



Biography

«Acclaimed conductor with whom music has regained its rightful place, the first » (J.J.Vlasselaer, Ottawa), Agnes Grossmann has been, in the thirty year span of her conducting career, Artistic Director of several illustrious organizations : Wiener Singakademie (1983-1986), Chamber Players of Toronto (1984-1990), Montreal Metropolitan Orchestra and Choir (1986-1995), ProCoro Canada, Edmonton, Alberta (1995-1997), the Vienna Choir Boys (1996-1998) and the Orford Arts Centre (1989-1995 and 1999-2004). Critics have been unanimous in praising the musical power of her interpretations as well as the remarkable building process she achieved in all the organizations she directed, bringing them to new heights musically, technically and stylistically. Her versatility was also reflected in her imaginative programming and audience building.

In addition, Agnes Grossmann has guest conducted orchestras and choirs in Canada, Japan, Taiwan and Europe, including Orchestras of Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Canadian Chamber Ensemble, the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa, the Jeunesses Musicales World Youth Orchestra, the Arcadia Choir and Orchestra in Osaka, Japan, the Osaka Philharmonic, the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra.

Agnes Grossmann started her career as a pianist touring the USA, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and Japan with Columbia Artists Management. In 1972 she won the Mozart Interpretation Prize in Vienna. As a result of a hand injury, she was forced to abandon her pianistic career, and soon turned her attention to conducting. Since that time, « Her profound, inborn musicianship and irresistible temperament » (Gerhard Rosenthaler, Vienna), has had her conquering her public wherever she has concertized. By 1987, the City of Montreal named her « Woman of the Year in the Arts ». Ms.Grossmann has received many honors, including the Silver Cross for Outstanding Achievements in the Arts from the Austrian Government (1992),and the Golden Cross of the City of Vienna (1995),an Honorary Doctorate from Mount St. Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia (1994) and Ottawa University (2004), and the « Chevalier de la Pléiade » conferred by the Quebec Government (2003);

In 1990, she took the Toronto Chamber Players on a highly praised European tour, where concerts were given in Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Graz among others.



In 1996, she was appointed Artistic Director of the Vienna Choir Boys. Within a year, following the 500th Anniversary Concert with the Boys Choir, Vienna Chamber Orchestra and the Chorus Viennensis in the Golden Hall of the Vienna Musikverein, the critic of Vienna's « Kurier » Franz Endler exclaimed « At last, finally we could hear that the Vienna Choir Boys is flourishing once again ». Agnes Grossmann rounded off the Celebrations with a resoundingly successful tour of the major North American concert halls including New York's Carnegie Hall, Boston's Symphony Hall and Washington's Kennedy Centre among others, thus « reclaiming the reputation of this organization to one of the highest order ». (Gerhard Kramer, Die Presse, Vienna). A CD of this event was distributed by Koch International.



She launched the Children's Opera Series of the Vienna State Opera by conducting Krása's « Brundibar » with Soloists and Chorus of the Vienna Choir Boys. Her educational reforms for the Institution included acceptance of girls in the Kindergarten, which created a worldwide positive echo. She also introduced a comprehensive educational program for the children. In November 1998, she relinquished her position as Artistic Director of the Vienna Choir Boys because of the incompatibility with the Board of Directors on the method of financing and the goals of the Institution.

As of 1999, Agnes Grossmann resumed her guest conducting career, conducting performances of ProCoro Canada, Arcadia Chamber Orchestra and Choir (Osaka, Japan), highly successful debuts with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra in Handel's Messiah and a televised performance of the Mozart Requiem, the Contemporary Chamber Orchestra and the National Experimental Chorus of Taipei, Taiwan in Schnittke's « A Faust Cantata ».

In October 1999, she was asked to resume the Artistic Directorship of the Orford Arts Centre (1999-2004), Canada's oldest and most prestigious International Summer Academy and Chamber Music Festival. She planned and organised this eight week Festival, where she also conducted numerous concerts and operas. Her artistic vision brought back to Orford the international reputation of the Faculty and Festival it had once enjoyed with performances by such illustrious artists as Janos Starker, Menahem Pressler, Edith Mathis, Patrick Gallois, James Sommerville, Juilliard and Leipzig Quartets, Ensemble Clement Jannequin. The Bach Festival which culminated in the Montreal Metropolitan Orchestra and Choir performance of the B minor Mass under her direction, created a rebirth and continuation of the ideals set by Orford Arts Centre founder Gilles Lefebvre. A highlight of the Orford 2002 season was the performance of Mozart's « Don Giovanni » which Agnes Grossmann conducted with Albert Millaire directing.

In 2001, she founded Ensemble Montréal, which consists of a professional choir and orchestra, whose debut performance with Haydn's « Creation » in celebration of Orford Arts Centre's 50th Anniversary, was nominated for a Prix Opus of the Quebec Council of Music in the cate-



gory « Best Concert of the 2000-2001 season in the Province of Quebec ». Another major event for this occasion was the performances the Hofmannsthal/R. Strauss' adaptation of Molière's «Bourgeois Gentilhomme» with Strauss' incidental music and culminating with the opera «Ariadne auf Naxos».

In Osaka, she performed Mozart's C minor Mass with the participation of Ensemble Montreal Choristers joining Arcadia Chamber Choir and Orchestra in Izumi Hall.

In 2003, she conducted a television performance of Haydn's « Seasons » and in April of that year, his rarely heard Stabat Mater for Radio Canada. In the Fall of 2003, she conducted highly acclaimed performances of Mozart's « Cosi fan tutte » at the University of Toronto Opera Workshop. In 2004 she returned to the podium of the Arcadia Chamber Orchestra and Choir for the fifteenth consecutive season for a performance of Haydn's Stabat Mater, and made a sensational debut in Tokyo with the Tokyo New City Orchestra in an all-Beethoven concert.

In 2006, she became Artistic Director of the newly created Toronto Summer Music Academy and Festival, where international Faculty taught and performed, and where she conducted a highly acclaimed production of Mozart's « Don Giovanni » with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. This international Festival takes place at the Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto. Also in 2006, she was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Kyoto Gewandhaus Choir(Japan) and Artistic Director of the National Experimental Chorus of Taipei, Taiwan, where she conducted Handel's Messiah in the Mozart version with the National Orchestra of Taiwan. In 2007, she conducted Orff's Carmina Burana (Chamber version) and Stravinsky's « Les Noces » which will be distributed by Koch International.

February 2008

