

L2 ARTISTS

VISWA SUBBARAMAN

CONDUCTOR



GENERAL MANAGEMENT

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Internationally acclaimed American conductor, Viswa Subbaraman, is currently Artistic Advisor to the Skylight Music Theatre in Milwaukee. During his tenure as Artistic and Music Director at the Skylight, he has expanded the company's repertoire and placed it at the forefront of the industry in producing contemporary opera and reimaging traditional works. His most recent production was Thomas Ades' *Powder Her Face*, directed by Robin Guarino, which was declared "a triumph for Skylight's artistic leader" (urbanmilwaukee.com) and he was praised for his "sublime control of this music, and the singers" (broadwayworld.com). Other highlights include Beethoven's *Fidelio*, set in a Bollywood production, which he conducted and stage directed; the world premiere of Somtow Sucharitkul's *Snow Dragon* which traveled to Bangkok, Thailand; Philip Glass' *Hydrogen Jukebox*; and acclaimed mountings of Puccini's iconic *Tosca* and Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, modified for Skylight's unique, 200-seat Baroque theater. Recognition during his time at the Skylight include being selected by the Milwaukee Business Journal as one of Milwaukee's 40 Under 40 for 2015, receiving an invitation to speak at INKTalks in India as a 2014 INK Fellow and being named by Dave Begel as one of Milwaukee's 14 most influential people.

In addition to his duties at the Skylight in the 2015-2016 season, Subbaraman makes his debut with the Opera Saratoga leading the American Premiere of Philip Glass' *The Witches of Venice* and collaborates with Milwaukee Opera Theatre on a production of Missy Mazzoli's *Songs from the Uproar*. In the 2016-2017 season, he will make his Fort Worth Opera debut in the World Premiere of *Voir Dire*.

Previous to his time with the Skylight, Subbaraman was the Artistic Director/Founder of Opera Vista, Houston's innovative contemporary opera company. In his time with Opera Vista, Mr. Subbaraman was selected by the HoustonPress as a *100 Creatives 2012*: one of the one hundred most creative people in Houston. Opera Vista and Mr. Subbaraman were also honored with the 2010 Mastermind Award from the HoustonPress for artistic creativity and innovative outreach. Performance highlights during his tenure with Opera Vista include the world premiere of James Norman's *Wake...*, the world premiere of Line Tjørnhøj's *Anorexia Sacra* (marking Mr. Subbaraman's stage directing debut), the Texas Premiere and historic New Orleans premiere of Amy Beach's *Cabildo*, the world premiere of Somtow Sucharitkul's *The Silent Prince*, and the creation of the annual Vista Competition for new opera.

Equally comfortable in the orchestral realm as with opera, Mr. Subbaraman served as Assistant Conductor of the Orchestre National de France where he assisted Kurt Masur and visiting guest conductors, such as distinguished artists as Bernard Haitink, Riccardo Muti, and Sir Colin Davis. Highlights of his tenure with the Orchestre National de France include the world premiere of the *Overture du Roi Lear* by Paul Dukas, a performance of the Stravinsky *Octet* with soloists of the orchestra in Paris' famed Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and the French premiere of the *Symphony for Trombone and Orchestra* by Ernst Bloch, which has been recorded and released under the title *Tranquille* through the *districlassic* label. Mr. Subbaraman has been featured as a guest conductor of the Orchestre National de France, and he was invited to conduct a New Year's Day concert with the Orchestre Symphonique et Lyrique de Nancy.

Additional conducting appearances have included the Orchestre National d'Ile de France, Colorado Springs Philharmonic (USA), the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Thames Philharmonia (London), the Bombay Chamber Orchestra (India), Orchestre Symphonique et Lyrique de Nancy, the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra (New York, USA), Longview Symphony Orchestra (TX), the Midland/Odessa Symphony and Chorale (USA), the Orchestre National du Capitole Toulouse, the AudioInversions Contemporary Music Ensemble (TX), the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra (PA), and the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra (Santa Cruz, CA) as part of the Cabrillo Festival conducting seminar.

In 2005, Mr. Subbaraman was awarded the Herbert von Karajan Conducting Fellowship by the Herbert von Karajan Centrum and American Austrian Foundation which resulted in his residency at the Salzburg Festival.

