

# biography



## THIERRY FISCHER

Swiss conductor Thierry Fischer is Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and also Chief Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic. From 2001-2006 he was Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Ulster Orchestra.

Fischer studied flute with Aurèle Nicolet and began his musical career as Principal Flute in Hamburg and at the Zurich Opera, where he studied scores with Nikolaus Harnoncourt and was profoundly influenced by him. His conducting career began in his 30's when he replaced an ailing colleague, subsequently directing his first few concerts with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe where he was Principal Flute under Claudio Abbado, who encouraged and inspired him in his new-found talent for conducting. Spending his apprentice years in Holland, Thierry Fischer has since appeared with many leading orchestras in the UK and Europe.

Fischer took up his title with BBC National Orchestra of Wales in 2006, and his inaugural concert featured Florent Schmitt's Psalm 47, subsequently recorded for Hyperion as the first in a series of French discs, and Messiaen's Turangalila, which was recorded live for the cover disc of the BBC Music Magazine. Together they have toured the USA, Spain and Prague, and their first disc of Stravinsky ballets was released in August 2009 for Signum Records. Fischer and his BBC orchestra appear every year at the BBC Proms in London, and have together mounted major celebrations of the music of Dutilleux and Messiaen.

Fischer has been Chief Conductor with the Nagoya Philharmonic since April 2008, fulfilling with panache his brief to refresh the artistic programming and quality of performances. He makes his Tokyo debut in May 2010 when he will take the Nagoya Philharmonic to Suntory Hall.

During his tenure in Belfast with the Ulster Orchestra, Fischer toured with the orchestra to Prague and New York and appeared several times at the BBC Proms, conducted cycles of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann and Honegger, and began his relationship with Hyperion with a series of recordings of the works of Jean Francaix. His wider discography also includes recordings for, among others, ASV, Chandos, and a Frank Martin disc on Deutsche Grammophon with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe which was nominated for a Gramophone Award.

Fischer's hallmarks are a lightness of touch and transparency of texture, allowing room for vivid characterisation. He has a keen stylistic sense and brings a fresh approach to repertoire which extends from Bach, the classical repertoire and early Romantics; the 2nd Viennese school, the great French composers of the early 20th century, a keen advocacy of his compatriots Frank Martin and Honegger, and a particular feel for the music of Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Shostakovich. His affinity also with the unique textures and radical utopianism of Messiaen is no accident, and he played a major role in the BBC's Messiaen celebrations in 2008. Fischer regularly programmes contemporary composers such as Simon Holt (Composer in Residence at the BBC National Orchestra of Wales), and is a regular guest of the London Sinfonietta.

Last season Fischer made debuts with the Czech Philharmonic and with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic – joining the latter in a performance of Frank Martin's rarely-performed opera *The Tempest* in the prestigious Matinee series in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. The live recording will be released on Hyperion in Spring 2010. He also made debuts with several orchestras in the USA, including the New Jersey Symphony; in November 09 he will also conduct the Indianapolis Symphony for the first time and will return to the Utah Symphony.

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Already well-established in Europe, Fischer has conducted orchestras such as the Philharmonia, Orchestre National de Lyon, Berlin Konzerthausorchester and the radio orchestras of Paris (Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France), Stockholm, Hanover, Lugano and Saarbruecken. In 2009/10 he appears several times with the SWR Baden-Baden, in repertoire from Mahler to Britten and Holliger. In parallel to his symphonic career, Fischer's collaborative approach has fostered strong relationships with several prestigious chamber orchestras, notably the Scottish Chamber, Northern Sinfonia, Dutch Radio Chamber, and Ensemble Orchestral de Paris.

Thierry Fischer is represented by Intermusica.

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