## Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse

### PROFILE

From its origins as the Orchestra of the Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, the Orchestra National du Capitole de Toulouse (ONCT) has, in recent years, been hailed as one of France’s finest orchestras.  
   
Russian conductor Tugan Sokhiev was appointed Music Director in September 2008 following three years as Principal Guest Conductor and musical advisor to the ensemble.  At his instigation, the orchestra launched a recruitment drive in 2009 and now boasts 125 musicians.  The very special relationship between Sokhiev and his musicians has made a huge impact, with Le Figaro describing the partnership as being “at the centre of French musical life” and Le Monde speaking of “Sokhievmania” following a concert in Paris in 2010.  
   
Michel Plasson, who conducted the ONCT from 1968-2003 and is now the Orchestra’s honorary conductor, is credited with developing ONCT’s symphonic reputation through over sixty recordings for EMI, overseas tours, and his passion for French symphonic and operatic music.  
   
ONCT presents its symphonic season at the Halle aux Grains in Toulouse [the former market converted to the Orchestra’s home arena in 1974], gives concerts in the region Midi-Pyrénées and is the Orchestra for the operatic and ballet season at the Théâtre du Capitole. The ONCT appears at several European festivals including George Enesco, Bucharest, La Quincena Musical, San Sebastián, and Chorégies d’Orange in the South of France. For several years the ONCT has given regular performances at the Salle Pleyel, Paris; the Orchestra is scheduled to give four concerts in the 2011-2012 season. In January 2011, the Orchestra performed Prokofiev’s Betrothal in a Monastery at the Opéra Comique.  Following performances in Russia, Spain and Italy in 2010-2011, the Orchestra, in their 2011-2012 season, will tour the United Kingdom (for the first time) as well as Germany and South America. In 2012-2013, two tours are planned in Asia, as well as a series of concerts at the Musikverein, Vienna.  
   
Four recordings with Tugan Sokhiev and the ONCT have been released to date by Naïve: Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition/Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No 4 (2006), Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf (2007) and Prokofiev’s Violin Concerto No 2 (with Geneviève Laurenceau, the ONCT's Concertmaster)/Rachmaninov’s Symphonic Dances (January 2011). The most recent recording was released in autumn 2011: Shostakovich’s Festive Overture/Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No 5.  The ONCT’s discography will be extended in the spring of 2012 with the release of Stravinsky’s The Firebird (1919)/The Rite of Spring.  
   
Karol Beffa, resident composer from September 2006-June 2009, has written three works under the tenure of Tugan Sokhiev.  Bruno Mantovani was appointed Associated Composer in September 2010 and his “Double Concerto for Pianos”, jointly commissioned by the Orchestre National du Capitole and the Casa da Música in Porto, will be premiered in France with the ONCT, conducted by Alain Altinoglu, in June 2012.