

NICHOLAS COLLON

Conductor

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'Aurora Orchestra, a sparky, young ensemble specialising in new repertoire and chamber arrangements of symphonies has already reached the threshold of big-name status. The current conductor is the name-to-watch firecracker Nicholas Collon.'

Metro, January 2008

Nicholas Collon is establishing an enviable reputation as a commanding and inspirational interpreter in an exceptionally wide range of music. As Principal Conductor of Aurora Orchestra he has promoted imaginative programming that integrates challenging repertoire from the 20th and 21st centuries with masterworks of the Classical and Romantic eras. In addition to his work with Aurora he regularly conducts other ensembles in London and is increasingly heard outside the UK. A viola player, pianist and organist by training, Nicholas studied at Clare College, Cambridge. He was awarded the 2008 Arts Foundation Fellowship for conducting, having been chosen from a list of twenty nominated British conductors.

With Aurora Nicholas has explored a wide variety of repertoire, including the chamber symphonies of John Adams, Schoenberg and Schreker, Birtwistle's *Secret Theatre* and Strauss's *Metamorphosen*. Together they performed Ligeti's Chamber Concerto to great acclaim at the Aldeburgh Festival and recently returned there with Schoenberg's *Erwartung* to open the new Hoffmann Building. He has also appeared with Aurora in the Spitalfields and Barbican Young Genius Festivals, at the BBC Proms as part of the Young Composers' Competition, at LSO St Luke's and at the Al Bustan Festival, Lebanon. Other recent concert work includes the chamber version of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Orchestra of Opera North, a programme of Schumann, Piazzolla and Stravinsky with Symphonieorchester Vorarlberg, Shostakovich Symphony No 4 with the Kensington Symphony and Berlioz *Symphonie Fantastique* with the Salomon Orchestra.

His operatic experience includes a recent programme of Walton's *The Bear* and Stravinsky's *Renard* for Mahogany Opera in 2008, described by Opera magazine's critic as *'one of the most electrifying evenings I've spent at the opera in recent seasons ... brilliant playing [by] the Aurora Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Collon, whose feel for Stravinsky's Russian colourings were beyond reproach'*. In April 2007 he conducted Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, directed by Sam West, in Ramallah and Bethlehem, the first-ever staged opera production in the West Bank and returned this year with the same team for performances of *La Boheme*.

Future appearances with Aurora Orchestra include concerts at LSO St Lukes, the Wigmore Hall, the City of London Festival and a week's curatorship at King's Place featuring music from the Weimar Republic. Other appearances this season include a return to the Orchestra of Opera North, a special project at Glyndebourne conducting a new opera by Julian Phillips, the London Sinfonietta and he will be one of the conductors for George Crumb's *Star Child* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican.