

Jaap van Zweden *Biography*

Conductor Jaap van Zweden became music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra during the 2008-09 season. His other titled positions include music director of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Kamer Filharmonie (2005-2013).

Since van Zweden's debut, the DSO has received consistent praise for stunning interpretations of works including Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Verdi Requiem, Mahler's Symphony No. 5 and many more. Throughout the past seasons, the orchestra under van Zweden's leadership has received lavish praise from notable media including *The New York Times*, *Musical America*, *The Financial Times*, *BBC Music Magazine*, *The Dallas Morning News* and many others.

In addition, van Zweden has become a highly sought after guest artist since the DSO introduced him to American audiences. Most recently, van Zweden led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Brahms' Symphony No. 4 (2009), and during the 2009-10 season he will make his conducting debut with the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Having joined the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra as concertmaster at age 19, van Zweden spent the next sixteen years being inspired and mentored by Solti, Haitink, Giulini, Harnoncourt and Bernstein. In fact, in 1990, it was Bernstein who asked him to take over a Mahler Symphony No. 1 rehearsal while Bernstein listened from the hall. Bernstein's pronouncement was that he was a born conductor and should pursue it. With this encouragement, the Juilliard-trained violinist began studying conducting in the Netherlands and performed as violinist and conductor with several orchestras between 1994-1997.

In 1997, van Zweden made his decision to conduct full time, played his last concert as a violinist with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, performing the Shostakovich 1st Violin Concerto, and was named the chief conductor of the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra where he remained until 2003. In 2000, he added the music directorship of the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague to his credits, a post he held until 2005.

Since 2001, he has guested with, and been re-invited to, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National du Capital de Toulouse, Munich Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Danish Radio Orchestra, Bern (Switzerland) Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Tokyo Philharmonic, among others.

Apart from an extensive symphonic repertoire, opera also plays an important part in Jaap van Zweden's career. During recent seasons, he has conducted *La Traviata* and *Fidelio* with the Nationale Reisopera in Holland and Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* in a concert performance at the Concertgebouw with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. In the 2006-07 season, he made his debut with the Netherlands Opera conducting *Madama Butterfly*. He has conducted, to great acclaim, concert performances of Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Die Meistersinger*.

A prolific recording artist, Jaap van Zweden has recorded all of the Beethoven symphonies with the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague for Philips, and is in the process of recording for Octavia all of the Bruckner symphonies with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, of which numbers 4, 5, 7 and 9 have been completed. The Dallas Symphony has released a CD of his live performances of Beethoven Fifth and Seventh Symphonies.

Born in 1960 in the Netherlands, Jaap van Zweden began his violin studies at the Amsterdam Conservatory before entering The Juilliard School in New York at age 16, as a student of Dorothy DeLay, and supported his way through school by winning various violin competitions. He was married in 1983, and he and his wife Aaltje have four children ages 24 to 13.

The van Zwedens are very committed to bringing awareness and acceptance to the cause of autism, and in the Netherlands have established the Papageno Foundation devoted to bringing music therapy into the homes of autistic children.