

BRIAN SCHEMBRI

One of the most brilliant musicians to emerge from Malta, Brian Schembri started his music studies under the guidance of his father Carmelo Schembri, very early establishing a reputation as a highly talented concert pianist, frequently performing on TV, radio and at public concert halls.

After he became the youngest ever to obtain the Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music (London) he continued his studies at the Kiev and Moscow "Tchaikowsky" State Conservatories. There he actively participated in the student concert life, both as pianist and conductor, winning first prize in the "Beethoven Concerto Competition". He obtained an M.A.(music) and did post-graduate course in piano with Alexander Snegiriou and Serguei Dorensky as well as conducting with Roman Kofman and Gennady Rozhdestvensky.

In 1989, he was appointed assistant conductor with Michel Plasson at the Orchestre du Capitole and the Theatre du Capitole de Toulouse, also collaborating with prestigious conductors James Judd, Edoardo Muller, Serge Baudo, Yuri Temirkanov, Garcia Navarro, Armin Jordan and Emmanuel Krivine.

He has been guest conductor with the State Philharmonic Orchestras of Ukraine, Macedonia, Kielce and Tirgu Muras, l'Orchestra Sinfonica di San Remo, l'Orchestre Symphonique et Lyrique de Nancy, the Sinfonietta, the London Mozart Players, l'Orchestre de Bretagne, l'Orchestra Ciutat de Barcelona, Oquestra regional de Murcia, the Philharmonic Orchestras of Odessa, Brasov, Novosibirsk, the Moscow Soloists, the Academic Orchestra of Lisbon, l'Orchestre Philharmonique de France, Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra, Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra, l'Orchestra Filarmonica Marchigiana, the Chamber Orchestra of Geneva, l'Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, l'Orchestre Nationale de Radio France, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, l'Orchestre National de Lyon, Sofia National Opera Orchestra, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, EU Chamber orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, the Svetlanov State Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Brian Schembri has been Chief Conductor of the OPF Orchestra, the Orquestra Metropolitana de Lisboa, Music Director and Consultant of Malta National Theatre "Teatru Manoel" and Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. Brian Schembri has been awarded the Malta Cultural Award and the Medal for Service to the Republic.

He has collaborated with soloists including Lucia Aliberti, Tatiana Lisnic, Karen Huffstodt, Sandrine Piau, Jose Cura, Joseph Calleja, Gianluca Terranova, Oleg Kulko, Alexandre Da Costa, Alexander Kniazev, Colin Carr, Sergey Antonov, Ludmila Berlinskaia, Oleg Poliansky, Balazs Szokolay, Anne Queffelec, Emma Johnson and has performed at the "Festival Massenet", "Kiev Symphonic Evenings", "Octobre en Normandie", "Les Rencontres Musicales d'Evian", "Festa da Musica", "Lisboa em Festa", transmitted live on Eurovision, "Festival MusicAtlantico", "Fêtes de Genève", "Festival de Piano Vendôme", "Henley Festival", "Kings Lynn Festival", "G7 Summit Concert" in Lyon which was televised internationally. He has also conducted opera productions with ARCAL, Ensemble Justiniana, the Atelier Lyrique du Centre, Opera Nomade (Paris), the Rennes and Nancy Opera Theatres, the National Opera and Ballet Theatre of Lvov, Opera Hong Kong, Lübeck Opera Theatre and has composed music for theatre productions at the Manoel Theatre and Teatru Strada Stretta in Malta and the Comédie Française in Paris.

Besides giving piano recitals in Malta, Italy, France, Ukraine, Switzerland, Germany, Russia and Great Britain, he has recorded a CD Piano Recital of sonatas by Beethoven, Schubert and Rachmaninov and other CDs of works by Charles Camilleri with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Divine Art Diversions DDV24126), Bach concertos with the European Union Chamber Orchestra (Divine Art DDA 25128), Tansman wind concertos with Diego Dini Ciacci and Fabrizio Meloni (CPO 555 079-2).

Receiving critical acclaim as an artist of high caliber for his strongly passionate and lyrical performances, he has forged a strong reputation for a moving profound musicality.

