



# Sebastian Lang-Lessing

– Dirigent

[www.lang-lessing.com](http://www.lang-lessing.com)

## BIOGRAPHY 2023/2024

### **Music Director Korean National Opera | Music Director Emeritus San Antonio Symphony**

Sebastian Lang-Lessing was appointed Music Director of the Korean National Opera in 2020. Since 2018, he has conducted over 12 new productions there. Among others, "Fidelio" – in collaboration with visual artist Kevork Mourad – opened up new ways of presenting opera during the pandemic. Sebastian Lang-Lessing is a passionate advocate of education. The Academy of the Korea National Opera was founded on his initiative. Today, the studio accompanies 18 singers and répétiteurs on their way into the profession. He gives numerous masterclasses and leads the National Opera on nationwide tours. In 2020, he made his debut with the KBS Orchestra in Seoul with a Brahms programme and has conducted many South Korean orchestras.

After ten highly successful years as Music Director of the San Antonio Symphony, Sebastian Lang-Lessing became MD Emeritus, allowing him to continue his deep relationship with the orchestra and his strong advocacy for the performing arts in South Texas. He was heavily involved in the re-establishment of the San Antonio Philharmonic.

Highlights include the performance of his Tristan/Elgar arrangement with the cellist István Várdai and the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra in Budapest and with the Liechtenstein Symphony Orchestra, conducting the "St Matthew Passion" at the newly opened opera house in Budapest and the closing concerts of the Tivoli Festival in Copenhagen with Renée Fleming.

### **International career in opera houses and concert halls**

Sebastian Lang-Lessing speaks five languages fluently. His curiosity, versatility, extensive repertoire and interest in all cultures make him a unique artist who holds the title of music director on all five continents. Lang-Lessing regularly conducts at major opera houses around the world, including Berlin, Hamburg, Paris, London, Bordeaux, Lyon, Palermo, Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Dallas, Houston, Washington, Vancouver, Cagliari, Sydney, Melbourne, Tokyo, Beijing, Seoul and Cape Town. He opened the iconic Oslo Opera House with a new production of "Porgy and Bess" in collaboration with Cape Town Opera, of which he became Music Director shortly afterwards. In Paris, he worked with Maurice Béjart on his spectacular interpretation of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with which he later toured Japan. Lang-Lessing conducted China's first production of an opera by R. Strauss, "Der Rosenkavalier" at the NCPA in Beijing.

Sebastian Lang-Lessing's symphonic repertoire extends far beyond his German roots. His close, personal connections to the symphonies of Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Beethoven can be heard in numerous recordings and concerts. He also has a great affinity for the French, Russian, Italian, American and contemporary repertoire. His friendships with composers such as Detlev Glanert, Brett Dean and Stewart Copeland have led to a series of new commissions and world premieres. He has a close artistic relationship with artists such as Renée Fleming, as evidenced by their joint album "Guilty Pleasures" for Decca.

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### **Deutsche Oper Berlin 1993–2001**

After his debut at the Deutsche Oper, Sebastian Lang-Lessing was engaged by Götz Friedrich as house conductor, making him the youngest artist to hold this position. He conducted an extensive repertoire of new productions and revivals, including the last production of his mentor Götz Friedrich. The opportunity to conduct hundreds of performances at a young age and to work with leading international singers and directors was decisive and formative for his musical future. In 2010, he conducted the highly acclaimed new production of Wagner's "Rienzi", which was released on DVD.

### **Music Director, Nancy, Opéra National and Orchestre Symphonique et Lyrique 1998–2006**

His time as music director in Nancy brought the ensemble to a national level and transformed it into the "Opéra National de Lorraine". Sebastian Lang-Lessing rediscovered the late Romantic French repertoire with this orchestra and recorded an award-winning cycle of symphonies by Guy Ropartz, among others. As a passionate pedagogue, Lang-Lessing has launched several initiatives and concert formats for children and young adults.

### **Principal Conductor, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra 2004–2011**

During his time with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Sebastian Lang-Lessing raised the orchestra's profile by strengthening its expertise in classical, early romantic and contemporary repertoire. With the TSO, he created an annual cycle in Sydney and led the orchestra on national and international tours. It soon became Australia's most-recorded orchestra. His close collaboration with Brett Dean resulted in a collection of 20 CDs of works by Australian composers. Lang-Lessing's recordings of the Schumann, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Schubert symphonies are a testament to the orchestra's exceptional artistry. In numerous masterclasses with the TSO and at the ANAM in Melbourne, he has promoted the next generation of conductors in Australia.

### **Music Director San Antonio Symphony 2009–2020**

The establishment of an annual festival in San Antonio, with over 20 performing arts organisations, underscores Lang-Lessing's creative season planning and sense of community collaboration. He opened the new Tobin Centre with Renée Fleming and the "Four Last Songs" by R. Strauss and later with a new production of "Salome" with Patricia Racette. "14 American Preludes" was his commissioned project with works by composers from America and Europe, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the orchestra and its diversity. Lang-Lessing also developed and supported various educational initiatives here. During his tenure, the orchestra developed its very own sound in the new hall.

By creating a baroque series that included opera, commissioning new works and performing several composer cycles, the orchestra expanded its repertoire and stylistic versatility. Lang-Lessing established contacts between many international artists and the orchestra and made San Antonio known as a creative centre in Texas. Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Vadim Gluzman, Olga Kern, Susan Graham, Renée Fleming, Kirill Gerstein, Lynn Harrell, Lang Lang,



Augustin Hadelich and many others were regular guests of the orchestra. Lang-Lessing himself has a long and deep artistic friendship with many of them.

### **Repertoire**

Through his international activities, Sebastian Lang-Lessing has built up an extensive repertoire in both opera and symphonic music. His operatic repertoire includes over 80 works, and his symphonic repertoire covers all eras from baroque to new and contemporary music.

### **Teaching**

Sebastian Lang-Lessing is in demand as a teacher for masterclasses all over the world. During his time in Australia, he taught masterclasses with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and collaborated with ANAM in Melbourne on various projects, concerts and masterclasses. Most recently, he gave masterclasses with the Lithuanian State Orchestra and the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the Talent Norge programme for young conductors. He regularly gives masterclasses in Seoul with the KNO Academy.

### **Training and prizes**

Sebastian Lang-Lessing studied piano in Essen with Detlev Kraus and Lübeck with Wilhelm Rau. He studied conducting in Hamburg with Klaus-Peter Seibel and in Vienna with Karl Österreicher. In 1990, he was awarded the prestigious "Ferenc Fricsay Prize" after his debut concert at the Berlin Philharmonie. He became Gerd Albrecht's assistant at the Hamburg State Opera and, a year later, became the first conductor in Rostock.

His discography for various labels can also be found on Spotify.

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