

## Imre Z. Palló

Imre Palló was born in Budapest, Hungary, and is the godson of Zoltán Kodály, who was very influential in his musical training and education. After studying piano and majoring in composition and percussion at the Budapest Conservatory, Imre graduated from the Vienna Academy of Music with two diplomas, in orchestral and choral conducting. As a student at the academy, he served as a musical assistant to Herbert von Karajan and Professor Karl Böhm at the Vienna and Salzburg Festivals.

Immediately after graduation from the academy in 1964, Imre joined the Wuppertal Opera as conductor and coach. He remained with that company until 1968, when he joined the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, conducting more than 100 performances a year there. During this time he also became involved as the assistant to Maestro Antal Doráti in the highly acclaimed recordings of the entire symphonic and operatic works of Haydn.

Imre made his American debut in 1973 with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In 1974 he was invited to join the New York City Opera at Lincoln Center and served as a principal conductor with that company for over two decades. After a highly successful debut in *Madama Butterfly*, he led productions of Korngold's *Die Tote Stadt*, Rossini's *Count Ory*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Coq d'Or*, and Verdi's *Nabucco*, among many others. In 1978 he conducted the farewell tour of the great American soprano Beverly Sills at the Guanajuato Festival in Mexico City, and at Robin Hood Dell in Philadelphia, in performances of *The Barber of Seville*.

Imre served as music director of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic in upstate New York from 1976 through 1991. Here he worked with soloists such as the pianists Emanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Eugene Istomin, Ivan Moravec, and Garrick Ohlson; violinists Joshua Bell and Elmar Olivera; cellists Lyn Harrell, Yo Yo Ma, Zara Nelsova, and János Starker; double bassist Gary Karr; clarinetist Richard Stoltzman; and trumpet player Winton Marsalis.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Imre appeared as a guest conductor with the Israel Philharmonic, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Columbus Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New Jersey Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Lisbon Radio Orchestra, Canadian Opera Company, Cincinnati Opera, Cleveland Opera, Connecticut Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Philadelphia Opera, Portland Opera, St. Louis Opera, Washington Opera, Vancouver Opera, and Manitoba Opera.

In 1984 he toured with international stars Shirley Verrett and Grace Bumbry, appearing at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, San Francisco Opera, and the New Jersey Arts Center, among others. And in 1987 Imre accepted an offer from the Frankfurt Opera Company in Frankfurt, Germany, as principal guest conductor, where he conducted the new production of Dvorak's *Rusalka* to great international acclaim.

Since that time, he has enjoyed many successful debuts with orchestras and opera houses around the world: Budapest State Opera (*Wozzeck* and concerts celebrating the music of Kodály); New Israeli Opera (*Faust*); Den Norske Opera, Oslo (*Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, *The Marriage of Figaro*); Staats Oper, Berlin (*La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus*); Badisches Staatstheater, Karlsruhe (*La Forza del Destino*, *Turandot*, Hindemith's *Cardillac*); Leipzig Oper (*Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*); De Vlaamse Opera (*Attila*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*); Cleveland Opera (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*); Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar (*Parsifal*); and Portland Opera (*Otello*, *Werther*).

In 1994 Imre joined the faculty of the prestigious School of Music at Indiana University, where he was the chair of the instrumental conducting department. With over 30 years of international operatic experience, Imre was a guiding force in upholding the high quality of the IU Opera Theatre. His insistence on the importance of having a laboratory orchestra

as a teaching tool for the conducting students resulted in establishing this orchestra one year prior to his retirement.

Conducting students who graduated during Imre's tenure are holding important conducting positions in the United States as well as in Europe and South America. Some of his former students from IU have followed him to the Sydney Conservatorium of Music at the University of Sydney, to study further under his guidance.

Following his retirement Imre was appointed professor and chair of conducting and opera productions at the Conservatorium. He is a sought-after guest conductor in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia, where his upcoming engagements include performances with Opera Australia, Orchestra Victoria, and West Australian Opera.

*Thomas Baldner*