

## Jaap van Zweden National and International Press Excerpts *September 2007 – Present*

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra closes season with exhilarating take on Mahler**

“Every so often, there’s a concert you feel lucky to have experienced. Thursday night’s Dallas Symphony Orchestra concert was one of those. Led by music director Jaap van Zweden, Mahler’s Second Symphony was riveting from anxious beginning to raising-the-dead close. No recording could capture the glorious embrace of the Meyerson Symphony Center acoustics.”

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
May 22, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Captivating Mozart and Ravel**

“A joyous performance of a Mozart concerto and a shimmering, captivating performance of a Ravel ballet made Thursday night’s concert by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra a memorable event.... Van Zweden and the orchestra played the complete *Ma Mère l’Oye*, or *Mother Goose*, of Ravel. This lovely music was beautifully shaded by van Zweden and played by the orchestra, with much elegant solo work by DSO principals.”

Olin Chism  
KERA  
May 7, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra goes from crudity to magic all in one night**

“...In Ravel’s complete score for the ballet *Mother Goose*, music director Jaap van Zweden coaxed one delicate pastel, one bright shimmer, one elegantly tapered line after another.”

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
May 6, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Pinch-hitting Dutch conductor delivers again**

“Every Major League Baseball franchise should have a pinch hitter who can lift the team to glory as splendidly as Jaap van Zweden does for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.”

John von Rhein  
*Chicago Tribune*  
April 24, 2010  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **Van Zweden's fresh, invigorating Rachmaninoff sparks populist CSO program**

"Jaap van Zweden has become the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's go-to batonsmith for sudden cancellations.... His invigorating take on Rachmaninoff's rich Russian Romanticism blew the cobwebs off, shearing off the rhetoric and making one listen to this nearly hour-long symphony with fresh ears.... The CSO members clearly enjoy and respect van Zweden judging by the players' smiles during the performance, and he's earned the right to be invited back as a scheduled guest conductor rather than a replacement."

Lawrence A. Johnson  
Chicago Classical Review  
April 23, 2010  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **Van Zweden and DSO raise their game with Schoenberg and Brahms**

"As he nears the end of his second season as music director of the Dallas Symphony, Jaap van Zweden has clearly raised the quality of playing in the orchestra. There have not been many personnel changes, but there has been a palpable exploitation of the enormous pool of talent already in the orchestra. A case in point: the trombone section has always been 'good' but now it is 'remarkably good.' The sureness of intonation, the beauty of tone, the balance between the three instruments and tuba – all these things are on a level of refinement only hinted at in the past. One has to think that it is van Zweden who has inspired these players to do better."

Paul E. Robinson  
*La Scena Musicale*  
April 23, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **The juxtaposition of two romantic opposites creates an intriguing musical evening**

"Returning to the podium for the first time since February, Music Director Van Zweden showed off the extraordinary precision and flexibility he has nurtured in these musicians, beginning with the breathtaking subtlety of the opening passages and continuing through the sweeping climax of the work."

Wayne Lee Gay  
FrontRow  
April 9, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra's marvelous performance at Meyerson shouldn't be missed**

"Schoenberg was a great admirer of Brahms, and in the company of *Verklärte Nacht* – and in van Zweden's hands – Brahms' harmonic yearnings felt heated to new degrees."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
April 8, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Jaap van Zweden reaches celebrity status**

"In a word: energy. He still has the body language and the determination of the fierce soccer player he was at school, combined with the delicacy of the musician who gave up his position as concertmaster at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam to take up conducting as his primary métier. In another word: thoughtfulness. And modesty combined with self-confidence."

Willard Spiegelman  
*D Magazine*  
March 2010

### **A music director on the rise**

"Short and bearded, van Zweden at close range could be mistaken for a monk or an artisan. On the podium, though, he stands tall, with commanding eyes and large, fluent gestures. He has a knack of squeezing maximum expression from a

taut musical frame, creating the sort of tension-from-restraint in performance that results in a surge of voltage at structural climaxes.”

