



Photo: Richard Brodzeller

Joseph Rescigno

conductor

Joseph Rescigno has conducted symphonies, concertos, operas, and oratorios for more than 50 companies on four continents. The 2008-2009 season is his 28th as Artistic Advisor and Principal Conductor at the Florentine Opera Company of Milwaukee (WI), where he has conducted some of the company's most challenging repertory. As Artistic Director of l'Orchestre Métropolitain of Montreal, Maestro Rescigno made four recordings in four years: works by Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn, and operatic and concert arias by Mozart featuring Lyne Fortin. Two additional recordings round-out his discography: One is *Verismo*, arias with Diana Soviero. The other is Minoru Miki's *Joruri*, of which he conducted the world and Japanese premieres.

As a frequent guest conductor, Joseph Rescigno has conducted the New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera, Hungarian State Opera, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Seattle Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Vancouver Opera, Teatro Bellini, l'Opéra de Marseille, and l'Opéra de Montreal among others. The symphony orchestras he has conducted include the Montreal Symphony and the Milwaukee Symphony orchestras, both of which he has conducted in their regular subscription series as well as in opera productions.

In his permanent and guest engagements, Joseph Rescigno has conducted virtually all of the core Italian opera repertory—including romantic, *verismo*, and *bel canto* operas—as well as the standard French and German repertory and contemporary

Four decades of experience in lyric theater ...

- conducting operatic and choral literature from the pit and on the stage
- devising programs of diverse repertory and more specialized fare
- nurturing and supporting singers
- identifying the brightest stars in the emerging generation
- guiding singers to ensemble work on the highest level

Continued on back panel ...

What others have said:

Bellini

I Capuleti ed I Montecchi—Paul Griffiths, *New York Times*: Joseph Rescigno, conducting, does a fine job in providing the instrumental soloists their space and in bringing fizz to other parts of the score.

Justin Davidson, *Newsday*: Joseph Rescigno linked these solid singers into an ensemble, conducting with Italianate flexibility and a sense of period style.

Heidi Waleson, *Wall Street Journal*: The City Opera chorus and orchestra, stylishly led by Joseph Rescigno, were in fine form.

Elaine Schmidt, *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno leads members of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in a sweeping performance.

Leighton Kerner, *Opera News*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno, as so often before, kept everything in good Bellinian order.

Berlioz

L'enfance du Christ—Tom Strini, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: Guest conductor Joseph Rescigno ... deserves thanks for unusual and compelling Christmas fare. ... "L'enfance du Christ" lasts 95 minutes, but within its circle time is suspended. "L'enfance" slows us down and invites us into a sphere of meditation on sacrifice, kindness and redemption. It's a good place to be, especially at Christmas time.

Brahms

Piano Concertos (with Anton Kuerti)—Gary Lemco, *Audiophile*: Prior to these collaborations I had not known the art of conductor Rescigno, but he gets some heady response from the Montreal players in the big opening tutti to the D Minor Concerto, and in the clarion exuberance of the D Minor Scherzo in the B-flat Concerto.

Donizetti

Daughter of the Regiment—Peter G. Davis, *New York Magazine*: Joseph Rescigno's alert conducting puts every scene into truly musical focus.

Don Pasquale—Peter G. Davis, *New York Magazine*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno gives them every accommodation, and the production trips lightly from dancing overture to happy finale.

Lucia di Lammermoor—John von Rhein, *Chicago Tribune*: His reading swept away the soggy rhythms and blurred textures that often obscure Donizetti's intentions. The pulse was steady and propulsive, yet Rescigno molded the bel canto lines appreciatively and proved a reliable ally of the singers. Let's have him back.

loesco.com (translated from Italian): But the highlight of this short season was the *Lucia di Lammermoor* conducted by the great *concertatore* Joseph Rescigno.

Miki

Joruri—Tom Sutcliffe, *The Guardian*: Joseph Rescigno conducted with a sympathy that helped to make the western orchestral instruments seem an extension of the [three on-stage] Japanese musicians, rather than leaving the Japanese music as merely exotic.

Mozart

Don Giovanni—John Koopman, *Opera*: Joseph Rescigno drew excellent ensemble and stylish playing from the orchestra.

Marriage of Figaro—Joseph McClellan, *Washington Post*: This production, eloquently conducted by Joseph Rescigno ... had in abundance the two virtues most suited to the Barns' environment: intimacy and clarity.

Orff & Leoncavallo

Carmina Burana & I Pagliacci—Derek M. Mills, *Opera News*: As the evening developed, however, it became clear that this approach was a strategy that allowed Rescigno to unite both works and to build the entire evening toward a compelling, almost bacchanalian conclusion.

