

MARIUSZ SMOLIJ

Conductor

BIOGRAPHY

MARIUSZ SMOLIJ is considered one of the most consummate conductors of his generation. A frequent recording artist for Naxos International, he has been consistently gaining international critical acclaim, including praise from *The New York Times* for “compelling performances.” Maestro Smolij has led over 150 orchestras in 28 countries on five continents, appearing in some of the world’s most prestigious concert halls. In North America, he has conducted (among many others) the Houston Symphony, the New Jersey Symphony, the Orchestra of the Chicago Lyric Opera, the St. Louis Philharmonic, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, the New Orleans Philharmonic, the Hartford Symphony and Symphony Nova Scotia. Internationally, he enjoys a notable reputation, appearing with important symphonic ensembles in Germany, Italy, France, Switzerland, Holland, Israel, China, South Africa, Bulgaria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Poland. His engagements have included collaborations with the Berner Symphony and *Sinfonieorchester* Basel in Switzerland (recording a CD and leading a series of concerts at the *Tonhalle* in Zürich with the latter), performances with Sinfonia Rotterdam, the Florence Chamber Orchestra, the Israel Symphony Orchestra, the Jerusalem Symphony, *Orchestre Lamoureux* in Paris, the Jena and Kiel Philharmonics in Germany, the Belgrade Philharmonic, the Budapest Symphony Orchestra, the Sofia Philharmonic, the Bogota (Colombia) Philharmonic, the Johannesburg Philharmonic in South Africa, and all the leading orchestras in his native Poland—including Sinfonia Varsovia, the Lutoslawski Philharmonic and the Warsaw National Philharmonic.

Maestro Smolij is currently Music Director of the Riverside Symphonia in New Jersey and serves as the visiting professor of conducting at the Utah State University. He recently completed his 21 years tenure at the helm of Acadiana Symphony Orchestra in Lafayette, Louisiana. Between 2016 – 2020 he was the Artistic Director of Toruń State Symphony Orchestra in Poland and the International Karol Lipiński Violin Competition and Festival in Poland. He is a former Artistic Director of the National Forum for Music Philharmonic in Wrocław, as well as the International Festival *Wrocław Cantans* in Poland. His tenure with both American and Polish orchestras is marked by innovative programming, broad community appeal as well various creative collaborating projects, while significantly improving the high artistic level of the orchestras. He led the Wrocław Philharmonic on its first tour to the United States and in May 2024 organized and conducted the first European tour of the Acadiana Chamber Orchestra.

Maestro Smolij served on the faculty of the School of Music at Northwestern University in Chicago-Evanston as a professor of conducting and director of the chamber orchestra. Between 2011 - 2020, he was a guest faculty and guest conductor of the Tianjin Conservatory of Music in China.

In 2004 he appeared in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam with the Rotterdam Chamber Orchestra; in 2002 he made his Paris conducting debut with the *Orchestre des*

Concerts Lamoureux in the prestigious *Salle Gaveau*. In 2001 he made his highly acclaimed debut at New York's Carnegie Hall with the *Sinfonia Varsovia*. His frequent collaboration with this premiere Polish orchestra includes concerts on three continents—Europe, North America and Asia—and a series of recording projects featuring masterworks of Polish and American symphonic music. His first CD for Universal—with music by Copland, Gershwin and Bernstein—was released in July 2002; his premier recording for Naxos International (with music by Andrzej Panufnik) was issued in November 2006.

Other many recording projects for Naxos include: a CD with music by Polish composers Tadeusz Szeligowski (Poznań Philharmonic, Poland), Romuald Twardowski (Toruń State Orchestra), a CD with music by Ernst Bloch, two discs with music by Miklós Rózsa, and eight discs with music by Eugene Zádor (all with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Hungary). The recording with music by Polish woman composer Grażyna Bacewicz with *Capella Bydgostiensis* in Poland, released in November 2014, received “Fryderyk Award”, Polish equivalent of American Grammy

Maestro Smolij's reputation as a conducting pedagogue and orchestra builder extends to both sides of the Atlantic. He was a faculty member of the International Workshops for Conductors in the Czech Republic, teaches at professional conducting seminars in the USA and Poland, and was invited to present conducting master classes at the Zürich Conservatory in Switzerland. Between 2011 and 2020 he was visiting professor at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music in China.

Born near Katowice, Poland, Maestro Smolij is an accomplished violinist. Founder of the internationally recognized Penderecki String Quartet, he performed and recorded with this ensemble in Poland, Germany, France, Italy and the United States. After studies in Europe, he studied conducting in the United States, earning a doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music.