

Ira Levin

Music Director of the Theatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro

Ira Levin is known internationally for the great versatility of his musical activities. He has conducted over 1200 performances of 80 operatic titles and is equally at home in concert, with a vast symphonic repertoire. He has worked with many leading instrumentalists, composers and stage directors and conducted at important opera houses and orchestras worldwide.

He studied with the legendary pianist Jorge Bolet at the Curtis Institute, later becoming his teaching assistant. Also at Curtis, he had coachings with Felix Galimir, Mischa Schneider and Mieczyslaw Horszowski, played under Leonard Bernstein and worked for two years with Max Rudolf, one of the leading conducting teachers of the 20th century, until being engaged by Michael Gielen in 1985 for the Frankfurt Opera.

He held posts as assistant conductor at the Frankfurt Opera (1985-88), principal conductor of the Bremen Opera (1988-1996) and the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf-Duisburg (1996-2002) and as the principal guest conductor of the Kassel Opera (1994-1998).

He was the Music Director and Artistic Director of the Teatro Municipal in Sao Paulo (2002-2005) and of the National Theater of Brazil in Brasilia (2007-2010), bringing both organizations international acclaim. He introduced important works by Mahler, Janacek, Shostakovich, Sibelius, Busoni, Reger, Enescu, Schoenberg, Schmitt, Schnittke, Jolivet, Corigliano and many others to Brazil.

He was the Principal Guest Conductor of the legendary Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires from 2011-15, where he conducted 12 major opera productions, including the American premieres of Enescu's Oedipe and Glanert's Caligula, and many symphonic concerts.

He has performed with many orchestras and at opera houses throughout the world including the New York City Opera, Grand Theatre Geneve, Semper Opera (Dresden), Leipzig Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Montpellier Opera, Norske Opera in Oslo, Norrlands Opera in Umea, Cape Town Opera, Rio de Janeiro Opera, Theatro Sao Pedro in Sao Paulo, Dublin Opera, Düsseldorf Symphony, Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Duisburg Philharmonic, Hannover State Orchestra of Lower Saxony, Bruckner Orchestra in Linz, Badische Staatskapelle in Karlsruhe, Bremen Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, Portuguese Symphony Orchestra in Lisbon, State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Buenos Aires Philharmonic, Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra and all the other major orchestras in Brazil.

Ira Levin's recordings include two CDs of works by the American composer Michael Colina with the London Symphony and Colina's Requiem with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, all on the Fleur de Son and distributed by Naxos. The first studio recording of the 1899 first edition of Bruckner's Symphony No. 6 appeared on the Lindoro label. His recording of works by Reger with the Brandenburg State Symphony,

including his orchestration of the Bach Variations and Fugue opus 81, will soon appear on the Naxos label.

His over 40 publications include over several transcriptions for piano and cadenzas to Mozart concertos in addition to orchestrations for large orchestra of Busoni's monumental Fantasia Contrappuntistica, Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on BACH, Franck's piano quintet, five works by Rachmaninoff, Reger's Bach Variations opus 81, Respighi's Violin Sonata in b-minor and Brahms Piano Sonata # 3 opus 5. All of these are published by Edition Tilli of Finland and the complete orchestrations are also appearing in study score format in the "Repertoire Explorer" series of the Munich publisher Jürgen Höflich.

An accomplished pianist, Ira Levin was the first-prize winner of the American National Chopin Competition in 1980. He continues to appear in recital and concert, often leading concertos from the keyboard as well, including works by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven as well as Brahms's second concerto, which he played and conducted on very short notice after a major soloist cancelled. The first CD of his own piano transcriptions was released on the Lindoro label in 2007.

He has lived since 2011 in Berlin