Puccini

Madame Butterfly—Matthew Erikson, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*: I reached for the handkerchief several times—mostly in the bittersweet second act. Credit the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, led by conductor Joseph Rescigno, which gave a richly atmospheric and shaped reading of Puccini's emotive score. ... There were no dead spots in Rescigno's brisk conducting, and in such moments as the *Humming Chorus* and Act III's opening interlude, the players proved what a marvel Puccini's music is.

Leslie Valdes, *Philadelphia Inquirer*: When Joseph Rescigno launched into Puccini's burbling, arresting harmonies, the guest maestro revealed an opera orchestra as fluid and subtle as the waves and mists.

David Gordon Duke, *The Vancouver Sun*: Joseph Rescigno ... gets a broad, sumptuous sound from the orchestra, an approach that brings out the work's *verismo* lineage more than its pastel jpanoiserie.

Tosca—Catherine Reese Newton, *Salt Lake Tribune*: The Utah Symphony, under conductor Joseph Rescigno, played with vivid color and emotion.

Turandot—Charles H. Parsons, *Opera News*: From the first crashing chords, Joseph Rescigno stirred the Louisville Orchestra to extraordinary heights. Tonal beauty was always present, even in the fierce, savage reading by Rescigno. The chorus outdid itself.

Andrew Adler, *The Courier-Journal*: Joseph Rescigno led the Louisville Orchestra in a performance of admirable nuance. Kentucky Opera's chorus, given its severest test in many a season, responded with exceptional poise and power.

Rossini

The Barber of Seville—Will Crutchfield, *New York Times*: The rethinking came mostly in questions of tempo: The stretta of the first act finale, for instance, was taken so slowly that the vocal triplets could actually be attempted (this listener, in dozens of "Barbers," had never heard them before). And lo and behold, it proved to be a far more effective tempo for the shape of the piece. At the usual pace it can seem a little frantic; one wants it over with, and most productions make cuts to shorten it. Here, it was note-complete and purely delightful.

Allan Kozinn, *New York Times*: Joseph Rescigno drew an appropriately trim, shapely sound from the orchestra.

Fred Kirshnit, *New York Sun*: Joseph Rescigno ... led a taut and measured performance. ... The realization was dynamic and subtly fluid, the underlying tension brought to almost aching fruition.

La Cenerentola—Georges Farret, *Opera International* (Paris, translated from French): His conducting was supple, precise in the ensembles, coherent and communicative.

Simone Serret, *La Marseillaise* (Marseille, translated from French): The orchestra, noticeable here rather for its poetry and its refinement, was under the baton of Joseph Rescigno, who worked wonders, especially in the large ensemble numbers and finales.

I'Italiana in Algeri—Octavio Roca, *Washington Times*: Joseph Rescigno is a conductor to treasure. He has Rossini in his blood and technique at his fingertips. His conducting was expansive and very considerate of his singers yet never letting things bog down. One came away with a good sense of the nobility of this music as well as its humor.

Joseph McClellan, *Washington Post*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno matched the show's visual impact with properly crisp and excellently balanced music.

Shostakovich

Symphony #5—Arthur Kaptainis, *Montreal Gazette*: Few lists of likely interpreters of Shostakovich's burly Fifth Symphony would include the classically scaled Orchestre Métropolitain under opera-minded Joseph Rescigno. Last night, Montreal's other orchestra and its music director showed a remarkable aptitude for thinking big and speaking Russian in Théâtre Maisonneuve.

Strauss

Elektra—John Koopman, *Opera News*: Joseph Rescigno led the excellent Milwaukee Symphony in a surging, incandescent reading that achieved fine balance between stage and pit.

Der Rosenkavalier—Tom Strini, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno paced and balanced sensitively and maintained transparency in the dense orchestration. That last point is crucial, as waltzes lurk deep in the mix, as if heard through the open windows of a ballroom down the block. Rescigno and Strauss never let you forget: This is Vienna.

John Koopman, *Opera News*: Suicidal as his sounds, it all turned out well, and the company actually played to its great strength: the excellent Milwaukee Symphony, which serves as the Florentine orchestra, lent a solid underpinning to the entire project and contributed mightily to its success. ... Conductor Joseph Rescigno held it all together with precise cues, artfully balancing stage and pit and shaping the score.

Salome—Tom Strini, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno comforted and urged on the singers with tempos and orchestral dynamics so right that you thought not of them, but only of the gripping, sweeping drama. The Milwaukee Symphony played with a glorious combination of precision and excitement.

Mark Thomas Ketterson, *Opera News*: Joseph Rescigno fielded some of his best work yet with his exemplary handling of Strauss's reduced orchestration for eighty-two (as opposed to the original scoring for 110) instruments. The Milwaukee Symphony played beautifully.

Tchaikovsky

Symphony #5—François Trousant, *Le Devoir* (Montreal, translated from French): Freed from its banal antecedents and from its Romantic shackles, the underlying *fatum* of this work gains remarkable dramatic intensity, and effectiveness completely devoid of vulgarity and superficiality. Guided by the conductor's subtle beat, a myriad of otherwise suppressed contrapuntal passages emerge. Discreet accompaniment motives, which generally are submerged in an indistinguishable mass of sound, come to the fore. ... Tchaikovsky as an antidote to Rachmaninoff: who would have thought it possible?

