

Yutaka Sado

Conductor

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Born in Kyoto, Music Director of the Tonkünstler Orchestra since the start of the 2015–16 season, Yutaka Sado is considered one of the most important Japanese conductors of our time.

After many years assisting Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa, Yutaka Sado started winning important conducting prizes such as the Grand Prix of the 39th «Concours international des jeunes chefs d'orchestre» in 1989 in Besançon, France, and the Grand Prix of the Leonard Bernstein Jerusalem International Music Competition in 1995. His close ties with his mentor led to his appointment as Conductor in Residence at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, which was founded by Bernstein. In December 1990, at the «Leonard Bernstein Memorial Concert» in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, Yutaka Sado conducted alongside other Bernstein protégés.

From 2023 the Tonkünstler Music Director will also serve as Music Director of the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra and, since 2022, he is the Artistic Consultant for the same orchestra, which was founded by Seiji Ozawa, among others. Since 2005, Yutaka Sado has been Artistic Director of the Hyogo Performing Arts Center (PAC) and of the PAC Orchestra. This concert hall and theatre has become one of Japan's leading artistic venues with some 60,000 subscribers annually. Yutaka Sado's fame in Japan is enormous, thanks in no small part to a weekly TV programme that he presented from 2008 to 2015 in which he brought the world of classical music closer to Japanese music enthusiasts. For almost 20 years he has been directing the annual performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, featuring 10,000 choral singers, that is held in a stadium in Osaka. Known as «Daiku» (in English: «the Ninth»), the event is held under the aegis of the Mainichi Broadcasting System (MBS), a major Japanese radio and TV network, and is hugely popular in Japan. Yutaka Sado leads regular tours with his Super Kids Orchestra, founded in 2003 in Hyogo to support the most talented primary- and middle-school pupils from all over Japan as part of an exemplary music education programme. Since 2003 he has also been principal conductor of the Siena Wind Orchestra, one of the few professional ensembles of its kind in the world, founded in 1990 and highly popular in Japan.

Yutaka Sado's career outside Japan started in France, where he was principal conductor of the Orchestre Lamoureux in Paris between 1993 and 2010. Over his career so far, Yutaka Sado has stood in front of many outstanding European orchestras. He has guested with the Berliner Philharmoniker, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Bayerisches Staatsorchester in Munich and the symphony orchestras of the BR, NDR, SWR and WDR broadcasters in Germany.

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Yutaka Sado has conducted the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Staatskapelle Weimar, the Dresden and Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestras, the Bamberg Symphony, Gürzenich Orchestra of Cologne and Tonhalle Orchester Zürich. He has also stood in front of the Orchestre de la Suisse-Romande, the London Symphony and the London Philharmonic Orchestras, the BBC Philharmonic, the Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Orchestre National de France.

In Italy he has conducted the Orchestra di Santa Cecilia Rom, the RAI Torino, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi and the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Yutaka Sado's US debut was with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington in 2018.

As part of his extensive concert obligations with the Tonkünstler Orchestra, tours have taken them together to Japan, Britain and, most recently, Germany, with an itinerary including performances in the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Kulturpalast Dresden and the Philharmonie Essen.

Yutaka Sado's many-faceted musical achievements have been documented in more than 50 CD recordings. The Tonkünstler Orchestra's own label, established in 2016, releases up to four CDs per year as in-house studio productions and live recordings from the Wiener Musikverein. They include «Ein Heldenleben» and the «Rosenkavalier» suite by Richard Strauss, Joseph Haydn's «The Day Trilogy» and his oratorio «The Creation», Anton Bruckner's Fourth, Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, Gustav Mahler's Second and Fifth Symphonies and orchestral works by Leonard Bernstein.

Concert season 23–24 © Tonkünstler Orchestra