

Laurence Cummings

Conductor



"Conductor Laurence Cummings sets about every number with almost breathless enthusiasm."
Richard Fairman, *Financial Times*

Laurence Cummings is one of Britain's most exciting and versatile exponents of historical performance both as a conductor and a harpsichord player. A noted authority on Handel, the Guardian has written of him "he now ranks as one of the composer's best advocates in the world. Self-effacing on the podium, faithful above all to the score, he matches Handel's energy and invention with unmistakable lyricism, generosity and dignity."

He is Music Director of the Academy of Ancient Music and Orquestra Barroca Casa da Música in Porto and has previously held positions as Artistic Director of the Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen (2011 – 2021) and Musical Director of the London Handel Festival (1999 – 2024).

Frequently praised for his stylish and compelling performances in the opera house, his career has taken him across Europe, conducting new productions at houses including Royal Ballet and Opera Covent Garden (*Jephtha, Berenice*), Opernhaus Zurich (*Belshazzar, King Arthur*), Oper Frankfurt (*Hercules*), Dutch National Opera (*Idomeneo*), Theater an der Wien (*Saul*), Gothenburg Opera (*Orfeo ed Euridice, Giulio Cesare, Alcina* and *Idomeneo*), Theater Basel (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*), Halle Handel Festival (*Agrippina*), Théâtre du Châtelet Paris (*Saul*) and Opera de Lyon (*Messiah*). He has worked with directors including Barrie Koskie, David McVicar, Christoph Marthaler, Deborah Warner, Adele Thomas, Claus Guth, Oliver Mears, Sebastian Baumgarten, John Caird, Graham Vick and Peter Sellars. In the UK he has also appeared regularly for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera, Garsington Opera and Opera North.

Equally at home on the concert platform, he is regularly invited to conduct both period and modern instrument orchestras worldwide. In recent seasons this has included Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Netherlands Bach Society, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Tonkunster Orchester Grafenegg, Music of the Baroque Chicago, St Paul Chamber

Orchestra Minneapolis, St Louis Symphony, and Handel and Haydn Society Boston.

His recordings include discs with Emma Kirkby and Royal Academy of Music on BIS, Angelika Kirschlager and the Basel Chamber Orchestra for Sony BMG, Maurice Steger and The English Concert for Harmonia Mundi and Ruby Hughes and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment on Chandos, as well as a series of live opera and concert performances recorded at the Göttingen International Handel Festival and released on Accent. He has released numerous solo harpsichord recital and chamber music recordings for Naxos.

In addition to his commitments with Academy of Ancient Music and Orquestra Barroca Casa da Musica, highlights for 25/26 include productions of *Giulio Cesare* for Oper Frankfurt and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* for Garsington Opera as well as appearances with Manchester Camerata, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Antwerp Symphony Orchestra.

He was an organ scholar at Christ Church Oxford where he graduated with first class honours. Until 2012 he was Head of Historical Performance at the Royal Academy of Music which led to both baroque and classical orchestras forming part of the established curriculum. He is now the William Crotch Professor of Historical Performance.

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