

GERD SCHALLER

He is acknowledged as one of the most significant contemporary interpreters of the works of Bruckner. He studied conducting and worked at various German opera houses (State Opera Hanover, principal conductor with the State Theatre in Braunschweig, GMD at the theatre in Magdeburg); since 2006, he has been operating freelance, and is frequently invited to serve as guest conductor by famous orchestras both at home and abroad.

In 2008 he founded the Philharmonie Festiva, a symphony orchestra comprising selected musicians from top German orchestras, with whom he has been pursuing his own urbane musical projects ever since.

For many years, the music of Anton Bruckner has been at the very heart of Gerd Schaller's work; the composer's combination of profound emotionalism and potent complexity has fascinated the conductor since his early youth. That fascination has resulted in Schaller's large-scale CD album project BRUCKNER2024, which aims to record all of the composer's symphonies in all their versions with one orchestra, the Philharmonie Festiva. The project began with the symphonies – some of them in hitherto unknown versions – that Schaller is recording for CD with the Philharmonie Festiva for the Profil Günter Hänssler label; a series that has won numerous prizes and awards already at home and abroad. One highlight of that first tranche of recordings was undoubtedly Schaller's completion, based on the composer's own sketches, of the final movement of the 9th Symphony, released on CD and published in full score version in 2018

Alongside this Bruckner symphonic cycle Schaller has also recorded a number of Bruckner's sacred works, such as his Mass in F minor and the 146th Psalm, as well as all of his organ works and selected symphonies in arrangements for organs made and played by Schaller himself.

In addition to his passion for Bruckner's works, the conductor shows a pronounced delight in discovering new and unknown repertoire, and has been championing the rehabilitation of forgotten works and rare gems such as Carl Goldmark's opera *Merlin*, whose modern-day premiere he conducted and whose score he edited for the Ries & Erler music publishing house. Over and above that, Gerd Schaller has truly made his mark in the world of opera specifically with the works of Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss and Giuseppe Verdi. The wide-ranging spectrum of his achievement encompasses works by rarely played composers, and in the course of his career Gerd Schaller has amassed a vast repertoire for the concert stage ranging from the Baroque to the present day.

The conductor is also Artistic Director of the Ebrach Summer Music Festival, founded by him in 1990, which in recent years has received ever more international critical acclaim precisely on account of Schaller's enlightened Bruckner readings performed in the ideal acoustic atmosphere of Ebrach Abbey.