

National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, 2015 Artist Bios

Charles Dutoit

Captivating audiences throughout the world, Charles Dutoit is one of today's most sought-after conductors. He has performed with major orchestras and on stages in five continents and is currently the artistic director and principal conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London. Mr. Dutoit recently celebrated his 30th year of artistic collaboration with The Philadelphia Orchestra, who bestowed upon him the title of conductor laureate. He collaborates every season with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, and is also a regular guest on stages in London, Berlin, Paris, Munich, Moscow, Sydney, Beijing, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, among others.

His more than 200 recordings for Decca Classics, Deutsche Grammophone, EMI Classics, Philips Records, and Erato Records have garnered multiple awards and distinctions, including two Grammy Awards.

For 25 years, Mr. Dutoit was artistic director of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra—a dynamic musical team recognized the world over. From 1991 to 2001 he was music director of the Orchestre National de France, and he was appointed principal conductor and then music director of the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo in 1996, where he is currently music director emeritus. For 10 years, Mr. Dutoit was music director of The Philadelphia Orchestra's season at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts. He was also music director at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center for 21 years.

Mr. Dutoit's interest in the younger generation has always had an important place in his career, and he has held the positions of music director of Sapporo's Pacific Music Festival and the Miyazaki International Music Festival in Japan, as well as music director of the Canton International Summer Music Academy in Guangzhou. In 2009, he became music director of the Verbier Festival Orchestra.

While still in his early 20s, Mr. Dutoit was invited by Herbert von Karajan to conduct the Vienna State Opera. He has since conducted at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in London; the Metropolitan Opera; Deutsche Oper Berlin; Teatro dell'Opera di Roma; and Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. He was made honorary citizen of the City of Philadelphia in 1991, grand officier de l'Ordre national du Québec in 1995, commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France in 1996, and was invested as honorary officer of the Order of Canada in 1998. In 2007, he received the Gold Medal of the City of Lausanne, his birthplace, and was given the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Classical Music Awards in 2014.

Mr. Dutoit holds honorary doctorate degrees from McGill University, University of Montreal, Laval University, and the Curtis Institute of Music. A globetrotter motivated by his passion for history, archaeology, political science, art, and architecture, he has traveled all over the world.

YUNDI

Born in Chongqing, China, YUNDI began studying piano at the age of seven. He subsequently trained at the Shenzhen University Arts School and Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. YUNDI was propelled onto the international stage when he won first prize at the 24th International Chopin Piano Competition at the age of 18, becoming the youngest and first Chinese winner in the history of the renowned competition. Since then, he has been regarded as a leading exponent of Chopin's music. In recognition of his contribution to Polish culture, YUNDI was presented with a Gold Medal for Merit to Culture "Gloria Artis" in 2010.

On his regular recital tours, YUNDI performs at prestigious venues such as the Royal Festival Hall in London, Berlin's Philharmonie, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Munich's Herkulesaal, Leipzig's Gewandhaus, Paris's La Salle Pleyel, Moscow's International House of Music, St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Concert Hall, Beijing's National Centre for Performing Arts, Seoul Arts Centre, and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Orchestras and conductors with whom YUNDI has collaborated include the Berliner Philharmoniker and Seiji Ozawa, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and Riccardo Chailly, Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Daniel Harding, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Philharmonia Orchestra and Sir Andrew Davis, Mariinsky Orchestra and Valery Gergiev, and Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and Gustavo Dudamel. He has also performed with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and NHK Symphony Orchestra.

YUNDI has a large following and is a household name in his native China. At the beginning of the 2013–2014 season, he embarked on a 35-city recital tour of the country, bringing classical music to provincial capitals as well as second and third-tier cities. In addition to his activities on the concert platform, YUNDI is also passionate about humanitarian work. He is an ambassador of the Red Cross Society of China and the environmental and city image ambassador for his hometown Chongqing.

Equally committed to promoting classical music in an educational context, YUNDI is one of the pioneers of musical education in China, where his success story has inspired millions of children learning the piano. He has also given master classes at the Royal College of Music, University of Cambridge, and Qinghua University in Beijing. In fall 2012, he was appointed associate dean and professor of the piano faculty at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, the youngest member of the faculty to achieve this status.

YUNDI has an extensive discography with Deutsche Grammophon and EMI Classics. In 2007, he became the first Chinese pianist to record live with the Berliner Philharmoniker and Seiji Ozawa. This Deutsche Grammophon recording met with rave reviews and was named Editor's Choice by Gramophone magazine. For EMI Classics, YUNDI has recorded the complete Chopin Nocturnes, Live in Beijing, and Red Piano, an album celebrating piano music written by Chinese composers. YUNDI's most recent CD is a recording of three Beethoven piano sonatas released by Deutsche Grammophon in Spring 2013.