



SYLVAIN CAMBRELING

Conductor

Chief Conductor: Symphoniker Hamburg

Conductor Laureate: Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra

Born into a highly musical family in Amiens in 1948, Sylvain Cambreling quickly swapped his trombone for the baton after winning second place in the international conducting competition in Besançon in 1974 with Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*. For 50 years now, he has dedicated himself to both symphonic music and opera – always with a particular penchant for the contemporary.

Pierre Boulez appointed him as a permanent guest conductor of Ensemble intercontemporain in 1976; subsequently, Cambreling made his debut at the Opéra national de Paris in 1978 with Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, in a production by Patrice Chéreau. The conductor was appointed General Music Director of the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels in 1981, where he remained for ten years and, together with his life partner, artistic director Gerard Mortier, elevated the theatre to the top of European opera houses. Guest appearances have taken him to the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala in Milan, the English National Opera, the Vienna State Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and repeatedly to Paris. Cambreling was Artistic Director and General Music Director of the Oper Frankfurt from 1993 to 1997, during which time he was named Conductor of the Year for the first time by the magazine »Opernwelt« and the opera house was named Opera House of the Year.

From 1999 to 2011, he served as chief conductor of the SWR Symphony Orchestra Baden-Baden and Freiburg, with whom he recorded Messiaen's orchestral works, for which he was awarded with the Echo Klassik and German Record Awards in 2009, and the MIDEM Classical Award for Contemporary Music in 2010. To mark his 75th birthday, a 10-CD box set with the orchestra was released in 2023, featuring works by Janáček, Ravel, Stravinsky, Ives and Messiaen, among others, thus complementing Cambreling's numerous opera and concerto recordings with various companies. The conductor has performed with orchestras such as the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonics, the radio orchestras of Berlin, Cologne, Copenhagen, Stockholm and London, the Munich and the Oslo Philharmonic, the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony orchestra as well as the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal.

Cambreling has been repeatedly invited to numerous festivals and has thus been able to expand his artistic array in opera and symphonic music: at the Lucerne Festival with works ranging from Debussy and Berio to Haas, at the Ruhrtriennale with compositions by Zimmermann, Xenakis and Messiaen's »Saint François d'Assise«. At the Wiener Festwochen, he has brought Schönberg, Ligeti, Neuwirth and Dutilleux to life, and at the Glyndebourne Festival, Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* to the stage – the latter in David Hockney's design. Cambreling has conducted almost a dozen productions for the Salzburg Festival, including *La Damnation de Faust* staged by La Fura dels Baus, *Le nozze di Figaro* directed by Christoph Marthaler, Bob Wilson's iconic production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Les Troyens* staged by Herbert Wernicke. Cambreling will return to Salzburg in 2024 – with Klangforum Wien, for whom he functioned as principal guest conductor for over 20 years.

His interpretations in both symphonic music as well as opera are characterised by clarity, precision and lasting emotional resonance – in a broad repertoire that Cambreling himself labels as “from Monteverdi to morning”. It is therefore no surprise that he was celebrated as Chief Conductor of the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo from 2010 to 2019 and as General Music Director of the Staatsoper Stuttgart, where he was engaged during Jossi Wieler’s directorship from 2012 to 2018 and which was named Opera House of the Year in 2016. Cambreling has been honoured several times for his contributions to the arts – for instance in 2007 as Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur, in 2008 with the Premio Abbiati and in 2012 with the German Federal Cross of Merit 1st Class and most recently, in 2024, the ICMA Special Achievement Award for his services to music, and in particular, his total and inspiring commitment to the music of our time.

Cambreling has been Chief Conductor of the Symphoniker Hamburg since 2018 – and has extended his contract until 2028. Also in the Laeiszhalle, Cambreling knows how to present multifaceted performances of interpretative depth, from the baroque sounds of Rameau via classical, romantic and modern music with a special focus on Messiaen to the contemporary sounds of Hosokawa and Boesmans. With his deep understanding of musical structure, Cambreling surprises and inspires especially in the colourful and imaginative compilation of his programmes.