

## ANTONY WALKER

### *Conductor*

Born in Sydney and now resident in Washington, Antony Walker is at the forefront of a new generation of Australian musicians, having established a reputation for artistic excellence in direction and performance both in Australia and internationally. He is equally at home with opera, symphonic, choral and chamber repertoire of all periods and has an extensive discography to demonstrate this.

Antony Walker has been appointed Music Director of Pittsburgh Opera in October 2006. He began his 2007 season conducting Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Britten's *Billy Budd*. The next performances are *Madama Butterfly* (October 2007), *Aida* (April 2008) and *The Capulets & The Montagues* (May 2008).

In recent years he has held a number of posts including Musical Director, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs from 1993 to 1997; Chorus Master and staff conductor, Welsh National Opera in 1998 -2002; Artistic Director, Washington Concert Opera 2002-2008 and Music Director to a number of vocal and instrumental ensembles in Australia which he founded and continues to work with from 1987 to the present day.

He now works regularly in the USA, and has appeared with a number of opera companies. Productions have included *Mitridate*, *Idomeneo* and Rameau's *Dardanus* for the Wolf Trap Opera Company; *La Bohème*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, a double bill of *I Pagliacci*, *Carmina Burana*, contemporary operas as *The Handmaid's Tale* by Poul Ruders, *Nixon in China* by John Adams, *The Elephant Man* by Laurent Petitgirard for Minnesota Opera; *The Magic Flute* for Cincinnati Opera; *Così fan tutte* and more recently *Rigoletto* for the Hawaii Opera. In 2005 Antony Walker made his debut with the New York City Opera conducting Händel's *Orlando*. His work with Washington Concert Opera has included *Béatrice and Bénédicte*, *Stiffelio*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Esclarmonde*, *Luisa Miller* and more recently *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Il Tabarro*. Among his future projects it's worth mentioning *Madama Butterfly* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (2008) and Rossini's *Tancredi* with Washington Concert Opera.

He regularly works for the Sugar Creek Symphony & Song, conducting a large symphonic programme to include Beethoven's *Symphony No.5* and *Appalachian Spring* by Copland.

During his time at Welsh National Opera his conducting engagements included *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Queen of Spades* and *La Traviata*. He has also conducted *Queen of Spades* for Teatro Comunale di Bologna, and assisted John Nelson with *Giulio Cesare* at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma.

Appearances on the international concert platform have included the Haydn *Creation*, a 500-voice performance of the Berlioz *Te Deum*; the world-wide simulcast of a performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* for the opening ceremony of the Nagano Winter Olympics; and concerts at the Sydney Opera House for the 2000 millennium celebrations. In 2005 he had a tour with Emma Kirkby. In May 2007 he conducted the Thessaloniki Symphony Orchestra and in January 2008 is scheduled a concert with Orchestre Colonne de Paris.

His commitment to contemporary composition and performance are evidenced by more than 70 première performances of works by Australian composers and many Australian premières of significant international compositions including Arvo Pärt's *St John Passion*, Poulenc *Voix Humaine* and Iannis Xenakis' *Idmen A and B*. Many of these performances were given under his direction by The Contemporary Singers, which he cofounded in 1986.

In Australia, Antony has conducted leading orchestras, chamber orchestras and instrumental ensembles around the country, including the Adelaide, Melbourne, West Australian and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras and the Australian and Adelaide Chamber Orchestras, Queensland Philharmonia Orchestra, and many of Australia's finest contemporary ensembles. He returns regularly to Sydney Philharmonia as a guest conductor. For the Opera Australia he has conducted *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Faust*, *Hänsel und Gretel* and *Die Zauberflöte*. In 2002 he conducted Handel's *Semele*, inaugural performances for Pinchgut Opera in Sydney, and in subsequent years Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Rameau's *Dardanus*.

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