

Paul Agnew, Conductor



Paul Agnew is in continuous demand as an outstanding interpreter of the baroque and classical repertoire. His long association with the world's leading conductors in the field of early music includes a discography of over one hundred recordings. Born in Glasgow, he was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford before embarking on a career that has taken him throughout the world.

At the forefront of the revival of the French baroque repertoire, Paul Agnew made his critically-acclaimed début singing the title-role in Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* at the Palais Garnier in Paris conducted by William Christie. He has since returned to Opéra National de Paris for new productions of Rameau's *Platée*, *Les Boréades* and *Les Indes galantes*. He continued to perform the demanding haute-contre roles worldwide including at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Opernhaus Zürich and in Sydney, Australia. Subsequently he extended his repertoire to include Mozart's *Idomeneo* under William Christie; Peter

Quint in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* at Opéra National de Bordeaux under Jane Glover and at the Opéra de Rennes; Haydn's *L'Anima del filosofo* with Kammerorchesterbasel in Vienna and Eisenstadt, Handel's *Jephtha* at Det Kongelige Theater, Copenhagen in a new production by Katie Mitchell (conducted by Lars Ulrik Mortensen) and Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* at Opéra de Nice. Agnew made his debut with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden in their production of *Acis and Galatea* to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Handel's death.

Following a highly successful conducting debut with Les Arts Florissants in Paris in 2007, William Christie appointed him Joint Musical Director of the orchestra; he has since gone on to lead the orchestra on tour to major venues such as the Wiener Konzerthaus, throughout France, to Salzburg, to New York and to China. He made his London debut as conductor with the same ensemble at the Barbican as part of their 30th anniversary celebrations. Paul Agnew succeeded Christophe Rousset as Music Director of the Orchestre Français des Jeunes Baroque in 2009 and he has since been actively engaged in the training and preparation of the next generation of specialist instrumentalists. Paul Agnew is also the co-director of the academy for young singers, Le Jardin des Voix. He has conducted performances of *Messiah* for Le Concert d'Astrée and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra as well as Handel's *La Resurrezione* at the Atelier of the Opéra national de Paris. He made his opera conducting debut with Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor* at the Opéra de Rennes and in 2014, conducted the new Robert Carsen production of Rameau's *Platée* at the Theatre an der Wien in Vienna, and at the Opera Comique in Paris. His success was unanimously praised by the critics in both houses.

Paul Agnew has since conducted, among others, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, as well as Music of the Baroque in Chicago, the St Paul's Chamber Orchestra in Minnesota, the Staatskapelle in Dresden, and The Finnish Radio Chamber Orchestra in Helsinki.

As Joint Musical Director of Les Arts Florissants, he has made a series of Monteverdi recordings that, in 2014 won the Gramophone Award and recently completed a recording of the six books of Gesualdo Madrigals which were equally recognised by a Gramophone Award (2022) and Disc of the Year from *Classica* (2023). Agnew's comprehensive discography equally includes *Lamentazione* - on which he conducts Les Arts Florissants choir in works by Scarlatti and Caldara for Virgin, *The Food of Love* - songs by Purcell for Ambrosie, Sally Beamish's *In Dreaming* for Virgin Classics and Rameau's *Dardanus* for ABC, *The Food of Love* - songs by Purcell for Ambrosie, and Dowland songs for Metronome. On DVD his performances include *Les Boréades* and *Les Indes galantes* on Opus Arte, Lully's *Armide*, the Bach B minor Mass and St Matthew Passion, and his celebrated performance as *Platée* on TDK.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include two new production of *Platée* at the Opera de Göteborg and at the Opera de Garsington, *Giulio Cesare* at the Nationaltheater Mannheim, the *Messie* with the Spanish National Orchestra and then with the Orchestre of the Opéra de Saint-Etienne, or Bach's Christmas Oratorio with the Trondheim Symfoniorkester.

Paul Agnew has been represented by the RSBA agency since 2023.

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