

Kahchun Wong

Chief Conductor

“Clearly one to keep an eye on” (Financial Times), Kahchun Wong is Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra from the 2018/2019 season. In addition to leading his orchestra in international touring projects and subscription concerts at the Meistersingerhalle, he also conducts annually at Klassik Open Air, one of the largest outdoor events of classical music in Europe.

Wong has conducted some of the most distinguished international orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken, Japan Philharmonic, Konzerthausorchester Berlin and Shanghai Symphony. His orchestral engagements in the 2020-21 season include debuts with the Hallé Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony and Slovenian Philharmonic, as well as return appearances with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Staatskapelle Weimar, Kyushu Symphony and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony.

Born in Singapore, Wong became the first Asian winner of the Mahler Competition in 2016, following in the footsteps of Gustavo Dudamel, who immediately invited him to the Dudamel Fellowship programme with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2016/2017. He is a protégé of the late Kurt Masur and had the privilege of sharing the podium with him on multiple occasions in his final years. He has also assisted Valery Gergiev and Yannick Nézet-Séguin with the Rotterdam Philharmonic, Esa-Pekka Salonen at the Philharmonia Orchestra, Gustavo Dudamel at the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Ivan Fischer at the Budapest Festival Orchestra.

Wong believes in the power of education to inspire and uplift, mirroring his own journey as a musician from a young Southeast Asian country. Together with Marina Mahler, the granddaughter of Gustav Mahler, they have co-founded Project Infinitude, a grassroots initiative that encourages children to explore and enjoy music. Supported by the National Arts Council, he is currently into his 3rd year of collaboration with Child at Street 11, a non-profit Singaporean agency supporting children from underserved and diverse backgrounds.

As the youngest and also the first artist from Singapore, Wong was conferred the Order of Merit by the Federal President of Germany in December 2019 for his dedicated service and outstanding achievements in Singaporean-German cultural relations.

February 2020 (350 words)