Press comments :

“The Malta Philharmonic Orchestra under Brian Schembri's direction is simply stunning...» - Tansman CD CPO (**Ihr Opernratgeber, Sven Godenrath**)

“Brian Schembri, the chief conductor, made it obvious that he did not only have the score of Beethoven's “Eroica” in his head but also in his fingertips. And so we heard with rather quick tempi warm colour mixtures, many dynamic shades, intensive tensions and only rarely too powerful sound concentrations.” (**Kleine Zeitung Kärnten, Austria**)

“The Orchestre National de France, conducted by Maltese condutor Brian Schembri, performed admirably throughout this long evening which lasted three hours.” (**La Clef RESMUSICA, Victoria Okada**)

“With Schembri we are in the presence of an eloquent musician in whom is combined humanity and high art, whose music-making is compassionate, yielding, grand... His way of holding a piece together, his shaping and masking of a composer's joins, his generation of dramatic tension and repose, reminded me of passed greats, of other worlds long ago.” (**Sunday Times of Malta, Ates Orga**)

“...These sparkling performances from Brian Schembri and the excellent Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra could not be more stylish or persuasively spontaneous, and the vividly atmospheric recording is first rate.” (**Gramophone Magazine, Ivan March**)

“... accompaniment of the Hong Kong Philharmonic would not be so beautiful without Brian Schembri's conducting and engagement with singer's performance making this show beautiful and impressive.” (**Wen Wei Po**)

“Under Brian Schembri's direction, the Lübeck Philharmonic Orchestra unfolds a maelstrom, which you can not resist. (**Kultura Extra, Heiko Schon**)

“Brian Schembri revealed the best of German Versimo in the ... heavy score ... This melodious violence and the well-chosen ensemble convinced the enthusiastic audience at the premiere.” (**Kieler Nachrichten**)

“Conductor Brian Schembri spreads a dense, colourful orchestral carpet ... This evening gives lots of sensual moments of joy...” (**NDR Kultur**)

“The audience was swept away by music, staging and cast into the maelstrom between dream and reality... the Lübeck Philharmonic conducted by Brian Schembri at times tender at others, masterly powerful” (**Schleswig Holstein Sunday**)

“Brian Schembri resuscitated the score to its full flourishing beauty, ... without exaggeration, a triumph for the Theater Lübeck and once again proof of the enormous capacity of the “smaller” houses!” (**Der Opernfreund**)

“...aristocratic, vibrant, elegant gestures, clearly designing the music, without dryness or heaviness...” (**Lyon Figaro, France**)

“...as soon as the curtain rises we are sure of success with Brian Schembri's clear and secure conducting...” (**Opera International**)

conducting...a strong, generous and broad vision, as lyrical as one could imagine, without excess...a completely convincing and magnificent sound.” (**Paris Normandie, France**)

“...light and full-bodied, unconventional conducting...as if instead of conducting, he works on the musical texture as a musician on his instrument...” (**Vecher, Yugoslavia**)

“...their playing was phenomenal, perfect. It was a wonderful show of irresistible conducting and flawless reactions of the musicians to the slightest nearly invisible gesture...” (**Gazeta Ostrowiecka, Poland**)

“...without the least fault in taste, there was passion and lyrical emotion...” (**Est Republicain, France**)

“...everything sounds as if it has been meticulously prepared, but the control is never paralysing and the final impression is of focused vitality...he infused the interpretation with unbelievable warmth.” (**The Sunday Times, Malta**)

“...he tackles the work with character and breadth...giving it delicacy and sensibility.” (**Ouest France**)

“...Brian Schembri with his nervous baton, his guiding gestures full of complicity and warmth, deserves a general bravo all for himself...” (**La Tribune Le Progres, France**)

“The reading...was intelligent, musical and it did justice to this masterpiece (Shostakovich Symphony nr 14)...it was a great interpretation...a great symphonic concert...clearly the best concert of the season and the best event of all the Portuguese lyrical season.” (**Crítica de Música - Álvaro Silvio Teixeira**)

“...a pianist of high calibre...” (**The Times, UK**)

“...very well equipped, both technically and emotionally...” (**The Daily Telegraph, UK**)

(updated March 2018)