

Artis—Naples

Home of The Baker Museum
& Naples Philharmonic

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Alexander Shelley Sharon and Timothy Ubben Artistic and Music Director

A “natural communicator, both on and off the podium” (*The Daily Telegraph*), Alexander Shelley performs across six continents with the world’s finest orchestras and soloists. A passionate and articulate advocate for the role of music in society, he has spearheaded multiple award-winning and groundbreaking projects unlocking creativity in the next generation and bringing symphonic music to new audiences.

With a conducting technique described as “immaculate, everything crystal clear and a tool to his inborn musicality” (*Yorkshire Post*), Alexander is known for the precision and integrity of his interpretations, for his creative programming and for the breadth of his repertoire, having led among other things, 36 major world premieres; highly praised cycles of Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms symphonies; operas; ballets; and innovative multimedia productions.

He collaborates with artists such as Lang Lang, Joshua Bell, Daniel Hope, Hélène Grimaud, Itzhak Perlman, Renée Fleming and Thomas Hampson alongside some of the finest orchestras of Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australasia, including Leipzig’s Gewandhaus Orchestra; the Konzerthausorchester Berlin; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande; the Helsinki, Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Malaysian, Oslo, Rotterdam and Stockholm philharmonic orchestras; and the São Paulo, Houston, Seattle, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto, Munich, Singapore, Melbourne, Sydney and New Zealand symphony orchestras.

In September 2015, Alexander succeeded Pinchas Zukerman as music director of Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra, the youngest in its history. The ensemble has since been praised as “an orchestra transformed ... hungry, bold, and unleashed” (*Ottawa Citizen*) and his programming credited for turning the orchestra “almost overnight ... into one of the more audacious orchestras in North America.” (*Maclean’s Magazine*). Together, they have undertaken major tours of Canada and Europe, commissioned groundbreaking projects such as *Life Reflected* and *Encount3rs*, released multiple JUNO award-winning albums and, most recently, responded to the pandemic and social justice issues of the era with the NACOLive and *UnDisrupted* series. This season, they complete a major Schumann/Brahms recording cycle and perform multiple world premieres, including Philip Glass’ latest symphony, which they brought to Carnegie Hall.

Born in London in October 1979 to celebrated concert pianists, Alexander studied cello and conducting in Germany and first gained widespread attention when he was unanimously awarded first prize at the 2005 Leeds Conductors’ Competition, with the press describing him as “the most exciting and gifted young conductor to have taken this highly prestigious award.”

In August 2017, Alexander concluded his eight-year tenure as chief conductor of the Nürnberger Symphoniker. The partnership was hailed by press and audience alike as a golden era for the orchestra, transforming the ensemble’s playing, education work and international touring activities, including concerts in Italy, Belgium, China and a re-invitation to the Musikverein in Vienna.

As of January 2015, Alexander has served as principal associate conductor of London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, with whom he curates an annual series of concerts at Cadogan Hall and tours both nationally and internationally.

Alexander’s operatic engagements have included *The Merry Widow* and Gounod’s *Romeo and Juliet* (Den Kongelige Opera), *La bohème* (Opera Lyra/National Arts Centre), *Louis Riel* (Canadian Opera Company/ National Arts Centre), *Iolanta* (Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen), *Così fan tutte* (Opéra National de Montpellier) and *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera North).

In 2016, Alexander was awarded the ECHO prize for his second Deutsche Grammophon recording, *Peter and the Wolf*, and both the ECHO and Deutsche Grunderpreis in his capacity as artistic director of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen’s *Zukunftslabor*, a visionary project of grass-roots engagement, which uses music as a source for social cohesion and integration. Through his work as founder and artistic director of the Schumann Camerata and their groundbreaking 440Hz series in Dusseldorf; through his leadership roles in Nuremberg, Bremen and Ottawa; and through his regular tours leading Germany’s National Youth Orchestra, inspiring future generations of classical musicians and listeners has always been central to Alexander’s work.

He regularly gives informed and passionate pre- and post-concert talks on his programs, as well as numerous interviews and podcasts on the role of classical music in society. He has a wealth of experience conducting and presenting major open-air events; in Nuremberg alone, he has, over the course of nine years, hosted more than half a million people at the annual Klassik Open Air concerts — Europe’s largest classical music event.

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