

Jaap van Zweden *Biography*

Jaap van Zweden, now in his second year as music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, begins his third season with the orchestra in September 2010. His commitment to the orchestra was recently extended through the 2015-2016 season. Under his direction, the orchestra is enhancing its programming and community outreach at home, is raising its profile across the nation with a residency in Vail, CO and an appearance at Carnegie Hall, continues work to champion new composers and is raising its level of performance to compare favorably with any top orchestra in the world. Concurrently with his post in Dallas, van Zweden's other titled positions include music director of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra (2005-2013), and principal conductor of the Royal Flemish Philharmonic Orchestra of Belgium (2008-2011).

With a committed focus on music education during the 2010-2011 season, van Zweden champions expanding the DSO's programs with the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) and has implemented a DSO Quartet in Residence at the Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing & Visual Arts in Dallas, TX. The partnership between the DSO and DISD will also work toward ensuring every eligible 5th grade student in DISD will attend a Dallas Symphony Orchestra performance during the 2010-2011 school year, and the Quartet in Residence will perform for Booker T. Washington string students, lead sectionals and provide individual and group instruction throughout the school year. Additionally, van Zweden's 2008-2009 initiative that created the DSO's successful Teen Council will enter its third season during 2010-2011. During the 2009-2010 season, the Council implemented several teen-focused initiatives to enhance the teen concert experience including the successful Teen Ticket Challenge, which awards the school with the greatest total student attendance at select concerts with a free DSO ensemble performance at their school.

Under van Zweden's leadership, the DSO has established an ongoing residency at the *Bravo!* Vail Valley Music Festival through the summer of 2012 and debuted five world premiere works in two seasons as part of the DSO's Texas Instruments Classical Series. Since van Zweden's debut as music director, the DSO has received consistent praise for interpretations of works including Tchaikovsky's Fourth and Fifth 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*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Musical America*, *The Financial Times*, *BBC Music Magazine*, *The Dallas Morning News* and many others. In a December 2009 article in *The LA Times*, Mark Swed named van Zweden one of the "Faces to Watch" in 2010, and raved after listening to van Zweden's most recent recordings on the Dallas Symphony's recording label *DSOLive!* that van Zweden "knows how to generate tense, tactile excitement in all kinds of music."

Van Zweden has also become a highly sought-after guest artist with American orchestras since the DSO introduced him to US audiences in 2007. Most recently, van Zweden led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Brahms (2009), the Philadelphia Orchestra in works by Bruckner and Mozart (2009) and the Cleveland Orchestra in works by Tchaikovsky (2010). In April of 2010, van Zweden makes his debut at the LA Philharmonic leading works by Rachmaninoff and Brahms. During the 2010-2011 season, van Zweden debuts with the Atlanta Symphony and makes his much-anticipated third guest appearance with the Chicago Symphony. Van Zweden is also scheduled during 2010-2011 to make his second guest appearance with both the Philadelphia Orchestra and the LA Philharmonic.

Having joined the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra as concertmaster at age 19, van Zweden spent the next sixteen years 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 and 1997.

In 1997, van Zweden made his decision to conduct full time, played his last concert as a violinist with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra 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.

He has guested with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia 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, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Tokyo Philharmonic, among others. In addition to his 2010-2011 US appearances in Atlanta, Chicago and St. Louis, van Zweden debuts with the Sao Paulo Symphony, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, and returns to the London Philharmonic Orchestra, 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, *Madama Butterfly* with the Netherlands Opera and Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* in a concert performance at the Concertgebouw with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. He has conducted, to great acclaim, concert performances of Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Die Meistersinger*, and his future projects include concert performances of Haydn's *Armida*.

A prolific recording artist, van Zweden has recorded the complete Beethoven symphonies with the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague for Philips, Shostakovich Symphony No. 5 with the Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Mahler Symphony No. 5 (recorded live at his London Philharmonic debut) and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Van Zweden has recorded the Brahms symphonies with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, with whom he is currently recording a Bruckner cycle for Octavia, with symphonies 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9 already released to great critical acclaim. In addition, the DSO has released two recordings of his live performances with the orchestra on the DSO's recording label *DSOLive!* – Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony and *Capriccio italien*.

Born in 1960 in the Netherlands, 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.