James S. Kahane, Conductor



James S. Kahane is the Music Director of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the Helsinki Chamber Orchestra and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre de Chambre de la Drôme. Commended for his ability to "weave the musical phrases together with flexibility and determination, as well as the musicians between them." (Bachtrack) and to "take the orchestra to its extremes" (Keskisuomalainen), Kahane has worked with first-rate orchestras around the world such as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra or the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. His debut album with the Helsinki Chamber Orchestra, released by Resonus Classics, has been lauded as a "colossal album that will inspire for generations to come" (The Flute View).

With a wealth of experience in both the symphonic and operatic worlds, Kahane conducted productions of operas such as Bizet's *The Tragedy of Carmen*, Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and Kokkonen's *The Last Temptations* among others, as well as world premiered of operas such as Kon's *Bas Sheve* or Tuurna's *Years of Silence*. He has been a regular guest conductor at the Finnish Chamber Opera and was also a conductor at the Helsinki Contemporary Opera Festival on several occasions. Kahane was the Assistant Conductor to Hannu Lintu at the Bayerische Staatsoper for their production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* by Debussy during the Spring of 2024, for which he was glowingly and publicly credited by Lintu, and at the Bregenzer Festpiele the following Spring for the production of *Œdipe*.

Recent years have seen Kahane guest conducting internationally, appearing with orchestras such as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Mulhouse, the Miroirs Étendus Ensemble, the Jyväskylä Sinfonia, the St. Michel Strings and the Pori Sinfonietta. He was Susanna Mälkki's Assistant Conductor at the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra for their 2017/2018 season, where he worked at her side and with the orchestra's guest conductors, aged only 21 at the time. In 2018, Kristjan Järvi invited him to conduct the Baltic Academies Orchestra in Berlin for their first international tour, and the following year, Kahane was offered a conducting fellowship at the Atlantic Music Festival in the United States, where he worked during the summer of 2019.

Since 2016, Kahane has been the conductor of the Far(away) Ensemble, a modular and multidisciplinary ensemble dedicated to performing the music of composer Jacopo Aliboni, with whom he recorded the score for the short films Du Temps Perdu and Le Temps Prend Feu, with the later notably featured at the 70th Cannes Festival. He became in 2018 the conductor of the Polytech Orchestra, succeeding a long line of esteemed conductors among which Jorma Panula, Sakari Oramo, Dimitri Slobodeniouk and Eva Ollikainen, and in 2019, Kahane contributed to the refounding of the Helsinki Chamber Orchestra, of which he subsequently became Principal Conductor. In 2023, he was also appointed Principal Conductor of the Orchestre de chambre de la Drôme in France. In May 2024, the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra announced James S. Kahane as their 9th Music Director, starting the 2024/2025 season.

Kahane was admitted at the age of 19 to the prestigious Orchestral Conducting class of the Sibelius Academy, where he studied with Sakari Oramo, Hannu Lintu and Atso Almila. From there, he went on to be invited to the Menuhin Festival in Gstaad, to Bernard Haitink's conducting masterclass at the Lucerne Music Festival and to the prestigious Tanglewood Music Festival, and benefited during these years from the teaching of many prominent conductors such as Paavo Järvi, Neeme Järvi, David Zinman, Peter Eötvös, Matthias Pintscher, Sir Roger Norrington, John Storgårds, Mikko Franck, Leif Segerstam, Johannes Schlaefli, Nicolas Pasquet and Jorma Panula.

Kahane was one of the three protagonists of the documentary movie "Conductivity", which followed him during his study years at the Sibelius Academy. The movie was released in the Finnish movie theaters in February of 2020.

James S. Kahane has been represented by RSB Artists since 2021.

General Management : World except North America

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