Andrew Clark  
*Financial Times*  
February 26, 2010

**With loving, focused detail, Dallas Symphony Orchestra delivers a serious program**

“If you haven’t heard the Dallas Symphony Orchestra lately, you owe it to yourself to hear the wonders Jaap van Zweden has worked. Two weeks in a row, and only halfway into his second season as music director, the Dutch conductor has turned out performances of a focused intensity and musical finesse unimaginable a couple of seasons ago.”

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
February 18, 2010  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

**Faces to watch in 2010: Music**

“Jaap Van Zweden, Music Director of the Dallas Symphony: A couple of years ago, when the Dallas Symphony announced the appointment of Jaap van Zweden as its next music director, heads scratched in Texas at an unfamiliar Dutch name. Now in his second season, heads are scratching around the U.S. What took us so long?”

Mark Swed  
*Los Angeles Times*  
December 28, 2009

**Leading Notes**

“In 2008, Jaap van Zweden was, in the words of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, ‘unleashed’ upon the Texan city. All around the Arts District, giant posters displayed the image of a defiant-looking Dutch conductor who, you’d better believe it, would come in and shake things up like a boxer in his prime, ready for an assault on the world title.”

Oliver Condy  
*BBC Music Magazine*  
October 2009

**For ailing orchestras, the new maestro cure**

“The two biggest success stories in the orchestra world last year support the idea that a new wind can be powerfully refreshing. They involved two unknown Europeans taking over two American orchestras: Manfred Honeck (Austrian) and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; Jaap van Zweden (Dutch) and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.”

Silvia Lelli  
*The Washington Post*  
September 28, 2009

**Van Zweden carries Dallas Symphony Orchestra through masterful Tchaikovsky Fourth Symphony**

“Not from the Berlin Philharmonic, not from the Chicago Symphony will you hear a more electrifying Tchaikovsky Fourth Symphony than that delivered Thursday night by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra... What van Zweden has done in only one season with the DSO has to be heard to be believed.”

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
September 18, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

**Excitement, Eccentricity in DSO Season Opener**

"The sizzler was Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony...which closed the concert in the Meyerson Center. If Van Zweden didn't really make it seem new, he made it crackle with electricity (the blizzing tempo of the finale tested legal speed limits) and the DSO responded with virtuoso playing and impressive solos. There wasn't a dull measure to be heard."

Olin Chism  
KERA  
September 18, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra delights in Colorado**

"On Wednesday, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra wound up a six-concert residency at Colorado's Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival with immensely impressive performances of works by two Viennese masters... But it was van Zweden, fascinating and formidable on the podium, who made this concert the success that it was."

Wes Blomster  
*Dallas Morning News*  
July 13, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dutch treat: Conductor serves it up**

"Response to the Dutch conductor from critics and audiences [in Dallas] has verged on the ecstatic... I'm ready to join the believers."

Kyle MacMillan  
*Denver Post*  
July 2, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra conductor Jaap van Zweden says first year has been 'a dream'**

"From Dallas Symphony Orchestra musicians to audiences, you'd be hard-pressed to hear a discouraging word about Jaap van Zweden's first season as the DSO's music director... You can't help but notice how different the orchestra sounds since van Zweden's arrival. There's a new focus and intensity, a new attention to detail."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
May 20, 2009

### **Dallas Symphony delivers with pair of electrifying, complicated pieces**

"In a work of considerable complexity [*Alexander Raskatov's world premiere Violin Concerto, In Excelsis*], van Zweden and the orchestra put on a no less virtuoso display... At every turn, van Zweden seemed to intensify colors and accents, crescendos and decrescendos, deftly highlighting inner voices (horns, especially)."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
May 1, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Bruckner: Symphony No. 2**

#### **Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Jaap van Zweden**

#### **Exton EXCL-00014**

"The Second Symphony is one of Bruckner's loveliest works... Like Giulini, the excellent Jaap van Zweden uses the pared-back 1877 version...[the] recording is very fine, worthy of consideration alongside those of the Bruckner deities."

