**Naoto Otomo, Conductor**

Honorary Guest Conductor, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra (since April 2014)

Conductor Laureate, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra (since 2008)

Music Director, Ryukyu Symphony Orchestra (since 2016)

Artistic Director, Takasaki City Theatre (since 2020)

For nearly forty years, Naoto Otomo has led the highly competitive music scene of Japan.

Since his debut with the NHK Symphony Orchestra at the age of 22, Otomo has been invited regularly to conduct all the major orchestras both based in Tokyo and all over Japan. He currently serves as Music Director at the Ryukyu Symphony Orchestra on Okinawa Island, and previously held the posts of Principal Conductor or Music Director at the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra, Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra and Gunma Symphony Orchestra. Besides conducting, he had served as the first Music Director of the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan concert hall for eight years.

Outside his country, Otomo led the Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra and the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra on their overseas tours and has appeared repeatedly with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre national de Lorraine, Orchestre de Cannes, Orchestra della Toscana and National Symphony Orchestra of Romania. Also invited to conduct the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony and Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, Otomo led the Philharmonia Orchestra on its tour to Japan.

Otomo has performed with numerous world-renowned soloists including: pianists Radu Lupu, André Watts, Ivan Moravec, Paul Badura-Skoda, Pierre Réach, Mikhail Pletnev, Hélène Grimaud, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Peter Serkin, Rafał Blechacz and Alexei Volodin; violinists Joshua Bell, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Augustin Dumay, Régis Pasquier and Augustin Hadelich; violists Gérard Caussé, Bruno Pasquier, Yuri Bashmet and Nobuko Imai; cellists Mstislav Rostropovich, David Geringas, Pieter Wispelwey and Mario Brunello. He also collaborated successfully with flutists Emmanuel Pahud, Andrea Griminelli and Philippe Bernold, trumpetist Maurice André and tenor José Carreras.

Also active as an opera conductor following his debut in 1988 with Weber’s *Der Freischütz* in Tokyo, he has been dedicated, in recent years, to premiering operas by Japanese contemporary composers. Otomo was invited twice to appear at the Puccini Festival, where he conducted the first performance in Italy of Shigeaki Saegusa’s *Jr. Butterfly*. Moved by Otomo’s conducting, the festival awarded him a letter of appreciation.

In 2001, alongside fellow conductor Alan Gilbert, Otomo founded the annual international music seminar “Music Masters Course Japan (MMCJ)” to coach younger musicians as its Founding Music Director.

Since his recording debut at the age of 20, Otomo has enlarged his abundant discography including, to name a few, Lou Harrison's Concerto for Piano with Keith Jarrett as soloist, Bartok’s Concerto for Piano with Hüseyin Sermet as well as Graham Fitkin’s Concerto for Two Pianos with Noriko Ogawa and Kathryn Stott. Well-known for his wide repertoire ranging from classical to contemporary works, Otomo has premiered numerous new works, conducting especially the first performances in Japan of several pieces by James MacMillan and the opera “A Flowering Tree” by John Adams.

Born in 1958 in Tokyo, Otomo graduated from the Toho Gakuen School of Music having studied conducting under Seiji Ozawa, Kazuyoshi Akiyama, Tadaaki Otaka and Morihiro Okabe. Otomo was also trained at the Tanglewood Music Festival where he worked with André Previn, Leonard Bernstein and Igor Markevitch.