Current as of August 26, 2016. Please destroy all previous materials.

He also took part in the 2006 Beethoven Seminar sponsored by the Beethoven Orchester of Bonn and the BeethovenHaus, Bonn. Normally a seminar open only to German conductors, Mr. Subbaraman was invited by Maestro Masur to take part in lectures given by BeethovenHaus scholars and was also invited to conduct the Beethoven Orchester of Bonn on the final concert. Mr. Subbaraman has conducted the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington D.C. at the Kennedy Center as a Debut Conductor in the National Conducting Institute.

Raised in West Texas, Viswa Subbaraman studied at Duke University where he earned degrees in both music and biology. After completing his degrees, he worked as assistant to William Henry Curry, Resident Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. Upon completion of his master's degree from Texas Tech University, he was awarded a Fulbright Grant to study conducting with John Nelson in Paris where he also worked as the Visiting Assistant Conductor of the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris. Two months after arriving in Paris, Subbaraman was offered a post by Kurt Masur with the Orchestre National de France. At the end of his initial Fulbright year, Mr. Subbaraman received the first extension of a Fulbright grant ever issued by the French Fulbright Commission.

Mr. Subbaraman has completed his MBA through the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin and is collaborating with renowned economics professor Michael Brandl to write a business primer for musicians. Mr. Subbaraman was selected as a delegate to the 2010 Asia21 Young Leader's Summit in Jakarta by the Asia Society. Most recently, Mr. Subbaraman was one of 100 Indians from around the world invited to take part in the inaugural Indiaspora Summit, which brings together influential members of the Indian community from all aspects of business to academia to the arts in order to discuss how to make the world a better place.

Further conducting study includes the Kurt Masur Conducting Seminar at the Manhattan School of Music, the Institut Musical de Provence-Aubagne in France, Accademia Chigiana in Italy, and the Brevard Music Center (NC). Subbaraman was also a semifinalist in the Suwon International Conductors Competition in Suwon, Korea, the Vakhtang Jordania Competition, and the Grzegorz Fitelberg Competition. He has studied with many prominent conductors including Leonard Slatkin, Marin Alsop, David Effron, and Gunther Schuller and is also a recipient of the Edward C. Lynch Fellowship.

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VISWA SUBBARAMAN PRESS

Powder Her Face, Skylight Music Theatre

“Artistic director and conductor, Viswa Subbaraman, led Adès’s chamber opera for four singers and 15 musicians with remarkable clarity and pacing...Doing any more than burying one’s head in the score and beating time seems a lot to ask, but Subbaraman gave much more: Definite and reliable cues, good pit/stage coordination, and crisp pacing of a 100-minute work should absolutely be viewed as a triumph for Skylight’s artistic leader...Skylight and Subbaraman deserve a high-five from the myriad fans of all the performing arts groups in town. This is how you take artistic risks. A challenging score and story, a fearless production, and a terrific performance of difficult stuff should give Skylight and Subbaraman permission to clang their big brass ones proudly.” – William Barnewitz, urbanmilwaukee.com

“...*Powder Her Face*...is not to be missed. The thrilling performance I took in last Friday was a testimony to the company’s capability in insightful, appropriately chosen chamber opera repertoire. Conductor Viswa Subbaraman led with confidence and style.” – Rick Walters, *Shepherd Express*

“Viswa Subbaraman...make(s) the most of the challenging score...A sensitive accompanist, Subbaraman allows the voices to march along with a rhythmic drive, even as Adès orchestrations burble along beneath them.” – Paul Kosidowsky, *Milwaukee Magazine*

“In his third season Viswa Subbaraman again proves the Skylight Music Theatre’s versatility...Directed by Robin Guarino with Subbaraman as musical director, the piece is a stunning achievement.” – Paul Masterson, *Shepherd Express*

Hydrogen Jukebox, Skylight Music Theatre

“I happened to have a good view of Subbaraman in the pit. He almost always kept his right hand down to keep the band thrumming along steadily and his left hand up to help the singers. He didn't merely cue them; he shaped the phrases with the most graceful gestures that expressed utterly secure ideas. He made it easy for the cast to sing with clear purpose and to concentrate through the end of every phrase.”

