

XU ZHONG

Conductor and Pianist

The Principal Conductor of Fondazione Arena di Verona from 2016, **Xu Zhong** is considered one of the most internationally renowned Chinese pianists and conductors; he is also Music Director and Chief Conductor at Teatro Massimo Bellini, Catania and Musical Director and Chief Conductor of the Israel Haifa Symphony Orchestra. He is also the founder of the China Shanghai International Piano Competition and Shanghai International Youth Orchestra.

He has successfully collaborated with many of the most world-renowned musicians, including Paul Badura-Skoda, Lazar Berman, Sergiu Commissiona, Philippe Entremont, Neeme Järvi, Maxim Vengerov, Arto Noras, Jean - Bernard Pommier, Jian Wang, Marie-Pierre Langlamet and Dimitra Theodossiou.

Born in Shanghai, he studied piano with Dominique Merlet at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris and Orchestra Conducting with Xiaotong Huang.

He won numerous prestigious international piano competitions including the 'Hamamatsu International Piano Competition', the 'Santander Paloma O'Shea International Piano Competition', the 'Tokyo International Piano Competition' and the 'Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition' in Moscow. Since then, he has been a regular guest of Chinese orchestras, both as a pianist and conductor and has performed in the most important concert halls in Europe, North America, South America and South-East Asia. He has conducted l'Orchestre National de France, l'Orchestre National de Lille, l'Orchestre de Cannes, l'Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, MDR Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Filarmonica de Gran Canaria, Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla, Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, KBS Symphony Orchestra, Taipei Symphony Orchestra, China Philharmonic Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Camerata.

As a jury member, Xu is regularly invited to attend the most important worldwide international piano competitions.

From 2003 to 2005 he was the Artistic Director of L'Année de la France en Chine. Noted among his most significant professional experiences are the following; Artistic Consultant of China Shanghai International, Musical Consultant of the Shanghai Concert Hall, Artistic Committee member of the Shanghai Grand Theatre and Vice President of the Artistic Committee of Shanghai Oriental Art Centre.

In 2014 with the Teatro Massimo Bellini di Catania he tours in China and is invited to conduct the Closing Performance of the Shanghai International Spring Music Festival and the Shanghai Chenshan Botanical Garden Concert.

Recently, he has collaborated with the following institutes as guest conductor; Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova, Teatro di Verdi, Trieste, Staatstheater Darmstadt, Opera Carolina, Opera Hongkong conducting, among others, Strauss's Die Fledermaus and Elektra, Leoncavallo's Pagliacci, Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana, Verdi's La Traviata and Il Trovatore, Offenbach's Orphee aux enfers, Puccini's La Bohème, Rachmaninov's Aleko, Lehàr's Das Land des Lachelns, Bizet's Carmen.

In 2015 at the Milan EXPO Xu conducted the celebratory concert for The National Day of China. In 2010 he was awarded the Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication.

At the Teatro Filarmonico di Verona he performs both as Conductor and Pianist during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Symphonic Seasons.

He returns for the 2015-2016 Symphonic Season conducting the 7th concert at the Teatro Ristori and the 7th concert at the Teatro Filarmonico.