



CHRISTIAN BADEA

CONDUCTOR

The Romanian Foundation for Excellence in Music

Christian Badea - President

www.frem.ro



Christian Badea has received exceptional acclaim throughout his career, which encompasses prestigious engagements in the foremost concert halls and opera houses of Europe, North America, Asia and Australia.

Equally dividing his time between symphony and opera conducting, Christian Badea has appeared as a frequent guest in the major opera houses of the world.

At the Metropolitan Opera in New York he conducted 167 performances in a wide variety of repertoire, including many of the MET international broadcasts.

Among the opera houses where Christian Badea has guest conducted, are the Vienna State Opera, the Royal Opera House of Covent Garden in London, the Bayerische Staatsoper in München, the Staatsoper in Hamburg, the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, the Grand Théâtre de Genève, the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam, the Royal Opera theaters in Copenhagen and Stockholm, the Oslo Opera, the Teatro Regio in Torino and the Teatro



Christian Badea at the Metropolitan Opera - New York

Comunale in Bologna, the Opera National de Lyon and in North America - the opera companies of Houston, Dallas, Toronto, Montreal and Detroit.

In recent years, Christian Badea has received great acclaim for his work at the Budapest State Opera (*Tannhäuser*, *Der fliegende Holländer* and *Parsifal*), the Sydney Opera with new productions of *Tosca*, *La bohème*, *Die tote Stadt*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, Oslo Opera – a new production of *Tannhäuser*, collaborating with stage director Stefan Herheim and Goteborg Opera – a new *Don Carlo* and *Turandot*.

In addition to 25 years of experience as artistic director and founder of two new international festivals, in USA and in Europe, Christian Badea was also guest of international festivals in Vienna, München, Paris, Verona, Florence, Hong Kong, Prague, Bucharest and Valencia.

His operatic repertoire encompasses more than 100 operas with particular emphasis on the works of Mozart, Strauss, Wagner, Verdi, Puccini, Tchaikovsky, as well as those of 20th century composers such as Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Berg and Samuel Barber, collaborating with the most important singers of the last two decades.

His discography includes the Saint Saens *Symphony no.3* with the Royal Philharmonic on the Telarc label, award winning recordings of symphonies of American composers Roger Sessions and Peter Mennin, as well as a live recording of Samuel Barber's opera *Antony and Cleopatra*, which won a Grammy Award.



Christian Badea with Plácido Domingo and Mirella Freni at the Metropolitan Opera - Season opening gala with "La bohème"

Christian Badea collaborated with the top singers of the last two decades such as -Plácido Domingo, Luciano Pavarotti, Thomas Hampson, Bryn Terfel, Rolando Villazón, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Natalie Dessay and stage directors Franco Zeffirelli, Werner Herzog, David Pountney, Bruce Beresford, John Copley, David Alden, John Cox, Stefan Herheim, Keith Warner, Andrei Șerban and others.

At Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw, Suntory Hall or Salle Pleyel, Christian Badea has conducted orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic and the BBC Symphony, the Gothenburg Symphony, the Czech Philharmonic and the Sankt Petersburg Philharmonic, the Amsterdam Philharmonic, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France the Accademia di Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, the RAI Orchestra in Torino , the Maggio Musicale Orchestra in Florence, the Gulbenkian Orchestra in Lisbon, the Budapest Philharmonic and the National Orchestra of Spain among many others. In Asia he conducted the Hong Kong Philharmonic and he toured Japan with the Tokyo Philharmonic.

Christian Badea received his initial training as a violinist at the Bucharest Conservatory of Music, followed by studies in Geneva and New York with Henryk Szeryng and Dorothy DeLay. He studied conducting in Brussels, at the Mozarteum in Salzburg with Herbert von Karajan and at the Juilliard School. One of his most important mentors in New York was Leonard Bernstein.



Christian Badea with Leonard Benrstein

In 2012 Christian Badea was appointed Principal Conductor of the Bucharest “George Enescu” Philharmonic and established the Romanian Foundation for Excellence in Music, dedicated to creating international artistic projects of the highest artistic value and helping the development of the best young musicians of Romania and Europe.

Among the Foundation projects are many orchestral and chamber music concerts involving renowned European artists in collaboration with the best young musicians of Romania and other countries, masterclasses, educational and community concerts, the Sibiu/Hermannstadt International Music Festival, as well as the “The Parsifal Project” at the Romanian Athenaeum and the Wagner Festival, scheduled for 2018 in Bucharest.



2

“PARSIFAL” AT THE ATHENAEUM

A PROJECT OF THE ROMANIAN FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC IN
COLLABORATION WITH THE "GEORGE ENESCU" PHILHARMONIC

BUCHAREST/ ROMANIA

The ROMANIAN ATHENAEUM is a smaller version of the Royal Albert Hall, and the conductor Christian Badea, turned stage director for his last appearance this season with the George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra, had the idea of transforming the venue into the Temple of the Grail for a semi-staged concert performance (May 14, 15) of the last act of *Parsifal*. The performance space in this building is beneath the dome, with the foyer below that, so extraordinary aural and visual effects could be created by placing the chorus directly beneath the audience and using the lighting to make the concert an immersive experience.



Parsifal at The Romanian Athenaeum

Badea was the mastermind behind the entire project, acting as conductor and promoter, and his efforts were well rewarded. The orchestra revealed both the detail and scale of Wagner's score at a level hardly achievable in an orchestra pit. The hall has 800 seats, allowing all the singers, Eric Halfvarson's Gurnemanz in particular, to concentrate on the dynamics and subtleties of their roles in a way that would be impossible in a larger house. Stefan Vinke was at his best as Parsifal, making use of his lyrical voice to portray a youthful character, valiant and pure. Béla Perencz was the last-minute replacement for an indisposed Levente Molnár, and managed to make a very good impression as Amfortas. As for Kundry, who has so little to sing, but so much to convey, she was strongly performed by Maia Morgenstern, known for her performance as the Virgin Mary in Mel Gibson's film *The Passion of the Christ*, completing the theatrical element of this unusual and powerful concert.

