

GRAZIELLA CONTRATTO



Graziella Contratto represents a new generation of conductors who focus on highly inspired and refreshing concepts in their programs from Renaissance to contemporary music. Surprising references in the choice of her repertory and an openhearted communication towards the audience reflect her important relationship with literature, architecture, dance and film.

In 1998 after her studies as a pianist, chamber musician, teacher for Music history and conductor, Graziella Contratto is invited by Claudio Abbado to become his musical assistant in the Berlin Philharmony and the Easter Festival in Salzburg. She assisted for Boris Godunow, Tristan und Isolde and Simone Boccanegra (Salzburg Easter Festival 1998/1999), *Così fan tutte* (with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Ferrara 2000) as well as for different recordings and World tours with the Berlin

Philharmonic orchestra conducted by C. Abbado.

In 2000 the Orchestre National de Lyon (David Robertson) elects Graziella Contratto *à l'unanimité* as their resident conductor : besides different tasks as a conductor, she will found the Académie de l'orchestre National de Lyon, a successful training platform for young orchestra musicians.

In 2003 the Swiss conductor Graziella Contratto becomes the new Artistic Director of the Orchestre des Pays de Savoie in France and thus the first female chief conductor in France. During the following six years, the orchestra enlarges its audiences and the French media applaud G. Contratto's programmes.

She works regularly with soloists and singers as Anna Larsson, Stefan Genz, Lothar Odinius, Patrizia Ciofi, Roberto Saccà, Renato Bruson, Donald Littaker, Raphaël Oleg, Anne Gastinel, Kolja Blacher, Michel Portal, Bruno Ganz, Nicolas Angelich

G. Contratto conducted the World Premiere of Hans Werner Henze's *Knastgesänge* at the Opera of Basle (1996). In the same year she also gave her debut at the Lucerne Festival performing compositions by Pierre Boulez on the occasion of Paul Sacher's 90th birthday. Several world premières of compositions by e.g. Andrea Scartazzini, Jörg Widmann, Daniel Gilet, Suzanne Giraud, Alain Béraud, Jean Louis Agobet etc. have been created under G. Contratto's direction.

In 2002 she produced Piazzolla's Tango-Operita Maria de Buenos Aires in Switzerland and directed the Opera-Collage Olympische Gesänge in Berlin's Pergamon-Museum, the beginning of a long-time artistic friendship with the German stage director and choreographer Mirella Weingarten, culminating in Viktor Ullmann's opera Der Kaiser von Atlantis (Theresienstadt 1944) in France.

She has conducted the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the Deutsche Kammerorchester Berlin in the Berlin Philharmonic concert hall, the Deutsche Kammerakademie Neuss, the Basler Kammerorchester, the Berner Symphonie Orchester, Camerata Schweiz and performed in Gidon Kremer's Festival "Les Muséiques" in 2005. Invitations to the Orchestre de Picardie, the Prague Chamber Orchestra and the Göttinger Sinfoniker followed.

As a musical consultant Graziella Contratto has cooperated with the film director Bettina Ehrhardt in her documentaries "Kielspur im Meer" about Luigi Nono, "We play", a portrait of Bobby McFerrin's friendship with Chick Corea and "wo ich noch nie war" (Helmut Lachenmann).

Between 2007 and 2013, Graziella Contratto was the artistic director of the Davos Festival - young artists in concert in Switzerland. Her original performing concepts (e.g. a conducting class for children, the Nomads' concerts), her choice of programs and the especially well received young composers' workshop with resident composers Wolfgang Rihm, Deqing Wen, Frangis Ali-Zade, Andres Bosshard and Erkki Sven Tüür led to a remarkable frequentation and an enthusiastic reaction by the audience and the medias.

In 2008 Graziella Contratto created a comic-symphonic project with Ursus&Nadeschkin and the camerata Schweiz which lived to see four reprises in different Swiss tours. In July 09 she conducted Verdi's "La Traviata" at the Opera Festival of Avenches, Switzerland and her performance was highly praised by the international press.

Since 2004, Graziella Contratto successfully runs conducting workshops for managers and executives both nationally and internationally. She regularly participates in radio and television programmes and in 2015, as successor to Heinz Holliger and Andrés Schiff, she will direct an edition of the music festival Ittinger Pfingstkonzerte.

Since 2010 she is

Since 2010, she is Head of the Department of Music at the Bern University of the Arts.

She has been awarded The Johanna Dürmüller Preis (2008), the Honor Medal of the City of Chambéry (2009) and the Cultural Award of Central Switzerland (2015).

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