

DAVID HANDEL

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“Maestro Handel is a ‘messiah’ for orchestra”

The Miami Herald, Florida, USA

“David Handel elevates El Paso Symphony Orchestra... Mesmerizing.... The postured Handel, who grew more animated with each movement, kept it on track, on time and on the spot ... you could sense an almost magical connection between the music, the musicians and the conductor. Not only did the crowd respond with a loud and long standing ovation, but the musicians applauded him at length, something I haven't seen in three years of covering their concerts.... By making those musicians sound as good and alive as they did, and in such convincing fashion, Handel has to have established himself as a very strong front-runner ...”

El Paso Times, Texas, USA

“ The young maestro and envoy of American culture, David Handel – who possesses European education of the highest order (he was assistant to Kurt Masur at the Leipzig Gewandhaus) –, currently occupies a leadership role in Latin America... The debut of David Handel in Moscow forms part of the presidential mission Medvedev–Obama, as announced by the United States Ambassador... The refined conductor provoked a hurricane of emotional admiration in the hall... It was clear that Handel worked in great detail with the musicians of the Russian Philharmonic... It has been a long time since the Orchestra has demonstrated so excellent and stylized playing. Indeed, one sensed the strong hand of a truly professional conductor, ... who was not only able to bring out the form, but also filling it with every detail of its content. It is clear that in the communication with various conductors, the great creative potential of the ensemble's musicians has been awakened, above all when on the podium there is so brilliant a professional as David Handel... The orchestra sounded luxuriously and grandly ‘in tutti’.”

Magazine CULTURE, Moscow, Russia

“An impressive personality and demanding musician... David Handel, who got a sustained ovation at the last concert... threaded the beautiful melody from the guitar (Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez) gently to keep it from being covered by the orchestra, yet allowed its strong interpretation flow through. The performance blew the audience away both nights... What a trip... Handel whipped up the orchestra in fine style... Handel lets all hell break loose (Berlioz's “Fantastic Symphony”) with instruments going and blowing one moment, then shushes to solemnity before a return to heavy uproar. The audience went wild. Handel took so many bows he looked like a puppet on strings. He ‘took no prisoners’ keeping the orchestra in tow and in line! ...”

El Paso Inc., Texas, USA

“My experience with David Handel was extraordinary. During my long career, David is one of the best conductors with whom I have had the pleasure to collaborate. He possesses all the important and necessary qualities to be music director of any orchestra, even the most important. His great musicality, human touch, technical mastery and intelligence makes it possible for him to elevate the level of any orchestra.”

Sir Pepe Romero, international guitar soloist and recording artist

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"Handel's decisive style brought cohesive, blended sounds, precise attacks, and bold dynamics from the orchestra, in a performance that was polished, expressive and full of carefully shaped phrases throughout..."

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Wisconsin, USA

"Handel has brought the National Symphony of Bolivia to levels of public awareness and excellence heretofore unknown. His energetic podium manner and repose in real life are fresh air in our midst."

COSAS, International Syndicated Magazine, South America

"Much more than pure joy... The capacity crowd of more than 2,000 gave a massive 'YES' to this performance... The extremely notable interpretation of this universal classic (Beethoven's Ninth Symphony), under the direction of Maestro David Handel, revealed the true vigor of the original score... Every one of the singularities of each of the four movements was indicated by Handel with mathematical precision, but was at the same time filled with enchantment... All were received with an extended standing ovation... Musicians and public alike were radiant with joy"

Diario UNO, Mendoza, Argentina

"Replete with interesting variety... Emphasis was placed on rhythmic appeal. Fluid sections with ritardandi were particularly effective... Equally impressive in shape and accomplishment was the melancholy and dramatic... where Handel's attentive conducting was also remarkable for its sensitivity."

The Sunday Times, Malta

"The public burst into applause.... Yes, the concert was truly great; not only for the opportunity to enjoy the musicianship of violinist Schlomo Mintz, but because the Orchestra was so solidly guided by its music director David Handel in a well balanced program, full of emotion and one intelligently delineated."

