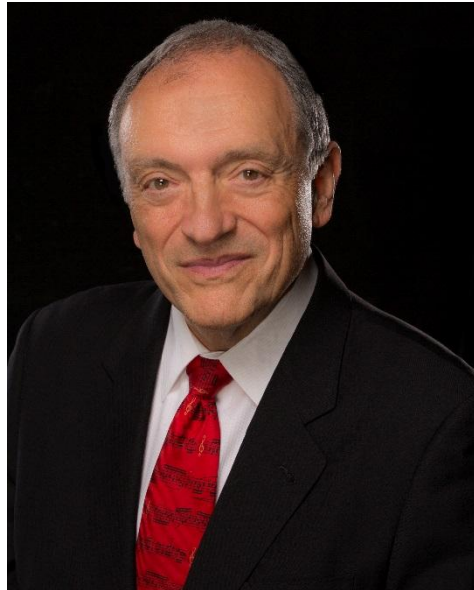




John DeMain, Music Director

Biography

In Season 2016-17, John DeMain will be in his 23rd season as Music Director of the Madison Symphony Orchestra (MSO). Grammy and Tony Award-winning Conductor DeMain is noted for his dynamic performances on concert and opera stages throughout the world. American composer Jake Heggie recently assessed the conductor's broad appeal, saying, "There's no one like John DeMain. In my opinion, he's one of the top conductors in the world."



For more than two decades in Madison as the MSO's Music Director, DeMain has consistently raised the quality of the orchestra by introducing blind auditions and continuously expanding the repertoire to encompass ever more challenging and virtuosic works, including the highly acclaimed performances of the complete symphonies of Gustav Mahler. DeMain also oversaw the move into the world-class Overture Hall and expanded the subscription season to triple performances.

His active conducting schedule has taken him to the stages of the National Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the symphonies of Seattle, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Columbus, Houston, San Antonio, Long Beach, and Jacksonville, along with the Pacific Symphony, Boston Pops, Aspen Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of Seville, the Leipzig MDR Sinfonieorchester, and Mexico's Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional.

In 2016, DeMain visited the Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. to conduct Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars*. Future engagements in 2016 take him to San Francisco Opera as guest conductor for General Director David Gockley's farewell gala; to the Glimmerglass Festival in New York to conduct *Sweeney Todd*; and to Northwestern University to conduct Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*. He also recently became a mentor and conductor for the Washington National Opera's program to develop new composers and librettists. In 2017, he will return to Virginia Opera to conduct Puccini's *Turandot*, and to the Glimmerglass Festival.



DeMain also serves as Artistic Director for Madison Opera, where he conducted Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* in spring 2014 to critical acclaim. He previously conducted the Australia and New York premieres of *Dead Man Walking*. During spring 2014, he returned to the Virginia Opera to conduct *Carmen* and to the San Francisco Opera for their debut of *Show Boat*. He has been a regular guest conductor with Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, New York City Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Virginia Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Glimmerglass Festival in up-state New York, Aspen Music Festival, Portland Opera, and Mexico's National Opera.

During his distinguished 17-year tenure with Houston Grand Opera, DeMain led a history-making production of *Porgy and Bess*, winning a Grammy Award, Tony Award and France's Grand Prix du Disque for the RCA recording. In spring 2014, the San Francisco Opera released an HD DVD of their most recent production of *Porgy and Bess*, conducted by John DeMain.

DeMain began his career as a pianist and conductor in his native Youngstown, Ohio. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at The Juilliard School in New York City and made a highly acclaimed debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. DeMain was the second recipient of the Julius Rudel Award at New York City Opera and one of the first six conductors to receive the Exxon/National Endowment for the Arts Conductor Fellowship for his work with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

DeMain holds honorary degrees from the University of Nebraska and Edgewood College and he is a Fellow of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. He resides in Madison with his wife, Barbara. Their daughter, Jennifer, is a recent University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate.

Photos: Please contact Teri Venker at tvenker@madisonsymphony.org if you need photos.