(*Opera*, September 2015, pp. 1156, *Parsifal* review)

About Opera Magazine

Described by the Daily Telegraph as 'the bible of the industry', OPERA has been the world's leading commentator on the lyric stage for over 65 years. It was founded in 1950 by the late Lord Harewood, and since then has provided unrivalled coverage of events through a mixture of features, reviews (live performances, recordings, books) and analysis, plus monthly listings of events worldwide and our famous 'We hear that' section. Our long-standing editors-Harold Rosenthal, Rodney Milnes and (since 2000) John Allison-have ensured continuity, and our editorial board includes many of the most distinguished opera critics from Britain's national newspapers. London-based, the magazine has an unrivalled network of international correspondents, covering performances from around the globe.

A short video of the event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9IGAls4Vvg>



3

IN THE PRESS

The conductor Christian Badea opened our ears afresh to the genius and novelty of the orchestration in the first ten minutes of the opera and kept sentimentality at bay thereafter without sacrificing emotional tension. The orchestra followed his lead to the letter.

(Michael Kennedy, *Opera*, Sept. 2008, pag. 1101, *La bohème*, Royal Opera House, 15 Iulie)

The house orchestra, under the superb and carefully direction of Christian Badea, had mastered every nuance of the gloriously involved score, from the quaint, occasionally queasy Mozart pastiches to the thudding, symphonic episodes through which the work's central tragedy is articulated, and proved itself deserving of the highest praise.

(Guy Dammann, *Opera*, Sept. 2009, pag. 1102, *Pique Dame*, Stockholm Opera)



Christian Badea with the Sankt Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra

Christian Badea conducted briskly, while also allowing more contemplative moments to make their effect.

(Erna Metdepenninghen, *Opera*, July 2010, pag. 850, *Tannhäuser*, Oslo Opera)

Wanting to bring Korngold's Die tote Stadt into the repertoire of Opera Australia but lacking - in the Sydney Opera House at least - room for an orchestra big enough for its requirements, the artistic director Lyndon Terracini took the lateral-thinking approach. The Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra spread itself out comfortably in the SOH's nearby Studio, the sound was piped in, and the audience had its ears ravished in a way rare in this space. Christian Badea was most capably in charge of the seduction while the répétiteur Tahu Matheson was in the Opera Theatre pit to cue the singers, who wore microphones so Badea could hear them. It was an ingenious solution.

(Deborah Jones, *Opera*, Oct. 2012, pag.1225, *Die tote Stadt*, Opera Australia, Sydney)

Ballo was the best of OA's new-year offering by quite a wide margin [...]. The performance in the pit, with Christian Badea at the helm, matched the spirited onstage goings-on.

(Deborah Jones, *Opera*, May 2013, pag. 589, *Un ballo in maschera*, Opera Australia, Sydney)

Under Christian Badea, the orchestra conquered the score, and the chorus sang superbly.

(Michael H. Margolin, *Opera*, Nov. 2013, pag 1449, *Fidelio*, Detroit Opera)



Sibiu/Hermannstadt International Music Festival 2014

Christian Badea, Founder and Director

Within this incredibly tense environment Christian Badea led the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra in a gripping performance of the music.

(Deborah Jones, Opera, Dec. 2013, pag. 1569, Tosca, Opera Australia, Sydney)

Both Lindstrom and Lee threw out rather more decibels than strictly necessary, Christian Badea kept the tempos brisk while supporting the surge and flow of the action, and the audience went wild.

(Deborah Jones, Opera, Oct. 2015, pag. 1263, Turandot, Opera Australia, Sydney)

The touche by the Royal Swedish Opera Orchestra following the revival premiere was a tribute to the Romanian conductor Christian Badea who secured playing by the orchestra marked by vigour, concentration and a transparent sonority. In addition- well balanced for the singers. But the tribute could just as well have been valid for the entire performance. This sparkling revival actually gave a sense of a new beginning for the whole Royal Opera, optimism was felt from the stage as well as from the audience.

(Svenska Dagbladet, Otello, The Royal Swedish Opera, Stockholm)

At the revival premiere on Saturday, something akin to a miracle occurred. The man behind this wonder – a first class example of music's power – was Romanian born American conductor Christian Badea.



Mozart Kammerphilharmonie

Sibiu/Hermannstadt International Music Festival 2014

He has worked with the orchestra's phrasing, its sonic liberation and interpretative capacity. In a completely wonderful way he has succeeded in transforming the paradoxical combination of focusing, compression and elementary explosive expression of late Verdi. His sense of the timbre's dramatic importance is extraordinary, also as a mirror of the entire spectrum of human emotions. Intrigue, compulsive jealousy, explosions and the loveliest, most heartbreaking lyricism formed a synthesis under Badea, which was genuine Verdi.

A lightning bolt a la Toscanini hit the first chord and the Royal Swedish Opera Orchestra played as if possessed. Now, reengage Christian Badea at once, preferably for a new production!

(Dagens Nyheter, Otello, The Royal Swedish Opera, Stockholm)

Altogether astonishing was the conductor, Christian Badea, who not only displayed an extraordinary sensitive ear for the singers, but also changed elegantly between the dramatic and the intimate.

(Aftonbladet, Otello, The Royal Swedish Opera, Stockholm)

The Romanian Foundation for Excellence in Music

Christian Badea - President

www.frem.ro