Los Andes, Mendoza, Argentina

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BIOGRAPHY

Acclaimed on four continents for his passionate musical leadership and skill at energizing orchestras and audiences alike, David Handel is widely regarded as one of the most significant of emerging conductors. A multi-lingual world citizen, Handel has been described in the international press as “mesmerizing”, “decisive”, “commanding”, and “achieving a magical connection between the music, musicians and conductor.”

His sold-out Moscow debut in 2010 at Svetlanov Hall led to his immediate re-engagement and was soon thereafter named Principal Guest Conductor of the **Moscow City Symphony – Russian Philharmonic**.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Handel received a Bachelor of Musical Arts Degree in violin, philosophy and composition, and a Master’s Degree in orchestral conducting. Among his mentors were Gustav Meier, Elizabeth Green, Ruggiero Ricci and Kurt Masur. Even before receiving his graduate degree in conducting, Masur took Handel under his wing as his apprentice conductor at the **Leipzig Gewandhaus** and later invited him to conduct the **New York Philharmonic** in a preview of young conducting talent at **Carnegie Hall**. Counted among his many distinguished collaborators are Schlomo Mintz, Walter Ponce, Pepe Romero, Rachel Barton Pine, Peter Donahoe, Rafael Gintoli, Alexander Ghindin and stars of Moscow’s Bolshoi Theater.

At an early age, Handel was named Music Director of the **National Symphony Orchestra of Bolivia**, a position he held for fourteen years and where his tenure was characterized by unprecedented artistic growth and a many-fold increase in the Orchestra’s public. His achievements with the National Symphony of Bolivia have made that organization a model for orchestra building in Latin America.

His imaginative programming and initiatives have been the subject of profiles on National Public Radio (USA), the BBC World Service and in Russia Today, The Washington Post, USA Today, The San Francisco Chronicle, and The Guardian of London, to mention a few.

Concurrently, Handel served as Music Director of the Mendoza Symphony Orchestra (Argentina), as Founding Artistic Director of the Guadalquivir International Orchestra Festival and as Artistic Advisor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Guatemala. He currently holds positions as Artistic Advisor of the La Serena Symphony Orchestra (Chile) and as Principal Guest Conductor of the Moscow City Symphony – Russian Philharmonic.

Extremely varied, Handel’s repertoire spans much of the symphonic and operatic literature. Having led numerous first performances and world premiers, he has personally commissioned more than seventy original scores and orchestral arrangements, and has to his credit a considerable list of television and compact disc recordings.

Twice a Fulbright Senior Scholar, Maestro Handel is a laureate of the Chicago Artists International Program and has received numerous awards including two Rackham Center for

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Graduate Studies awards, the Marguerite Lapp Scholarship for Exceptional Musical Talent, two Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Illinois Arts Council awards, the Decoration of Illimani for Outstanding Community Service in the Arts (Bolivia), the UNESCO Pro-Santa Cruz National Prize in Culture (Bolivia), the Pedro D. Murillo Medal of Honor (Bolivia), the Nilo Soruco Arancibia Medal for his extraordinary contribution to the cultural life of Bolivia, and a fellowship from the Leipzig Gewandhaus (Germany). He has represented the United States around the world as a Cultural Ambassador through U.S. State Department Cultural Specialists and Public Diplomacy Programs.

As a cultural diplomat, David Handel has performed on important international stages as well as unconventional venues. In 2007, he led the combined orchestras of Baghdad, Erbil and Suleimaniya (Iraq) at the American Voices' Unity Festival, a solidarity initiative, supporting Iraqi orchestral musicians and young artists from throughout the country. He is one of the only American conductors to have performed in Cuba in recent years, was decorated by Bolivia's President with the Coat of Arms of the City of La Paz for his contribution to the cultural life of the country, and most recently conducted the annual season finale of the Malta National Philharmonic at the Girgenti Palace, hosted by Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi.

A Naxos recording artist, his current projects include recordings of works by Alberto Ginastera, Anton Rubenstein, George Gershwin and Isaac Albeniz. He has previously recorded music by American composer David Winkler for that label.

His wife Chemena is a pianist and native of the former Soviet Republic of Turkmenistan. When not occupied with his busy concert schedule, Handel, his wife and young son enjoy their time together at home on the West Coast of Florida.