



Neil Thomson

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Neil Thomson- BIOGRAPHY

Neil Thomson is one of the most widely-respected British conductors and teachers of his generation. Born in 1966, he studied with Norman Del Mar at the Royal College of Music and later at Tanglewood with Leonard Bernstein and Kurt Sanderling.

He has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia (in a broadcast with Steven Isserlis), the English Northern Philharmonia, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and the London Concert Orchestra. Since 2005 he has worked with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra in Denmark, the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Teatro Massimo, Palermo, the Orquesta Sinfonica de Yucatan in Mexico, Orquestra Nacional do Porto, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra and RTE Concert Orchestra. In May 2005 he was invited to conduct the 50th anniversary Memorial Concert for George Enescu with the Romanian National Orchestra in Bucharest. In 2008 he made highly successful débuts with the Israel Symphony Orchestra and the Hallé.

He has performed with many distinguished soloists including Sir James Galway, Dame Moura Lympany, Sir Thomas Allen, Julian Lloyd Webber, David Geringas, Jeremy Menuhin, Gyorgy Pauk, Jean-Philippe Collard, Valentin Gheorgiou, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett and Sarah Chang.

From 1992 until 2006 he was Head of Conducting at the Royal College of Music. The youngest-ever incumbent of this post (first held by Sir Adrian Boult in 1916 and thereafter by conductors such as Sir Malcolm Sargent, Constant Lambert, Vernon Handley and Norman Del Mar) he was made an Honorary Member of the RCM in 1994 for his services to the institution and has established an enviable reputation as an orchestral trainer.

His skills as a natural communicator have enhanced an already growing reputation as a teacher throughout Europe. He was invited twice to the EU-sponsored masterclasses in Vilnius, Lithuania and has been a Guest Professor at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and the Conservatoire "Arrigo Boito" in Parma. In 2002 he was invited by Lorin Maazel to be on the jury for the European rounds of the Maazel Conducting Competition and in 2007 was on the jury of the Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition in Mexico City.

Neil Thomson-Reviews

As a composer I consider myself to be very privileged to have had a number of my works performed under the baton of Neil Thomson. Neil has great insight into the inner workings of a composition and an inspired perception in conveying the spirit of the music to the musicians. He is one of the finest orchestral trainers in the world, but over and above this he projects wonderful artistry in performance.

EDWIN ROXBURGH, Conductor and composer. Professor at the Royal College of Music 1967-2004

Neil Thomson is a born teacher. This rapidly became clear during the 2005 London Conducting Workshop at the Royal College of Music where we were both tutors. Neil has the ability to correctly assess a conducting problem and simultaneously articulate a solution. It is clear that Neil has thought deeply about the conductor's art and is devoted to passing on his knowledge.

JOHN FARRER, Director of the London Conducting Workshop; Music Director of the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra and the Roswell Symphony Orchestra

Neil Thomson is an uncommonly committed and supportive teacher. His approach is at once practical and methodical whilst always springing from the music itself and the individual needs of the student. When on the podium ourselves Neil's encouragement and guidance ensured that we felt as comfortable as possible whilst still steering us in the right direction. Neil does not aim to produce 'clones', but his own conducting was a consistent source of inspiration to all of us at the RCM and answered so many of the conducting questions that can only be resolved by example.

MICHAEL YOUNG, former student and Finalist and Prize-winner at the 2005 Leeds Conductors' Competition.

Neil Thomson is an outstanding conductor with a huge repertoire and the outstanding ability to combine a highly effective rehearsal technique with a wonderful sense of sonority, phrasing, style and musical interest in his interpretation.

JORGE ROTTER, Professor of Conducting, the Mozarteum, Salzburg

It is often said that there are defining moments in one's life where, in an instant, everything becomes clear. I experienced one of those moments as a young first year undergraduate at the Royal College of Music sitting at the back of Neil Thomson's orchestra. I knew as soon as he started conducting that I not only wanted to be a conductor myself but also to study with him.

TIMOTHY HENTY, former student and Guest Conductor The Royal Ballet

One of the main reasons for my applying to the Royal College of Music to study conducting was the chance to have tuition from Neil Thomson. He is an inspiring and immensely practical teacher with so much experience from conducting world-class orchestras to talented student ensembles.

THOMAS BLUNT, former student and Chorus Master of Glyndebourne Festival Opera

I studied with Neil Thomson at the Royal College of Music for three years. I not only learned a conducting technique based on phrasing and sound but also the real ability to rehearse an orchestra efficiently. Furthermore his inspiring musical approach was perfectly balanced between a sheer passion for the music and a clear analysis of the score. These important aspects have been indispensable in my conducting career.

CLAUS EFLAND, former student and Finalist in the Donatella Flick Competition 2004

His baton technique is excellent! Clarity and expressiveness have always been of great importance to me and that is something I got from Neil's teaching. The way of approaching a score, how to memorise it, the preparation of rehearsals and how to make them enjoyable were some of the many crafts Neil offered me at the RCM that have helped me in my conducting career.

NATALIA LUIS-BASSA, former student and Finalist and Prize-winner in the Maazel-Vilar Competition 2002

It was genuinely inspirational to watch Neil at work; his rigorous attention to detail and unusual thoroughness in rehearsals, his deeply personal and considered interpretation of the work at hand and, most significantly, the ravishing, warm, glowing string sound he drew from his players — surely the life blood of any orchestral performance. Those of us who were privileged enough to attend the resulting concerts will never forget the impact they made on the audiences.

JOHN WILSON, former student

Neil Thomson-Repertoire

BACH

St.Matthew Passion
Christmas Oratorio

BARTOK

Concerto for Orchestra
The Miraculous Mandarin

BEETHOVEN

Symphonies 1-9
Violin Concerto
Piano Concertos 1-5

BERLIOZ

Symphonie Fantastique
Harold in Italy

BRAHMS

Symphonies 1-4
Haydn Variations
Violin Concerto
Piano Concertos 1 & 2

COPLAND

Symphony No.3

DEBUSSY

La Mer

DVORAK

Symphonies 5, 7, 8 & 9
Cello Concerto

ELGAR

Symphonies 1 & 2
Enigma Variations
Violin Concerto

HOLST

The Planets

LISZT

A Faust Symphony

MAHLER

Symphonies 1, 2, 4 & 6

MESSIAEN

Turangalila Symphony

NIELSEN

Symphonies 2, 3, 4 & 5

PROKOFIEV

Symphonies 1 & 5

SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphonies 1, 5, 8, 10, 12 & 15

SIBELIUS

Symphonies 1, 2, 3, 5 & 7

SMETANA

Ma Vlast

STOCKHAUSEN

Gruppen

STRAUSS

Don Juan

Till Eulenspiegel

Ein Heldenleben

Also Sprach Zarathustra

STRAVINSKY

Rite of Spring

Petrushka

Firebird

SUK

Asrael Symphony

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphonies 2, 4, 5 & 6

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Symphonies 2, 5 & 9

WALTON

Symphony No. 1

WEILL

Symphony No. 2