Verdi

Aida—Edward Reichel, *Deseret Morning News*: Conductor Joseph Rescigno, directing members of the Utah Symphony, showed his fine sense of balance and pacing. His tempos were well chosen, giving the singers the freedom they needed to project and allowing them to sing naturally and fluidly.

Falstaff—Ursula Weiss, *Opera Canada*: Maestro Joseph Rescigno brought his usual bright, urgent tempi to the work, but had the wisdom to restrain himself for several of the notoriously complex ensembles.

Rita Celli, *La Voce di Romagna* (translated from Italian): The *Falstaff* ... was a complete success. ... Credit must go first of all to conductor Rescigno, who was able to masterfully lead the Pesaro Symphony Orchestra and the whole company of singers with tempos, expressiveness and a balance of sound that allowed the audience to hear and enjoy this masterpiece.

La Traviata—Rita Celli, *La Voce di Romagna* (translated from Italian): The leading role was played this evening by Maestro Rescigno, who assured the performance's success by uniting those on stage and those in the pit in a genuine symbiosis.

Wagner

The Flying Dutchman—Christine Granster, *Opera*: Maestro Joseph Rescigno began Wagner's vigorous overture with his usual energetic approach and kept the excitement flowing on throughout the evening.

Das Rheingold—Claude Gingras, *La Presse* (Montreal, translated from French): Joseph Rescigno, overseer of this grandiose production, not only confirmed once again his great qualities as a conductor and an artist, but also astonished us by the breadth of his vision. There was a unity about his direction that embraced both the singers and the orchestra; it was at each moment both sensitive and effective.

François Trousant, *Le Devoir* (Montreal, translated from French): Obviously it must be recognized that a large share of the credit is owed to Rescigno. ... The choice of tempos was right: they were alert – there was no musical foot-dragging. Unlike many other conductors who are called "Wagnerian," he listens to the music, not to himself. As a result, he easily manages what is most difficult about this style of writing: the transitions and numerous fluctuations of pulse within a single tempo. The theatricality that one might have feared would be missing [in a concert performance] was made truly present through this supple mobility.

Tristan and Isolde—Tom Strini, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: Under Rescigno's purposeful and sensitive guidance, they always knew their place within Wagner's long, slow build-ups to climactic release.

Die Walküre—John Koopman, *Opera News*: The success of the undertaking rested squarely on the energetic leadership of Rescigno and the excellent playing of the Milwaukee Symphony. Seemingly ablaze with its own internal magic fire, the orchestra was a constant supportive presence which lent a marvelous, urgent vitality to the undertaking.



Photo: Richard Brodzeller

Continued from front panel ...

works. In addition, Maestro Rescigno has conducted the masterworks of the choral literature and symphonies and concertos from the baroque to the modern era, sometimes conducting from the keyboard in works from the earlier eras.

This native New Yorker comes from a long line of musicians on both sides of his family. He trained as a pianist and has been studying and performing music since childhood. His uncle was the prominent conductor Nicola Rescigno, a founder of both the Dallas and Chicago opera companies; and his grandfather taught him sightsinging from about the age of two. More formally, Rescigno studied with composer Nicholas Flagello and other distinguished teachers in the United States and Europe, including privately at l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He went on to serve the time-honored, opera-house apprenticeship in the European manner with such influential conductors as Laszlo Halasz (founder of the New York City Opera), Bruno Maderna, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Carlo Moresco, and his uncle. Powerful influences also included pianist Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, conductors Herbert von Karajan and Erich Leinsdorf, and Roberto Benaglio, the legendary chorus master of La Scala. Joseph Rescigno has further been privileged to collaborate with prominent instrumentalists as well as renowned singers of three generations such as June Anderson, Angela Brown, Ghena Dimitrova, Giuseppe DiStefano, Plácido Domingo, Alfredo Kraus, Eva Marton, Johanna Meier, Erie Mills, Erika Sunnegårdh, Ruth Ann Swenson, Tatiana Troyanos, Ramon Vargas, and Deborah Voigt.

A born teacher, Maestro Rescigno has always derived tremendous gratification out of working with young musicians and singers as he does in his capacity as the Music Director of La Musica Lirica festival in Italy. Multilingual, he readily gives lively and informative talks before performances, illustrating themes on the piano when one is available. And he is authoring the forthcoming book: *The View From The Pit: Where Theater Meets Music*.

For information about conductor

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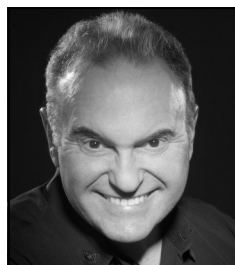


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