-*Tom Strini Writes*, Milwaukee, WI, 15 March 2014

““The orchestra performed in lock-step precision and the cast delivered words and music with coolness and ease...Exciting things are happening at the Skylight and Milwaukee audiences have a brave champion of engaging works at the helm. To Mr. Subbaraman: more, please.”

-*The Shepherd Express*, Milwaukee, WI, 19 March 2014

El Cimarrón, Skylight Music Theatre

“Subbaraman, who can still be called the new artistic director, has a background in classical music. He has shown with his program for this year, featuring everything from "Les Miserables" to "Hair," that he is well attuned to the intrinsic value of the big show. With "El Cimarron" he has served notice that he is not going to march through this musical world with fear on his shoulder. This is a brave choice. It is not a play for the faint of heart. If you are looking for a gentle evening out, don't bother with this. But if you are brave enough to be challenged both intellectually and emotionally, if you are brave enough to face something new and unexpected, and if you are brave enough to wonder how in the world man could do some of these things to his brothers, then see this play.”

-*On Milwaukee*, Milwaukee, WI 4 January 2014

Fidelio, Skylight Music Theatre

“Under Subbaraman, the strings of the Skylight Theatre Orchestra played with a lean, taught sound that carried the drama: thanks to them, the tortured elements of this dark opera confronted the audience as strongly as its heroic side.”

“Subbaraman is clearly a rising star, fired by musicality and an insistence on putting the art of the composer first.”

-*Opera*

“Milwaukee can only imagine what marvelous surprises Subbaraman will open on stage this coming year, another vital theatrical transformation. Also consider transforming into an avant-garde, soul searching, opera-loving revolutionary by attending the Skylight all year. Wonder and watch where Subbaraman's creative revolution will lead the musical theatre and all those fortunate to travel with him.”

-*Broadway World*

Powder Her Face, Opera Vista

"Opera Vista's founding artistic and musical director Viswa Subbaraman was in total control of the challengingly virtuosic score, which ranges from Wagner and Weill to Varese and Vegas, with 1930s pop songs, Piazzola-like tangos, and a bit of Spike Jones' zany orchestration thrown in."

-*Opera*, London, UK Feb. 2012

"...maestro and Opera Vista's artistic director Viswa Subbaraman pulled out all the stops for this work, and the four singers, who, except for the Duchess, double and triple up as other characters were exceptionally good. This is terribly complicated music -- what with its fishing reels and bowls of water and other effects -- but Subbaraman made it all sound easy, drawing out the score with a lover's rapt attention."

-*HoustonPress*, Houston, TX, 11 Nov. 2011

"Opera Vista founder and artistic director Viswa Subbaraman looked dazed and exhausted when he took his curtain call. For two hours he'd led what appears to be the most cumbersome, unmanageable score in the modern repertory. It's difficult not to use superlatives here. Never mind the strings, trombones, or accordion--who's minding the fishing reels? Yes, there are several called for in the troubling sixth "trial" scene."

"Thursday night at Zilkha Hall, Opera Vista presented a deeply sophisticated staging directed by Houston Grand Opera's Sandra Bernhard. The performance not only confirms the limitless talents of the company but also advances its position as a major proponent of contemporary opera in America.

-*CultureMap*, Houston, TX, 11 Nov. 2011

"Founder and artistic director, Maestro Viswa Subbaraman, a dedicated genius in our midst, bravely, buoyantly, and beautifully conducts a powerfully phenomenal fourteen-piece orchestra."

-Arts Blog, *Houston Chronicle*, Houston, TX 11 Nov. 2011

Vera of Las Vegas, Opera Vista

"Opera Vista founder/conductor Viswa Subbaraman led the quasi-jazz trio accompaniment in a sprightly performance of Hagen's eclectic score, which was repeatedly juiced up by allusions to American jazz and pop traditions. "

-*Houston Chronicle*, Houston, TX, 13 May 2011

And Then I Remember, Opera Vista

"I will admit to being surprised and puzzled, at first, by the programming choices, struggling to find the thematic commonalities — something that I would expect from Viswa Subbaraman, Opera Vista's artistic director, a man who pays attention to details. But soon after the music started, the connection was obviously brilliant, academically, aesthetically and artistically, setting a musically historic context to synthesize Beecher's work."

-*CultureMap*, Houston, TX, 13 March 2011