



CHARLES DUTOIT

Chief Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra
Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair

Biography, January 2012

In the 2010-11 season The Philadelphia Orchestra celebrates its 30-year artistic collaboration with Charles Dutoit, who made his debut with that ensemble in 1980, and who has held the title of chief conductor since 2008. With the 2012-13 season, the Orchestra will honor Dutoit by bestowing upon him the title of conductor laureate. Also artistic director and principal conductor of the Royal Philharmonic, Dutoit regularly collaborates with the world's pre-eminent orchestras and soloists. He has recorded extensively for Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI, Philips, CBS, and Erato, and his more than 200 recordings have garnered over 40 awards and distinctions around the world.

For 25 years (1977 to 2002), Dutoit was artistic director of the Montreal Symphony, a dynamic musical partnership recognized the world over. Between 1990 and 2010 he was artistic director and principal conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra's summer festival at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in upstate New York. From 1991 to 2001 he was music director of the Orchestre National de France, with which he toured extensively on the five continents. In 1996 he was appointed music director of the NHK Symphony in Tokyo, with which he toured Europe, the United States, China, and Southeast Asia. He is today music director emeritus of that orchestra. Dutoit has been artistic director of both the Sapporo Pacific Music Festival and the Miyazaki International Music Festival in Japan, as well as the Canton International Summer Music Academy in Guangzhou, China, which he founded in 2005. In summer 2009 he became music director of the Verbier Festival Orchestra. While still in his early 20s, Dutoit was invited by Herbert von Karajan to conduct the Vienna State Opera. Dutoit has since conducted at Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires.

In 1991 Dutoit was made an Honorary Citizen of the City of Philadelphia. In 1995 he was named Grand Officier de l'Ordre National du Québec, and in 1996 Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France. In 1998 he was invested as an Honorary Officer of the Order of Canada, the country's highest award of merit. He was also the recipient of the 2010 Governor's Distinguished Arts Award, which recognizes a Pennsylvania artist of international fame, leadership, or renown whose creations or contributions enrich the state. Most recently, this past May Dutoit was awarded an honorary Doctor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music.

Dutoit was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, and his extensive musical training included violin, viola, piano, percussion, music history, and composition at the conservatories and music academies of Geneva, Siena, Venice, and Boston. A globetrotter motivated by his passion for history and archaeology, political science, art, and architecture, Dutoit has traveled all the nations of the world.