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Michael Buttermann

Conductor



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BIOGRAPHY

Music critics around the country are saying their “top honors must go to conductor Michael Butterman.” Equally accomplished in orchestral, operatic, and outreach conducting, his performances have been described as having “explored new musical ground...grand and joyful and delivered with finesse and a happy exuberance.” Dividing his time between Florida, New Mexico, and New York, Michael Butterman is the Associate Conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony, Music Director of Opera Southwest, and Principal Conductor for Education and Outreach of the Rochester Philharmonic, the only position of its kind in the United States. Also in demand as a guest conductor, Mr. Butterman’s recent engagements include appearances with the Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, Oregon Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Hartford Symphony, Syracuse Symphony, New Mexico Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Spokane Symphony and Santa Fe Symphony, as well as debuts this season with the Kansas City Symphony, Shreveport Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony and the Abilene Philharmonic. In the summers, Michael Butterman can be seen at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival in Colorado and serves on the faculty of the Wintergreen Music Festival in Virginia.

Mr. Butterman gained international attention as a diploma laureate in the Prokofiev International Conducting Competition and as a finalist in the prestigious Besançon International Conducting Competition—the first American in six years to be so honored. As the 1999 recipient of the Seiji Ozawa Fellowship, he studied at Tanglewood with Robert Spano, Jorma Panula, and Maestro Ozawa, and shared the podium with Ozawa to lead the season’s opening concert. Also on the international front, his 1997 UNESCO-sponsored appearance with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Moldova resulted in an invitation to assume the post of Principal Guest Conductor.

For five years, Mr. Butterman served as Director of Orchestral Studies at the LSU School of Music and was Principal Conductor of the LSU Opera Theater. Prior to his appointment at LSU, he held the post of Associate Conductor of the Columbus Pro Musica Orchestra, and served as Music Director of the Chamber Opera, Studio Opera, and Opera Workshop at the Indiana University School of Music. For two seasons, he was also the Associate Music Director of the Ohio Light Opera, conducting over 35 performances each summer.

At Indiana University, Mr. Butterman conducted a highly acclaimed production of Leonard Bernstein’s little-known *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* in a series of performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, receiving unanimous praise from such publications as the New York Times, Washington Post, Variety, and USA Today. He was subsequently invited to New York at the request of the Bernstein estate to prepare a performance of a revised version of the work.

Mr. Butterman’s work has been featured in five nationwide broadcasts on NPR’s *Performance Today*, and can be heard on two CDs recorded for the Newport Classics label.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle: “Michael Buttermann, who led the Rochester Philharmonic, was a marvelous enabler, serving up one lush romantic phrase after another.”

--John Pitcher (November 29, 2003)

Jacksonville Times-Union: “Guest soloist Emlar Oliveira took center stage for Barber’s Concerto for Violin and Orchestra...Associate Conductor Michael Buttermann showing his trademark confidence as he kept a graceful grip on the third movement’s perversely twisting time signatures.”

--Alyn Wambeke (April 25, 2003)

Jacksonville Times-Union: “Emotions ran high in the first of this weekend’s three Masterworks concerts, as the ensemble offered an evening of high drama and passion in the Romantic tradition...conductor Michael Buttermann and the players threw themselves into this fairy tale with a great deal of charm (Dvorak *Noon Witch*)...Buttermann and the strings took Elgar’s swells and dynamic surges to the far boundaries of melodrama, without becoming overwrought or precious; the results were flawless and emotionally compelling.” (Elgar *Enigma Variations*)

--Alyn Wambeke (March 8, 2003)

Spokane Spokesman-Review: “The evening’s guest conductor had clearly achieved a remarkable rapport with the symphony’s musicians in his short week working with them. Some of the reasons were easy to see. Buttermann’s beat is clear and uncluttered by “conductorly” posturing. It was obvious that he knew what he wanted and had the technique to achieve his goals efficiently. The orchestra players rewarded his skills with some of their finest playing.”

--Travis Rivers (February 15, 2003)

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle: “Conductor Michael Buttermann gave an energetic account of the score, conducting the RPO with a hyper-emotional intensity that brought out all the glory and grandeur of Tchaikovsky”

--John Pitcher (November 30, 2002)

Albuquerque Journal: “Music Director Michael Buttermann injected definitive energy into the orchestra from its opening notes, conducting with dramatic flair and giving the singers supple support” (*Madama Butterfly*).

