Music Academy, Zagreb (Master Class of Igor Gjadrov).
1988	Graduated from the conducting course at the Music Academy in Graz, Austria (Master Class of Milan Horvat).
1991-92	Studied conducting at the Music Academy, Vienna (Master Class of Uroš Lajovic) and composition, privately with Friedrich Cerha.
1989-93	A Lovro von Matacic Fund scholar
1995	Graduated from the composition course at the Music Academy, Zagreb, Master Class of Stanko Horvat.

Prizes and Awards

2002	Croatian Slavenski Prize for Dreamers
2001	Porin Prize for the best composition in the previous year, Concerto Grosso
1998	Croatian Porin Prize for the best production of the previous year, the Pizzicato CD by the Zagreb Soloists
1993	First Prize, Dr Ernst Vogel International Chamber Composition Competition , Stockerau, Austria First Prize at the International Competition for Choral Competition , Tolosa, Spain First Prize at the Croatian Stjepan Šulek Composers Competition
1992	Special Award for the best interpretation of Janaček's Simfonieta at the Smetana-Dvořak-Janaček International Conductors Competition , Olomouc,

	Czech Republic
1991	Commendation for performance at the 1st International Vienna Composers Competition (artistic director Claudio Abbado)
1990	Zagreb University Prize for composition
1989	Second Prize at the Yugoslav Young Conductors Competition
1988	Croatian Music Institute Prize for conducting
1987	Zagreb University Prize for conducting

Compositions

He wrote sixty compositions in various forms, compassing from piano pieces to large symphonic and theatre forms. They have been performed at the most important festivals of contemporary music, such as **Vienna Modern, Gaudeamus Amsterdam, Musikprotokoll Graz, Moscow Autumn, Europamusicale München, Musicora Paris, Trieste Prima and Zagreb Music Biennial**. They have been recorded for Austrian, German, Dutch, Italian and Croatian radios. His **Zildjian Concerto** was selected by the international jury and performed at the **World Music Days, Manchester**, 1998. His ballet **A Streetcar Named Desire** opened the **World Music Days Zagreb 2005**. He has written the incidental music for a number of ballets and plays, as well as for the movie **Chase for a Lottery Ticket**.

Teaching

His teaching activities are mainly concentrated at the Music Academy in Zagreb, where since 1990 he has taught music theory. 1998 he was promoted to **Assistant Professor**, and 2005 to **Associate Professor**.

REPERTOIRE

Music Theatre:

Händel: Giulio Cesare
Mozart: Entführung aus dem Serail, Le nozze di Figaro, Don Giovanni, Così fan tutte, Zauberflöte
Bellini: Norma
Rossini: Barbiere di Siviglia
Adame: Giselle
Minkus: Don Quixote
Verdi: La Traviata, Trovatore, Macbeth, Aida, Simone Boccanegra
Wagner: Tannhäuser, Das Rheingold, Tristan und Isolde
Bizet: Carmen
Massenet: Werther, Therese
Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci
Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana
Giordano: Andre Chenier
Ravel: La Valse, Bolero, Daphnis et Chloe
Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake, Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty
Strauss: Elektra
Puccini: La Bohème, Tosca, Madame Butterfly
Catalani: La Wally
Stravinsky: Petrouchka, Le Sacre du Printemps, Le Baiser du Fee
Shostakovich: Lady Macbeth of Mzensk
Zimmermann: Die Weisse Rose
Schwertsik: Die Erleuchtung
Many Croatian operas and ballets

Symphonic works

Bach: All Brandenburg concerts, Concerto in E major for violin, Double concerto in d minor, Double Concerto for violin and oboe in d minor, orchestral suites in h minor and D major
Händel: Music for the Royal Fireworks
Haydn: over 20 symphonies
Mozart: 10 last symphonies, all wind serenades, many piano concerts, violin concerts in G, D and A major, Bassoon concerto
Beethoven: all symphonies, all piano concerts, violin concerto, Koriolan, Egmont, Leonore 2nd and 3rd
Schubert: all symphonies
Berlioz: Symphonie fantastique, Symphonie funebre et trioumphale
Gounod: Petite Symphonie
Schumann: all symphonies, piano and cello concerto
Brahms: all symphonies, 1st piano concerto, violin concerto, double concerto
Dvořak: 7th-9th symphony, In the Nature, Cello and Violin concerto
Tchaikovsky: 4th-6th symphony, Manfred, Romeo and Juliet
Korsakov: Capriccio espagnole, Scheherazade
Mussorgsky: The Night on the Bare Mountain, original version, Songs and Dances of Death, Pictures on the exhibition

Bruckner: 3rd-5th, 7th-9th symphony
Mahler: all symphonies, all song cycles
R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegel, Don Juan, Don Quixote, Tod und Verklärung, Ein Heldenleben
Debussy: Prelude pour Apres le midi d'un faune, La Mer, Suite from Pelleas et Melisande
Ravel: Pavane pour une infante defunte, Piano concerto in G major, Ma mere l'oye
Respighi: Pini di Roma, Vetrata di chiesa, Huntingtower
Rachmaninov: 2nd-4th Piano concerto
Stravinsky: Soldier's tale, Symphonies for winds, Piano concerto, Violin concerto
Hindemith: Konzertante Musik für Bläser, Schwanendreher, Suite from Mathis der Mahler
Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue, An American in Paris
Copeland: Music for Theatre, Fanfares for Common Man
Prokofiev: 1st symphony, 2nd piano concerto, Peter and the Wolf
Shostakovich: 1st and 9th symphony
Martinu: Oboe concerto
Schönberg: Kammerinfonie II, Survivor from Warsaw variations op. 43
Berg: Suite from Lulu
Weill: Violin concerto, 2nd symphony
Kodaly: Dances from Galantha
Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra, Rumanian Dances
A hundred of various Croatian orchestral pieces

Oratorios and Masses:

Bach: St. John Passion, St. Mathew Passion, many church and secular cantatas
Pergolesi: Stabat mater
Mozart: Exsultate, jubilate, Requiem
Schubert: Deutsche Messe
Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem
Bruckner: Mass in E minor
Mascagni: Messa
Faure: Requiem
Orff: Carmina Burana, Triumph of Aphrodite

REFERENCES

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