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## **NAYDEN TODOROV**



For over three decades now, the talented art of **NAYDEN TODOROV** has been drawing bright creative climaxes in various genres, establishing itself on the most prestigious stages around the world.

His professional career began at the Dobrin Petkov Secondary School of Music in Plovdiv where at the age of 16 he made his debut as a conductor. Todorov founded the Plovdiv Youth Orchestra and toured with it around Europe. He studied conducting with Krastyu Marev and Alexander Vladigerov, from 1993 he studied with Karl Österreicher and Uros Lajovic in Vienna University, and in 1996 he specialized at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem with Mendi Rodan. He holds a Master's degree from New Bulgarian University, a Ph.D. from the University of London and a Master's degree in Cultural Management from New Bulgarian University. He has been a Fellow of the International St. Cyril and Methodius Foundation, the Borghese Foundation, the Rotary Club of Vienna and the Georg Wechter Foundation of Switzerland.

He received his first permanent international engagement in 1998 in Haifa, Israel, where he was selected from among more than 150 candidates to conduct the North Israel Symphony Orchestra. In the following years, he toured some of the major cultural centers in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. In 2000, at the age of only 26, he was invited to become Music Director of the Plovdiv Opera and Philharmonic Orchestra. With the

Plovdiv Philharmonic, he recorded the symphonies of Louis Glass for Danacord, as well as over 100 CDs for the record company IMO, and at the Plovdiv Opera he executed Dario Fo's super-production of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, with which he toured the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain. He received the Plovdiv Prize for his concert with the Plovdiv Philharmonic and John Lord.

Since 2001 Nayden Todorov's permanent partnership with the great Raina Kabaivanska began, and over the years he has conducted not only her masterclass concerts in Bulgaria but also her performances in Italy and Spain. In 2002 he made his debut with the Sofia Opera, with which he gave performances, concerts and recordings of numerous opera albums with famous singers, he was a guest at the Solothurn Opera Festival, and he carried out the first joint production with the Swiss director Gian Gianotti. At the invitation of the conductor Mikhail Angelov in 2003-2005 he became artistic director of the Burgas Opera and Philharmonic Society, and later – of the Danube Sounds Choir in Ruse. Since 2004 he has been conductor of the popular production "The Night of the Five Tenors", with which he has appeared on stages of the Berlin Philharmonic, Herkulessaal in Munich, Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, Liederhalle in Stuttgart, Alte Oper in Frankfurt, Meistersingerhalle in Nuremberg and many others. In 2005, he had his first contact with Grandopera Wichita, where he realized various productions with international casts.

In the period 2005-2017 Nayden Todorov was the director of the State Opera in Ruse, with which he performed in Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, with Bulgarian and foreign singers. With the Ruse Symphony Orchestra he also recorded several CDs, one of them with works by Pancho Vladigerov for the Naxos company. He has released a DVD of a concert in Bucharest with the Ruse Philharmonic and John Lord. With the Ruse Opera and Ballet, he tours Italy, South Korea and Dubai. His production of Shostakovich's *Katerina Izmailova*, directed by Vera Nemirova, remains iconic and was covered in a special broadcast on Austrian television as well as by the prestigious magazine *Die Opernwelt*. For his work with the Ruse Opera, Nayden Todorov has received various awards – several Crystal Lyres, Golden Book, Emil Tchakarov Award, Musician of the Year, and in 2016 he was awarded the title of Honorary Citizen of the City of Ruse.

In 2006, he made his debut with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and a year later was invited to conduct the concerts of the ensemble's tour to the largest cities in Japan. In 2009, he gave his first concert at Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, and in 2010 he made his debut at the Vienna Volksoper in performances of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker* with the Vienna State Ballet. Nayden Todorov has conducted hundreds of symphony concerts, opera and ballet performances in Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, Romania, Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Turkey, Russia, Israel, Egypt, China, South Korea, USA, etc. He has participated in a number of international crossover projects, including a series of concerts with Deep Purple's keyboardist John Lord, as well as Anastasia, Dougie White of Rainbow, Anna-Maria Kaufmann, Steve Balsamo, Cassia Lascaux, to name a few. In 2019, Disney organized the first major Star Wars concert presentation ("Star Wars in a Concert") in major cities in China, featuring the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Nayden Todorov.

Nayden Todorov has worked in Bulgaria with all symphony orchestras and opera houses, but he is particularly bonded to the Sofia Philharmonic, where he debuted in 2001. Since 2004 he has been its permanent guest conductor, later principal guest conductor, and in 2017 he was elected director. For his performance of Mahler's *Symphony No 2* with the Sofia Philharmonic (2005) he received his first Crystal Lyre. The same year, he made a new recording of the National Anthem of Bulgaria the soloists being Raina Kabaivanska, Nicola Ghiuselev, Roberta and Orlin Goranov. For the promotion of Bulgarian music with the

Philharmonic, he received the Golden Staves Award of the Union of Bulgarian Composers, the Golden Book Award, the Plaque of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, etc. In 2008, together with the Sofia Philharmonic and soloists Svetlin Roussev, Ludmil Angelov and Borislav Yotsov, Nayden Todorov made his debut at the UNESCO Hall in Paris. In early 2018, he conducted the Sofia Philharmonic at the concert opening the Bulgarian Presidency of the European Council at the world-famous BOZAR Hall in Brussels, with soloists Sonya Yoncheva and Ludmil Angelov. In 2019 he performed with the Philharmonic with great success in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein in Vienna and in the Vatroslav Lisinski Hall in Zagreb. In May 2022 he triumphed again with the Sofia Philharmonic in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein. Then in September he conducted the first visit of the Vienna Symphony in Bulgaria.

In October 2022 he has just enjoyed great success with concerts in Bogotá with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Colombia, with the renowned cellist Santiago Cañón-Valencia as a soloist, as well as a concert with the Sanremo Symphony Orchestra; in November 2022 was on tour with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra again in Zagreb, and in December he was also perform at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall.

In concerts with the Sofia Philharmonic, his partners are some of the world's most distinguished musicians such as Raina Kabaivanska, Angela Gheorghiu, Sonya Yoncheva, Vesselina Katsarova, Paul Badura-Skoda, Yuri Bashmet, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Sarah Chang, Maxim Vengerov, Vadim Repin, Julian Rachlin, Gautier Capuçon, Midori, Plácido Domingo, Martha Argerich, Emmanuel Pahud, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Sergei Nakariakov, Gidon Kremer, Maria João Pires, Camille Thomas, Ivo Pogorelich to name a few.

Since 2018, Nayden Todorov has become the host of Bulgarian National Television's classical music programme In Concert with BNT 2. He leads orchestral conducting courses in Bulgaria and master classes in Portugal and Spain. He was a member of the jury of the International Competition for Conductors "The Blue Danube" (2013) and the chairman of the jury of the Ghena Dimitrova Singing Competition.

In 2019, Nayden Todorov was elected Musician of the Year for the second time, In 2020 he received the Bogdan Bogdanov Prize for Humanities, on 1 November 2021 he was again awarded the Crystal Lyre, and in September 2022 he received the Culture Prize of Sofia Municipality. In the first half of 2023 Nayden Todorov was also Minister of Culture in the Caretaker Government in Bulgaria.