

Franz Vote, Artistic Director, New Mexico Performing Arts Society

Franz Vote has been called one of the finest conductors of his generation. Named a “singer’s conductor” by reviewers, his rapport with musicians, both on stage and in the orchestra pit, elicits music-making of the highest level. Regarding his premier of *Les contes d’Hoffmann* at the Metropolitan Opera, one reviewer noted, “... during the curtain call, a very unusual thing happened. Usually half or more of the musicians have left the orchestra pit by the time the conductor gets to take his curtain call, and he then has to stand there and extend his gratitude to an almost empty pit. Not this time. Last night most, if not all of the musicians stayed in their spots, and what’s more, they stood up and avidly applauded Franz Vote.”

Maestro Vote began his professional career in 1980 as a conductor at The Eastman School of Music and The Aspen Music Festival. In 1982 he was engaged at the Musiktheater im Revier in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, where he conducted *Le nozze di Figaro*, *L’elisir d’amore*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Xerxes* and *L’Orfeo*. His successes there led to productions of *Gianni Schicchi* and Hans Werner Henze’s *Don Chisciotte de la Mancia* in Aachen. From there, he went to the Gärtnerplatz Theater in Munich and the Theater des Westens in Berlin. Maestro Vote’s approach to conducting is informed by extensive experience in German opera houses and his 1989 engagement at the Bayreuth Festival as Assistant Conductor to Daniel Barenboim and James Levine.

In 1990 he was invited by James Levine to join the Metropolitan Opera, conducting performances of *Elektra*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino*, *Les contes d’Hoffmann*, and the 1996 New Year’s Eve Gala. Placido Domingo invited him to lead Tokyo’s Kanagawa Philharmonic Orchestra for the Operalia Vocal Competition.

The Los Angeles native has collaborated with many of the world’s most prominent operatic artists, including Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, Hildegard Behrens, Stephanie Blythe, Jane Eaglen, Renée Fleming, Galina Gorchakova, Ben Heppner, Jerry Hadley, James King, Susanne Mentzer, Richard Leach, Samuel Ramey and Deborah Voigt, among many others.

Maestro Vote achieved international prominence and received high acclaim as Music Director of Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at Seattle Opera in 2001 with soprano Jane Eaglen. Called the “musical Wotan of the production.....a real master of Wagnerian style....a conductor who brings out the best in his players,” the New York Times noted that his performance was “beautiful, conceptually unified and musically strong...Mr. Vote brought vigor and textural clarity to the score.”

Franz Vote currently lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he is Artistic Director and Conductor of the New Mexico Performing Arts Society. He also guests conducts at various opera houses around the country.