Richard Osborne  
*Gramophone Magazine*  
May 2009  
Netherlands Radio Philharmonic

### **Dallas Symphony Orchestra welcomes back conductor at organ concert**

"The Saint-Saëns *Organ* Symphony is a repertory staple, and deservedly so. Van Zweden lovingly molded its quieter music, and, in general, rarely have the piece's crescendos and decrescendos registered so boldly."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
April 17, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Van Zweden leaves bench firing for CSO**

"In October, when Dutch conductor Jaap van Zweden subbed at the last minute with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for an ailing Riccardo Chailly, his leadership of Bruckner's massive Fifth Symphony was so fine that I noted, "I would go to hear van Zweden conduct anything, anywhere." With guest Semyon Bychkov sidelined by illness, I was able to do that in Chicago on Thursday at Orchestra Hall...Again he was superb..."

Andrew Patner  
*Chicago Sun Times*  
March 21, 2009  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **CSO pinch hitter returns, reaffirming earlier triumph**

"Once again he [Jaap van Zweden] scored a major success, lifting the performances well beyond the ordinary, infusing the entire orchestra with his intensity, spontaneity and penetrating musical vision. Van Zweden connected with the CSO musicians from the very first moment of his debut here last fall, and that connection only became stronger on Thursday night. The orchestra responded to his clear beat and sweeping gestures as if someone had thrown on an electrical switch.... If not for the parched acoustics of Orchestra Hall, one might have mistaken this for a performance by Van Zweden's alma mater, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra."

John von Rhein  
*Chicago Tribune*  
March 21, 2009  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **Jaap van Zweden shines with Wagner**

"Jaap van Zweden gave us the impression that he has been conducting Wagner's operas for his whole life, whereas in fact this was merely his second time.... One must wonder where the career of Jaap van Zweden will lead. Everything that he touches seems to turn to gold."

Erik Voermans  
*Het Parool*  
February 9, 2009  
Radio Philharmonic Orchestra  
*(Translated from Dutch)*

### **Jaap Van Zweden leads Dallas Symphony in stunning Tchaikovsky performance**

"Jaap van Zweden and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra gave a stunning performance of the Tchaikovsky Fifth Symphony on Thursday night. The performance had everything: gut-grabbing intensity, but also tenderness; nervous excitability, but also unhurried warmth; brasses slicing through like razor-edged cleavers, but also cellos stringing out satin strands. Van Zweden lingered tellingly over poignant and pivotal moments, elsewhere urging the music ahead to goals great and small. Again and again surprising complexities of textures were revealed and clarified."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
January 16, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **DSO finds a happy combination with waltzes, polkas, other surprises**

"I was heard to laugh out loud several times. And it took some massaging to wipe the silly grin off my face.... It's a mark of a really fine musician to treat a Strauss waltz as lovingly as a Mahler symphony, and that's just what van Zweden did.... Here's a vote for making some semblance of this program an annual affair."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
January 9, 2009  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Jaap van Zweden working miracles**

"Jaap van Zweden has been working miracles. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra's new music director has tightened and polished the ensemble and stretched its pianissimos as well as fortissimos. One performance after another has compelled with elegance as well as sheer intensity."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
November 7, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Van Zweden makes most of CSO coming-out party**

"On the strength of this remarkable debut, I would go to hear van Zweden conduct anything, anywhere."

Andrew Patner  
*Chicago Sun Tribune*  
October 11, 2008  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **Jaap van Zweden dynamite in CSO debut**

"Jaap van Zweden scored one of the most impressive podium debuts Orchestra Hall has witnessed in many a season...After this extraordinary performance, the audience was up on its feet, treating the newcomer to a prolonged ovation. Dallas chose well. When can we have him back?"

John von Rhein  
*Chicago Tribune*  
October 11, 2008  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

### **All the way through fateful day for L.B.J.**

"Mr. van Zweden, hailed in his debut as music director a week before, scored another triumph here. And the orchestra's assured and gritty performance was rivaled by that of the large Dallas Symphony Chorus, both corporately and individually, in shifting solo snippets charting the course of that fateful day."

James R. Oestreich  
*New York Times*  
September 20, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra  
World Premiere: August 4, 1964

### **Van Zweden's two-week initiation**

"...Van Zweden, backed by able contributions from orchestra and chorus, did a masterful job of shaping the piece."

George Loomis

MusicalAmerica.org  
September 22, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra  
World Premiere: *August 4, 1964*

### **'August 4, 1964' boldly captures the urgency of a complex time**

"Coherent, dramatically gripping, thematically relevant and musically accessible...*August 4, 1964* deserves to be performed again and again. It is American music, speaking on American history. It touches the American soul."