--Joanne Hoover (April 2, 2001)

Jacksonville Times-Union: “Buttermann led the orchestra in a well-delivered performance that explored new musical ground...Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony was grand and joyful and was delivered with finesse and a happy exuberance.”

--Jaimie Wilson (March 12, 2001)

Houston Chronicle: “For the first time, Orchestra X had a guest conductor: Michael Buttermann. He got the orchestra to play sveltely. Together, they supported the singers with just the right firmness.”

--Charles Ward (February 14, 2001)

Quad City Times: “Michael Buttermann oozed excitement for the music he was conducting, the orchestra played marvelously and the choirs were angelic.”

--Mary Louise Speer (November 19, 2000)

Albuquerque Journal: “At the core of the production, bringing plenty of intelligence to the performance was Music Director and Conductor Michael Buttermann. Buttermann, the opera’s staff music director propelled the

music with a clear sense of dramatic pacing, letting it open up to give the singers sympathetic support without losing forward momentum.”

--Joanne Hoover (October 24, 2000)

Mobile (AL) Harbinger: “The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra presented bold portrayals of legendary heroes Friday night. Michael Butterman, conductor, explained and demonstrated the cast of characters in the music reminiscent of the Leonard Bernstein young people’s concerts back in the 1950’s. Between his commentary and the well-written program notes, the concert was a literary delight and a musical bon mot. Butterman was well-suited to the idea of musical story since much of his conducting has been in opera, and his articulate descriptions were full of visual detail...Richard Strauss’ tone poem Don Juan has one of the most difficult openings of any concert fare, but its precise delivery set the tone for the rest of the program...the orchestra’s playing was extraordinarily clean—entrances sounded as if they were made by one instrument with many timbres. And the performance was one of the most musical that we have heard in a long time. The audience responded with Bravos at the end of the demanding and well-executed program.”

--Patricia Pinson (January 19, 1999)

Santa Fe New Mexican: “Under the baton of guest conductor Michael Butterman, the Santa Fe Symphony and Chorus found just the right lead for its Sunday afternoon *Messiah* in Sweeney Center. Butterman brought out the best in his forces by emphasizing tonal lightness and rhythmic clarity in the orchestra...Butterman showed other strengths as well: a fine sense of Handel’s arching phrases; an assured podium manner; a clear beat; good cues to the chorus.”

--Craig Smith (November 24, 1998)

New Mexico Arts Alive!: “Guest conductor Michael Butterman lent a fine, controlled hand in a musically secure, well-paced reading. He was a steadying force at all times and maintained good, integrated balance between stage and orchestra.”

--John Seagrave (March 25, 1998)

The Akron Beacon Journal: “The music gets treated to vital, expressive playing from the orchestra, expertly directed by Michael Butterman.”

--Elaine Guregian (June 15, 1997)

The Alliance Review: “...and what glorious music it is. It begins with a glowing reading of the overture under the suave, controlled conducting of Michael Butterman and continues that way throughout the evening.”

--Thomas Harper (June 12, 1997)

Baton Rouge Advocate: “Among many excellent individual performances, top honors must go to conductor Michael Butterman. He whipped the orchestra and cast into fine shape. Ensemble was very good. Butterman certainly made no concessions to his student performers in terms of tempo. The score rollicked along—just as it should.”

--David Coco (April 20, 1997)

Baton Rouge Advocate: “...one of the best-programmed and best-played orchestral concerts in the Baton Rouge area this season. Conductor Michael Butterman is determined to explore some of the less-traveled byways of symphonic literature...[about *Carmen Suite No. 1*]...Butterman’s reading was fresh in its simplicity and vigor...the string tone was full and lush. Butterman has a fine ear—he gets his student wind players to listen to each other and tune precisely...[about Elgar *Chansons de matin* and *nuit*]...Butterman wrung every nuance from the sentimental works. The orchestra’s performance was beyond reproach...[about Berwald *Symphony No. 4*]...again, Butterman and the orchestra gave a wonderful performance. The quirky rhythmic and harmonic aspects of the work were delightfully brought out. The strings managed fast passage work with great aplomb...In terms of program and performance, Thursday night’s LSU Symphony concert would be hard to better.”

