

Owain Arwel Hughes CBE

"The best performance of Belshazzar's Feast I've ever heard" Sir William Walton OM

Owain Arwel Hughes has conducted and recorded with many of the world's leading orchestras. Among his titles have been Associate Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra and Principal Associate Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London; Associate Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales; Principal Conductor of the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, Denmark; Principal Guest Conductor of the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, South Africa; and Musical Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

Arwel Hughes is a noted conductor of large scale choral works (*"... this Proms performance brought out the sheer beauty of the music [Dream of Gerontius], the orchestral virtuosity and Elgar's dexterity with the sung word. At times intimate, at times dazzling, the powerful yet coolly-controlled combination of orchestra and choirs created an absorbing performance."* Mike Smith – *Western Mail*) and was a most successful Principal Conductor of the world famous Huddersfield Choral Society.

He is Musical Director of Camerata Wales and Founder and Artistic Director of the Cardiff Welsh Proms (*"Once again, it was the maestro himself, Owain Arwel Hughes, who inspired this mighty ensemble [the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra] to create such a magnificent sound Drawing the best out of the instrumentalists on stage, Hughes produced a truly awesome performance [Tchaikovsky, 6th Symphony, the Pathétique]."* Dean Powell – *Western Mail*). He also works with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and BBC Concert Orchestra, the Cape Philharmonic and Aalborg Symphony orchestras amongst several others (*"Owain Arwel Hughes was back at the Hallé Proms His programmes are carefully constructed so that each item contrasts intriguingly with its neighbours, and there are some big finishes. Above all, he feels his music, rather than just directing it – which you can't say of everyone – and that brings its own committed response."* Robert Beale – *Manchester Evening News*).

Owain Arwel Hughes has developed an enormous breadth of repertoire. This is reflected in the huge body of work shown in his many recordings for labels including BIS, EMI, cpo, Phillips, Quartz, ASV, Warner, Da Capo, Danacord and Carlton Classics ranging from the complete orchestral, concerto and choral works of Vagn Holmboe, the symphonies and overtures of Brahms, symphonies and piano concertos by Rachmaninov (*"Owain Arwel Hughes proves a sympathetic accompanist [to Noriko Ogawa], bringing a commendable freshness to both works with his Malmö Symphony Orchestra forces."* Barry Millington – *The Times*), Tchaikovsky's piano and orchestra works, Borresen, Schnittke, Handel, Delius, Elgar, Holst, Walton, a CD of music by his father (Arwel Hughes), Verdi, Fanshawe, Koppell, Prokofiev, Saint-Saens, Sibelius, Patterson, Sullivan and Nordby with orchestras including the London Philharmonic (*"..... Arwel Hughes at his most uninhibited and the LPO at their most spontaneous."* AJ Sicluna – *Echo*), Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé, Danish National Radio SO, Stuttgart Philharmoniker, BBC Concert Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Wales and

Cape Philharmonic during which he has received two prestigious Gold Discs. He also conducted the world premiere of Schnittke's huge choral work "Nagasaki" with his Cape Philharmonic forces and included Symphony "0" on the resulting CD with the orchestra.

Owain Arwel Hughes is fiercely proud of his Welsh heritage and Wales' reputation as a Land of Song. He is an instinctive accompanist of the human voice with a long line of distinguished singers who have valued having him on the podium alongside them. These include Dame Janet Baker, Bryn Terfel, John Tomlinson, Thomas Allen, Philip Langridge, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, Dame Gwyneth Jones, Solie Isokoski, Felicity Lott, Dennis O'Neil, Robert Tear, Benjamin Luxon, Rebecca Evans, Sir Geraint Evans, Inger Dam Jensen, John Shirley-Quirk, Alice Coote and Lesley Garrett.

A natural interest in his native Wales led him to found the Cardiff Welsh Proms in 1986 which, based in the city's magnificent St David's Hall and with his vision and commitment, quickly became one of the UK's major annual summer music festivals. Similarly his belief in forging a future for young Welsh musicians led him to agree to become Music Director of The National Youth Orchestra of Wales, the first orchestra of its kind in the world.

Arwel Hughes' contribution to music is widely recognised and marked with honorary doctorates and fellowships at nine Universities and Music Conservatoires. He was awarded the OBE in recognition of his services to music and charitable work, and further honoured in January 2009 when he received the CBE. In 2014 Owain was made Professor of Performance to the University of Wales Trinity St. David.

Further information on Owain Arwel Hughes can be found at his official website www.owainarwelhughes.co.uk