



Howard Griffiths

Howard Griffiths was born in England and studied at the Royal College of Music in London. He has lived in Switzerland since 1981. From 1996 to 2006 Howard Griffiths was artistic director and chief conductor of the Zurich Chamber Orchestra, whose long and excellent tradition he successfully continued and developed extensively. This

also included many tours in Europe, the USA and China. The public and the press reacted enthusiastically to this collaboration both in Switzerland and abroad.

From 2007 to 2018 Howard Griffiths was General Music Director of the Brandenburg State Orchestra in Frankfurt. His start to his first season was enthusiastically received in 2007 by the press: «Howard Griffiths immediately made it clear where the journey with him and the state orchestra will go: to lightness, ease and transparency... in addition to all the emotional intensity and expressive simplicity, subtleties and thematic developments suddenly became apparent... That makes us curious and excited about other Griffiths repertoire revelations.» (MOZ)

In addition, he has appeared as a guest conductor with many leading orchestras worldwide; these include the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra London, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchester National de France, the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Warsaw Philharmonic, the Symphony Orchestra Basel, and the London Mozart Players, the Orquesta Nacional de España, Taipei Symphony Orchestra, various radio orchestras in Germany (the orchestra of the NDR, the Radiophilharmonie Hannover, the Sinfonieorchester des WDR, the hr-Sinfonieorchester, the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie), the Polish Chamber Orchestra and the English Chamber Orchestra and the Northern Sinfonia.

Howard Griffiths is also regularly involved in contemporary music. With the Collegium Novum Zurich, he directed the Swiss premiere of Hans Werner Henze's Requiem in the presence of the composer and worked closely with composers such as Sofia Gubaidulina, George Crumb, Arvo Pärt and Mauricio Kagel.

Howard Griffiths is always enthusiastic about new, unusual projects: with the Basel Symphony Orchestra he performed Gustav Mahler's 8th Symphony, the «Symphony of a Thousand», with over a thousand participants; Together with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra (ZKO), successful crossover projects have been created with Giora Feidman, Roby Lakatos, Burhan Öcal or Abdullah Ibrahim; with great success he also conducted the original music for films by Charles Chaplin live with the ZKO for film projection on a big screen.

More than a hundred and fifty CD recordings on various labels (Warner, Universal, cpo, Sony, Koch and others) testify to Howard Griffiths' broad artistic spectrum. For example, they contain works by contemporary Swiss and Turkish composers as well as first recordings of rediscovered music from the 18th and 19th centuries. This also includes more than 40 symphonies by Beethoven's contemporaries and the early Romanesque. His recordings of all eight symphonies by Beethoven's student Ferdinand Ries have received great praise from critics worldwide. The readers of the English magazine «Classic CD» chose Griffiths' recording of works by Gerald Finzi as «Classic CD of the Year» in this category. The recording of all four Brahms symphonies also received great praise: «... the result is an excitingly pulsating reproduction of the symphonies ... However, such flights of fancy are only possible with a sound body that makes music at the highest level and is based on trust with the conductor. Both apply to the excellent, highly motivated Brandenburg State Orchestra Frankfurt.» (Radioswissclassic)

Howard Griffiths makes music with numerous renowned artists, including Maurice André, Kathleen Battle, Joshua Bell, Rudolf Buchbinder, Augustin Dumay, Sir James Galway, Kathleen Battle, Renaud and Gautier Capuçon, Evelyn Glennie, Edita Gruberova, Mischa Maisky, Güher and Süher Pekinel, Mikhail Pletnev, Julian Rachlin, Vadim Repin, Maria João Pires, Fazil Say, Gil Shaham Sarah Chang and Thomas Zehetmair.

In addition to working with renowned soloists and orchestras, Howard Griffiths is extremely committed to supporting and promoting young musicians. This is reflected in his work at the Orpheum Foundation for the Promotion of Young Soloists, whose artistic director he has been since 2000. In addition, he is particularly committed to teaching music to children and young people: While he was artistic director of the Brandenburg State Orchestra, he was the initiator of extensive education projects with several hundred students a year – for this the orchestra received the special prize of the German Orchestra Foundation «Innovative Orchestra».

In addition, he has already written three successful music books for children together with the Swiss «Musik Hug» publishing house: «The Witch and the Maestro», «The Orchestral Mice» and «The Flying Orchestra», each of which was released with the CD of the concert version with speaker and all three have been awarded several prizes.

Howard Griffiths was named a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 2006 in the annual New Year's Honours List, which Queen Elizabeth II announced on New Year's Day, and in June 2019 the State of Brandenburg awarded him the «Order of Merit» for his artistic achievement and social commitment.
