**MODESTAS PITRĖNAS – the artistic director and principal conductor of the LNSO**

One of the leading Lithuanian conductors **Modestas Pitrėnas**has taken the duties of the principal conductor and artistic director of the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra (LNSO) in autumn of 2015. In 2009–2014, he has served as the principal conductor of the Latvian National Opera (LNO) as well as the conductor of the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre (LNOBT). In 2006–2011, he was the principal conductor of the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra. Since August 2018, Maestro has served as the principal conductor of the St. Gallen Opera Theatre and symphony orchestra (Switzerland). In December 2022, he made his debut at the Frankfurt Opera House.

In 2003, Pitrėnas won the 1st prize and gold medal at the prestigious 7th Grzegorz Fitelberg Conducting Competition in Katowice (Poland) and was awarded a special prize of the Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra. Following that he was invited to collaborate with Poland’s leading symphony orchestras.

Together with the LNSO, the Latvian National Orchestra, Krasnoyarsk State Orchestra, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra and the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra Maestro has prepared and performed symphonic opuses by Mahler, Tchaikovsky, R. Strauss, Prokofiev, Lutosławski and Schnittke. For many years he has enjoyed invitations to work with the North Rhine-Westphalia youth symphony and chamber orchestras. With the aforementioned orchestras he has given concerts throughout Europe, toured in the USA and China.

For over a decade Pitrėnas has been preoccupied with opera. He was invited to conduct at the national opera theatres in Lithuania, Latvia, Cologne, St. Gallen and Helsinki as well as the Grand Theatre in Warsaw, Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and Deutsche Oper in Berlin. He is invited to conduct Bizet’s Carmen at the Grand Theatre in Warsaw; at the LNOBT he premiered The Little Prince, opera for children by R. Portman, Donizetti’s L’elisir d’amore, ballet Tristan und Isolde after music by Wagner, took active part in production of R. Strauss’ Salome, P. Eötvös’s Love and Other Demons and Wagner’s Die Walküre, conducted the ballets Red Giselle and Zorba the Greek as well as Tchaikovsky’s opera Eugene Onegin. Since 2009, he has produced Massenet’s Werther and Puccini’s Triptych, premiered Rossini’s Il barbiere di Siviglia, conducted the operas by Wagner, Verdi, Tchaikovsky and Puccini at the Latvian National Opera. In 2010, he debuted at the Cologne Opera and Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf. He is invited to conduct various productions in St. Gallen Opera Theatre (Switzerland) and Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. In 2014, under the baton of Pitrėnas Wagner’s Rienzi became one of the key events in the program of Riga – European Capital of Culture 2014; the same year Maestro gave a world premiere of A. Maskat’s opera Valentina at the LNO, the opera was taken to Deutsche Oper in Berlin on occasion of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2015.

Pitrėnas has collaborated with illustrious performers such as vocalists M. Salminen, J. Ryhänen, A. Antonenko, V. Noreika, E. Montvidas, E. Siliņš, A. Anger, V. Prudnikovas, I. Kalna, A.-K. Behnke, A. Grigorian, I. Prudnikovaitė, K. Opolais, P. Yende and A. Nigro, violinists T. Grindenko, B. Skride and P. Berman, cellists D. Geringas and A. Kniazev, pianists M. Rubackytė, A. Liakhovski, P. Donohoe and P. Geniušas, oboist F. di Rosa, etc. Maestro shared the stage with Violeta Urmana in her solo appearances at the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Hall (2009), the LNOBT (2010) and Vilnius Festival (2013). In 2013, on the occasion of Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union Maestro, Violeta Urmana and the LNSO took part at the Klarafestival in BOZAR (Brussels).

The beginning of his successful conducting career is marked with the rich and intensive activities of the *Psalmos* mixed choir. He founded it in 1990, at the age of sixteen, and led it until 2000. The choir went on several tours in Europe and the USA, and won prizes in many international choral competitions and festivals. Maestro has recorded over 15 CDs featuring choral and symphonic music.

In 1995–1996, Pitrėnas studied choral and opera conducting at the Mozarteum  University Salzburg  (Prof. W. Hagen-Groll and Prof. K. Kamper). He also pursued his studies at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LAMT), from which he graduated as a choral conductor in 1997 (Prof. L. Abarius), an orchestral conductor in 2002 (Prof. J. Domarkas), and earned the Licentiate of Arts Diploma in 2004. He participated in seminars and master courses led by famous conductors E.-P. Salonen, J. Panula and H. Rilling.

Since 2003, Pitrėnas has taught conducting (assoc. prof.) at the LAMT, where for several years from 2015 he served as the head of the Conducting Department. He was invited to serve as a jury member of the K. Taev International Competition for Young Opera Singers 2013 in Pärnu (Estonia) as well as many other international competitions.

In 2012, Pitrėnas was honoured with Lithuania’s highest award – the Lithuanian National Culture and Art Prize. For his contribution to Latvian music culture Maestro was awarded several Latvian music awards and the Cross of Recognition, a state decoration of Latvia. In 2015, in Riga the Joint Jury of the Baltic Assembly adjudged the Baltic Assembly Prize for the Arts to Pitrėnas. In 2019, he was decorated with the Officer’s Cross of the Order For Merits to Lithuania.

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**Short biography**

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Pitrėnas was invited to conduct in the national opera theatres of Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Germany and Finland, including the Grand Theatre in Warsaw, Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Hall, and Deutsche Oper in Berlin. In 2014, under his baton Wagner’s Rienzi became one of the key events in the program of Riga – European Capital of Culture 2014.

Maestro has recorded over 15 CDs featuring choral and symphonic music.

Pitrėnas studied conducting at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (Prof. L. Abarius and Prof. J. Domarkas) and at the Mozarteum  University Salzburg. Currently, he is an assistant professor of the Conducting Department at the LAMT, often serves as a jury member in various international competitions.

In addition to many other conducting competitions, Pitrėnas has won the 1st prize and gold medal at the 7th Grzegorz Fitelberg Conducting Competition in Katowice (Poland, 2003) and was awarded a special prize of the Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2012, he was honoured with Lithuania’s highest award – the Lithuanian National Culture and Art Prize. For his contribution to Latvian music culture Maestro was awarded several Latvian music awards and the Cross of Recognition, a state decoration of Latvia. In 2015, in Riga the Joint Jury of the Baltic Assembly adjudged the Baltic Assembly Prize for the Arts to Pitrėnas. In 2019, he was decorated with the Officer’s Cross of the Order For Merits to Lithuania.

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