Chris Shull  
*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*  
September 19, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra  
World Premiere: *August 4, 1964*

### **Debut of sensitivity & style**

"That his career change went swimmingly is easy to credit, given the powerful reading of Mahler's Fifth Symphony with which van Zweden led off his first season in Dallas last week, a performance that demonstrated a thorough structural grasp of the 70-minute work. Especially telling was the way van Zweden conveyed the sense that the second movement, which recycles many ideas from the Funeral March that precedes it, ups the ante in terms of emotional involvement."

George Loomis  
*Financial Times*  
September 17, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **Dallas Symphony, under new maestro, soars to previously unimaginable heights**

"In [Jaap van Zweden's] subscription-series debut Thursday as the DSO's music director, the Dutch conductor has the orchestra playing on a level scarcely imaginable before now. By turns thrilling and aching tender, with a laser focus but also gut intensity, the performance of the Mahler Fifth Symphony sounded like the work of one of the world's top orchestras – and conductors."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
September 11, 2008  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

### **London Philharmonic Orchestra/Van Zweden**

"What was even more striking about Jaap van Zweden's performance here, however, was his control and authority over an unfamiliar band...by the time the last note disappeared into the faint hum of the air-conditioning, the audience was rapt."

Erica Jeal  
*The Guardian*  
January 18, 2008  
London Philharmonic Orchestra

### **Jaap van Zweden, Royal Festival Hall, London**

"Either Jaap van Zweden's name goes before him or the London Philharmonic Orchestra is getting its marketing right. Whatever the case, and it's probably a bit of both, van Zweden was greeted by a full house for his official London debut, and responded with an assured display of musical leadership.... Recent Bruckner recordings have announced a thoughtful musician, able to think in long paragraphs of eloquently structured sound, and next season he takes up the music directorship of the Dallas Symphony. At 47, van Zweden is going places."

Andrew Clark  
*The Financial Times*  
January 17, 2008  
London Philharmonic Orchestra

## **Bruckner Symphony No. 9**

**Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Jaap van Zweden**

**Exton OVCL-00276**

"The star of van Zweden, once the youngest-ever leader of Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, has risen exponentially since he took up conducting in 1995. In addition to his work with the NRPO, he is music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and this expansive reading of Bruckner's unfinished symphony makes it easy to understand why. His Bruckner 9 has a Haitink-like assurance and command."

Hugh Canning  
*The Sunday Times*  
November 18, 2007

## **Crouching Tiger**

"For a pigskin-crazed metropolis like Dallas, the best way to explain the excitement at the Dallas Symphony is like this: The orchestra's own Tony Romo has arrived... Incoming conductor Jaap van Zweden, a Dutchman with his own repertoire of dazzling moves, stirred the Meyerson into delirium the past two weekends in leading the DSO in eight electric performances. It was his first appearance here since being named the DSO's future music director nine months ago, and the results have concert-goers dreaming dynasty."

Editorial  
*Dallas Morning News*  
November 13, 2007  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

## **Jaap van Zweden stirs DSO to fabulous intensity**

"By, say, March 2009, if there's any justice, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra could be the most talked-about orchestra in North America. Already, in only two weeks, music director-designate Jaap van Zweden has absolutely transformed the group."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
November 9, 2007  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

## **Beethoven, with energy, discipline and lots of verve**

"He has already made an imprint. Unstinting energy, a rock-solid concentration and discipline have been the hallmarks of his conducting so far. This translated into remarkably expressive unanimity and taut, crisp ensemble playing Thursday night."

Matt Erikson  
*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*  
November 9, 2007  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

## **Van Zweden strikes gold with Beethoven set**

"He doesn't take over as music director until next fall, but in only one concert he has the DSO sounding like a new orchestra."

Scott Cantrell  
*Dallas Morning News*  
November 2, 2007  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra

## **Symphony's director-to-be enjoys auspicious debut**

"The Dutch-born conductor doesn't officially take over until next year, but if Thursday's concert is any indication, the van Zweden era is going to be a knockout."

Matt Erikson  
*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*

November 2, 2007  
Dallas Symphony Orchestra