

BENJAMIN SHWARTZ

Conductor

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Benjamin Shwartz recently completed a three season tenure as the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony where he assisted Michael Tilson Thomas, led numerous concerts, and was the Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. A highlight during his Music Directorship of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, was leading their European tour during summer 2008. Of one of their performances a critic wrote, *Benjamin Shwartz practiced precision work; he by no means simply let his orchestra show off with brute sonic force, but shaped each phrase, even those of the solo winds, with the utmost refinement. In the slow movement, he succeeded in creating highly romantic moments of vibrant intensity in the strings. The Festsaal audience was in a frenzy.*

Prior to his appointment as Resident Conductor with the San Francisco Symphony, Benjamin was assistant conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, Delaware Symphony and the Reading Symphony in Pennsylvania.

Benjamin Shwartz has conducted the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, New World Symphony, and Oregon Symphony Orchestra, among others. Next season he will make debuts with the BBC Symphony London, Tokyo Symphony, Duisburg Philharmonic, and the Korea's KBS Symphony Orchestra.

Last season Benjamin made his opera debut with The Curtis Opera Theatre in Philadelphia conducting Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* and will return this season to conduct *La Sonnambula*.

Committed to new music, Benjamin Shwartz has led numerous world premieres of works by composers of his generation. Benjamin is the conductor of Mercury Soul, a new music project, which he curates together with composer Mason Bates and designer Anne Patterson. The ensemble presents new music for acoustic and electronic instruments in clubs and other unusual locations blurring the lines between classical, experimental, and electronic music.

Raised in Los Angeles and Israel, Benjamin Shwartz attended the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he received the Shanis Fellowship to study conducting. While at Curtis, Benjamin Shwartz worked closely with Christoph Eschenbach in preparing the Curtis Orchestra for concerts. He also studied composition with James Primosch at the University of Pennsylvania, with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Germany, and at IRCAM in Paris.

Benjamin Shwartz has received numerous awards for his work including the Presser Music Award and was a prize-winner in the 2007 Bamberg Symphony Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition.