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BACH COLLEGIUM JAPAN
Masaaki Suzuki, Music Director

Program Biography
PLEASE PRINT THIS BIOGRAPHY IN ITS ENTIRETY

If editing is necessary, Bach Collegium Japan would appreciate your consulting Barrie Steinberg at Frank Salomon Associates: phone (212) 581-5197 or e-mail (barrie@franksalomon.com).

Bach Collegium Japan was founded in 1990 by Masaaki Suzuki, its inspirational Music Director, with the aim of introducing Japanese audiences to period instrument performances of great works from the baroque period. Comprised of both baroque orchestra and chorus with soloists, their activities include an annual concert series of Bach's cantatas and a number of instrumental programs. The award-winning ensemble has begun to explore classical repertoire, releasing a recording of Mozart's Requiem in November 2014, which they followed up with their recent release of Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor. The recording won the Choral category in the 2017 Gramophone Awards.

They have acquired a formidable international reputation through their acclaimed recordings of the major choral works of Johann Sebastian Bach for the BIS label. Most recently, they celebrated their 30th anniversary in 2020 with a Gramophone Award in the Choral category for St Matthew Passion. 2014 saw the triumphant conclusion of their recorded cycle of the complete Church Cantatas, a huge undertaking comprising over fifty CDs initiated in 1995; this major achievement was recognized with a 2014 ECHO Klassick 'Editorial Achievement of the Year' award. Their recent recording of Bach Motets was honored with a German Record Critics' Award (Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik), Diapason d'Or de l'Année 2010 and, also in 2011, with a BBC Music Magazine Award. BBC Music Magazine again recognized Masaaki Suzuki and Bach Collegium Japan, selecting their recording of Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor* as Recording of the Month in January 2017. The disc follows their first recording of Mozart – the *Requiem* – released in 2015 and builds on Suzuki's continuing wish to explore the tradition and line of Christian music.

Bach Collegium Japan and Masaaki Suzuki have shared their interpretations across the international music scene with performances in venues as far afield as Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, New York, and Seoul, and at major festivals such as the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh International Festival, the Hong Kong Arts Festival, New Zealand International Arts Festival, Ghent's Festival of Flanders and Festival Cervantino in Mexico.

In 2010 the ensemble celebrated its 20th anniversary with a series of special concerts in Tokyo, and in 2013 they were invited to appear at New York's Lincoln Center where Masaaki Suzuki and the choir collaborated with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to open its Bach Variations Festival. The 2013-14 season saw the ensemble debut in the Czech Republic at the Prague Spring Festival and in Mexico. A sold-out tour in Fall 2015 marked their fifth tour of North American cities, including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, as well as a major European tour including a weekend residency at the Barbican Centre in London, re-invitations to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris, and debut appearances at Dublin's National Concert Hall and the Vienna Konzerthaus.

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The 2019-20 season included a return to the US and Canada performing at Carnegie Hall, Montreal's Bach Festival, Armstrong Auditorium and for early music presenters in Seattle and Vancouver. European highlights included appearances at the Leipzig Bachfest, Thüringer Bachwochen, Fribourg International Festival of Sacred Music, and Gewandhaus Leipzig, as well as re-invitations to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris.

Members of the Bach Collegium Japan orchestra, with Masaaki Suzuki leading from the harpsichord, look forward to reuniting with Baritone Roderick Williams for a tour in February 2023 that includes returns to the Library of Congress in Washington DC, the Boston Early Music Festival, Toronto's Royal Conservatory, Kansas City Friends of Chamber Music, and their debut with two performances at the Ordway Theatre for the Schubert Club in Saint Paul.

bach.co.jp/

Bach Collegium Japan Choir and Orchestra /Masaaki Suzuki, Music Director
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"Both the gentleness and ecstatic immediacy of Bach's rich imagery become apparent at the outset...The liquid and brilliantly projected bass-singing of Roderick Williams is **simply majestic**...After 22 years of intensive Bach recording, Suzuki and his forces just seem to get better." - *Gramophone, 2017*