--David Coco (November 9, 1996)

The Cleveland Plain Dealer: “Michael Buttermann conducted with vitality and affection.”

--Donald Rosenberg (June 15, 1996)

Baton Rouge Advocate: “...a clear beat and unusual attention to dynamic subtlety and inner voicing, crucial in both the Wagner and Cesar Franck’s *D Minor Symphony*, both thickly scored. Perhaps the most impressive aspect of Buttermann’s Wagner was its clarity. Though the orchestra employed is quite large, voicing was always clear, and intonation between strings and winds was excellent.”

--David Coco (October 7, 1995)

Variety: “Musical Director Michael Buttermann finessed first-rate work from the orchestra.”

--Daniel Selznick (August 17, 1992)

New York Newsday: “Musical Director Michael Buttermann is on a professional level.” [referring to an IU student production of Bernstein’s *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*]

--Tim Page (August 13, 1992)

The Washington Post: “The musical direction, by Michael Buttermann, is loving—an embrace of Bernstein’s neglected score.”

--Lloyd Rose (August 12, 1992)

The Indianapolis Star: “Musically, the show is in good hands, with director Michael Buttermann eliciting a lively treatment of Bernstein’s score on opening night.”

--Jay Harvey (July 16, 1992)

The Bloomington Voice: “Undoubtedly the best performance of anything I’ve seen within the walls of IU’s Musical Arts Center.”

--Joseph A. Nickell (July 15, 1992)

Louisville Courier-Journal: “*1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*’s music is under the skillful direction of Michael Buttermann.”

--William Mootz (July 14, 1992)

CURRICULUM VITAE

Current Conducting Positions:

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra: Principal Conductor for Education and Outreach.

Conducting Positions: Plan and conduct educational and community-oriented concerts for audiences of all ages. Only position of its kind in the United States. 2000-present.

Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra: Associate Conductor. Conduct concerts on all of the orchestra's major series. Assist Music Director in artistic matters and coordinate educational and outreach activities. 2000-present.

Opera Southwest: Music Director. (Albuquerque, NM). Conductor and Music Director for this fast-growing regional company producing grand opera as well as children's and contemporary opera works. 1998-present.

Wintergreen Music Festival: Faculty Member. (Virginia). Duties include conducting Wintergreen Festival Orchestra and Academy Fellows' Orchestra. 2001- present.

Guest Conducting:

Kansas City Symphony Orchestra. June 10, 2005.

Shreveport Symphony Orchestra. May 7, 2005.

Winston-Salem Symphony Orchestra. February 5-8, 2005.

Abilene Philharmonic Orchestra. October 30, 2004.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra. May 26-30, 2004.

Oregon Symphony Orchestra. April 24, 2004.

Syracuse Symphony Orchestra. February 27, 2004.

San Antonio Symphony Orchestra. April 13, 2003.

Spokane Symphony Orchestra. February 14, 2003.

New Mexico Symphony Orchestra. September 1, 2002; May 26, 2003.

Houston Symphony Orchestra. August 23, 2002.

Hartford Symphony Orchestra. July 12, 2002.

Eastman School of Music. Philharmonia and ESSO. January 30, February 1, 2002.

Quad City Symphony Orchestra. (Illinois/Iowa). November 18, 2000; November 17, 2001;

November 23, 2002; November 22, 2003, November 20, 2004.

Orchestra X. (Houston, TX.). *Gianni Schicchi*. February 11-12, 2001.

Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. Formerly New Orleans Symphony. March 19-22, 1998; July 2-3, 1998; October 23, 1998; November 13-14, 1998; January 5-8, 1999; April 16-18, 1999; May 14, 1999; June 4-5, 1999; July 2-3, 1999; April 7, 2000; May 19, 2000; July 4, 2000, May 20, 2005.

Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra. May 13, 14, 2000; June 3, 4, 2000.

Asheville Lyric Opera. (Asheville, NC). Conductor for production of *Don Pasquale*. April 2-4, 2004. Also conducted *I Pagliacci*. May 26-28, 2000.

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. May 10-11, 2000.

Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra. 1999 season's opening concert: June 30, 1999; also August 19-21, 1999.

Santa Fe Symphony. Subscription concert with orchestra and chorus. November 22, 1998.

