

Olli Mustonen, Pianist / Conductor / Composer

Biography

Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, Olli Mustonen has a unique place on today's music scene. Following the tradition of great masters such as Rachmaninov, Busoni and Enescu, Mustonen combines the roles of his musicianship as composer, pianist and conductor in an equal balance that is quite exceptional, often bringing them together in one fascinating triple role performance. This season, he takes up the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the Lapland Chamber Orchestra at the beginning of 2023 where he will combine orchestral concerts with chamber music and recitals.

During an illustrious career, Mustonen has brought his extraordinary musical insight to many of world's most significant orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orkest, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, and all the London orchestras.

Recipient of the 2019 Hindemith Prize of the City of Hanau, Mustonen's life as a composer is at the heart of his piano playing and conducting. Frequently bringing his own works to the chamber music stage, the world premiere of his work *Taivaanvalot (Heavenly Lights)* for Tenor, Cello and Piano was performed at Het Muziekgebouw, Amsterdam, by Mustonen himself, alongside Ian Bostridge and Steven Isserlis. Additional performances took place at London's Wigmore Hall and in Hong Kong. A further world premiere was his new string sextet, commissioned by the Beethoven Festival Bonn and first performed there in February 2020. This season sees the premiere of Mustonen's new work, a tribute to Pablo Casals commissioned by the Kronberg Academy, at the opening gala of the Casals Forum in Kronberg, Germany.

Alongside his continuing work in Turku, this season he returns to Camerata Zürich for the second consecutive season as Artist in Residence and goes on a fifteen-concert tour in Australia with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Following that, he returns to Japan to perform with Herbert Blomstedt and the NHK Symphony Orchestra as well as a series of recitals in Tokyo, and returns to London's Wigmore Hall for a full cycle of Prokofiev sonatas. Elsewhere in Finland, he joins the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Lahti Sinfonia and Dalia Stasevska for a performance of Rautavaara's *Piano Concerto No.3* to coincide with the release of a CD featuring that work alongside Martinu's third piano concerto.

Last season, Mustonen joined Prague Philharmonia and RSO Wien for Martinu's *Piano Concerto No.3*. Further afield, he returned to Brazil for his triple role, conducting the Orquesta Filarmonica de Minas Gerais, performing Mozart's *Piano Concerto No.25*, and opening the programme with one of his own compositions - *The Old Church at Petajavesi*. Coinciding with his triple-role appearance with the Lapland Chamber Orchestra was the announcement of his appointment as Principal Guest Conductor designate of the orchestra. With Steven Isserlis, he toured London, Milan, and Turin.

In 2021, Mustonen officially commenced his directorship of the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra where he was fortunate to be able to conduct regularly forming a strong connection with the musicians and explore a range of repertoire from Beethoven to Bartok to Rautavaara. Spending a substantial amount of time in Finland, he also joined the Finnish Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic and Jyväskylä Symphony Orchestras amongst others.

As a recitalist, Mustonen has appeared in recent seasons at the Lockenhaus Festival, Diaghilev Festival Perm, Dresden Festival, Cal Performances Berkeley, Symphony Center Chicago, New York Zankel Hall and Sydney Opera House. With Steven Isserlis, Mustonen has performed as a duo for more than thirty years. 2019 saw the release of their disc of Russian works for cello and piano on the Hyperion label.

Particularly close to Mustonen's heart are the piano concertos of Beethoven, Prokofiev, and Bartok, all of which he has performed with leading orchestras. His repertoire also includes Respighi's *Concerto in modo misolidio*, which he has recorded with the Finnish Radio Symphony and Sakari Oramo on the Ondine label. A recently completed recording project has been all of Bartok's and Prokofiev's piano concertos, also for the Ondine label.

Born in Helsinki, Olli Mustonen began his studies in piano, harpsichord and composition at the age of five. Initially learning

with Ralf Gothoni, he subsequently studied piano with Eero Heinonen and composition with Einojuhani Rautavaara.

Season 2022/23

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