National Orchestra of Moldova. Appeared as conductor of program of American music, November 1997. Subsequently invited to assume post of Principal Guest Conductor.

Opera Southwest. Albuquerque, NM. Conductor for production of *Turandot*. March 1998. Subsequently appointed as Music Director.

American Harp Society. Conductor for concerto program presented at national convention. June 1998.

Competitions/ Awards:

Seiji Ozawa Fellowship. 1999 award winner for study at Tanglewood Music Center.

Prokofiev International Conducting Competition. St. Petersburg, Russia. Diploma Prize winner. May 1999.

Besançon (France) International Conducting Competition--Finalist. First American to achieve this status in more than six years. September 1997.

Phi Kappa Phi/LSU Alumni Association Non-Tenured Faculty Award. One of three recipients university-wide. In recognition of outstanding achievement in one's field. May 2000.

Previous Conducting Positions:

Director of Orchestral Studies, LSU School of Music. Conductor of the nationally recognized Symphony, Philharmonia, and Opera Orchestras. Coordinator of graduate

Associate Music Director, Ohio Light Opera. Conductor for over 35 performances per season of light opera standards and rarities. 1995-1997.

Associate Conductor, Columbus Pro Musica Orchestra. Duties included conducting concerts, subscription concerts, programming and conducting the Family Series and Discovery serving as cover conductor and assisting the Music Director with artistic planning. Co-appointment as **Chorusmaster**. 1992-1995.

Founder and Music Director, Columbus Youth Orchestra. Responsible for programming, conducting and coordinating artistic effort with the community's schools. 1994-1995.

Music Director and Conductor, Bernstein's 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (IU Opera Theater). Performances at the Kennedy Center. 1992.

Indiana University Studio Opera. Music Director and Conductor for *The Fantasticks* (Spring 1994), Mozart's *The Impresario* (Spring 1993) and world premiere of Richard Faith's *The Little Match Girl* (Fall 1992).

Indiana University Opera Workshop. Music Director, 1993-1994.

Indiana University Chamber Opera. Music Director for 1992-1993 season.

Pro Arte Singers. Music Director for early music ensemble. Conducted singers, instrumental ensembles and Indiana University Baroque Orchestra. Spring 1993.

Singing Hoosiers. Music Director and Visiting Lecturer (IU). Led 120-voice Grammy-nominated group in semester of concerts. Prepared them for performances with Indianapolis Symphony under direction of Erich Kunzel. Fall 1993.

University of Virginia. Music Director and Conductor of Glee Club (1988-1991), University Singers (1988-89) and Virginia Chamber Chorus (1987-88).

Maryland Chorus. Assistant Conductor. Assistant for Maryland Handel Festival. 1989-1990.

Previous Teaching Positions:

Director of Orchestral Studies, LSU School of Music (see *Previous Conducting Positions*).

Visiting Faculty, Indiana University. Conducted university choral ensembles and worked with opera productions, 1993-94. Also appointed as Associate Instructor for daily conducting classes. Fall 1991 and Spring 1994.

Faculty Member. Music Department, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. 1990-1991.

Sabbatical Replacements. Twice at Indiana University (Singing Hoosiers and Pro Arte Singers) and at the University of Virginia (University Singers) appointed to fill temporary faculty vacancies.

Education:

Tanglewood Music Center: Conducting Fellow, 1999. Studies with Robert Spano, Seiji Ozawa, and Jorma Panula.

Indiana University School of Music: Doctor of Music candidate in conducting. Teachers include Robert Porco, Thomas Dunn and Thomas Baldner. 1991-1995. University Fellowship recipient.

University of Virginia: MA, 1990; BA with Distinction, 1988.

Recordings:

Victor Herbert--*Eileen*. Ohio Light Opera and Orchestra, Michael Buttermann, conductor.

Recorded summer 1997. Newport Classics No. 85615.

“The Art of the American Singer.” Michael Buttermann, conductor. Newport Classics No. 85636.

Radio Broadcasts: NPR’s Performance Today.

Five national broadcasts of performances given with the Jacksonville Symphony. Broadcast dates: June 24, July 2, July 4, October 25, 2002; February 11, 2003.

Workshop Hosted:

Host for national conducting workshop, sponsored by the Conductors Guild, Inc. Held at LSU. November 1997.

Affiliations: American Symphony Orchestra League, Conductors Guild