



Born in Thessaloniki, Greece, Maria Makraki studied music and received degrees in both piano performance and composition at the Music Academy of Athens, under Pericles Koukos, Elias Voudouris, Alkis Baltas and Uwe Matschke. She was awarded scholarships by the DAAD, UdK and the Franz Schubert Foundation to continue her studies in Germany, and she gained a diploma in orchestral conducting, with the highest distinction, at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK) under Professors Hans-Martin Rabenstein and Isaiah Jackson. She then continued for postgraduate and doctoral studies in orchestral conducting with Professor Hans-Dieter Baum at the 'Hanns Eisler' University of Music, Berlin, and Professor Johannes Schlaefli at the Zurich University of the Arts. Furthermore, she has attended several master classes by eminent conductors such as George-Alexander Albrecht, Carlo Maria Giulini, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Sir Roger Norrington, Jorma Panula and Kurt Sanderling. She also holds a Master's degree in physics from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

In 1996, she won first prize at the 5th International Conducting Competition of the Czech Republic and the special prize at the Carl Maria von Weber conducting competition in Munich, establishing thus a long collaboration with the Munich Radio Symphony Orchestra. Since then, she has also been a stipendium scholar of the German Music Council (Deutscher Musikrat Dirigentenforum).

Maria Makraki frequently leads, and makes recordings, with prominent European orchestras in England, Germany, Austria, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Switzerland, the Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Turkey and in the USA. She works regularly as a guest conductor with the philharmonic and symphonic orchestras of Berlin, Athens, Bucharest, Cologne, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Bochum, Boston, Nuremberg and the Tschaikovsky Symphony Orchestra. Furthermore, she has

given concerts in Baden-Baden and Jena, worked with the Janacek, Rheinische and Robert Schumann Philharmonics, and led opera productions with the State and Theatre Orchestras of Bremen, Giessen, Halle, Kassel, Leipzig, New Brandenburg and Rostock.

At the State Opera of Chemnitz she has performed 'My Fair Lady', 'Jesus Christ Superstar' and 'Cabaret', while at the Berlin University of the Arts the contemporary operas 'Sancta Susanna' by Paul Hindemith and 'The Poor Sailor' by Darius Milhaud. In 2019, she conducted 'La Traviata' at the National Opera Theatre Oleg Danovski in Constanta, Romania, with great acclaim. Additionally, her opera repertoire includes 'Aida', 'Carmen', 'Così fan tutte', 'Fidelio', 'Il barbiere di Siviglia', 'La Bohème', 'Le nozze di Figaro', 'Norma', 'Samson et Dalila', 'Tosca', 'Turandot', 'The Flying Dutchman', 'The Magic Flute', 'Hansel and Gretel', and also the operettas 'The Gypsy Baron', 'The Beggar Student', 'The Gipsy Princess' and 'The Bat'.

She has participated in numerous international festivals and she has received rave reviews for her concert and opera appearances in magazines such as 'Das Orchester', 'Opernwelt', 'Neafon', and in newspapers such as 'Berliner Morgenpost', 'Die Welt', 'Nürnberger Nachrichten', 'Siegener Zeitung', 'Tiroler Zeitung', 'Badisches Tagblatt', 'Bergische Morgenpost', and others.

In 2000, she won first prize in the conducting competition held by the Bergische Symphony Orchestra in Solingen, becoming the academy's chief conductor for the 2000/01 season, and also the special prize in the Bad Homburg conducting competition. In addition, she was amongst the prize winners in the German Music Council's 'Maestros von Morgen' rostrum of artists from 2001 to 2005. In 2003, she was appointed resident conductor of the State Orchestra and Theatre of Chemnitz, leading the Robert Schumann Philharmonic.

Maria Makraki has been the artistic director of Camerata Europæa (CE) in Berlin since 2007. From 2007 to 2009 she was appointed lecturer of orchestral conducting at the Faculty of Music, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece. Furthermore, she was the artistic director of the Festival of contemporary music and visual arts 'Regain' in Athens in 2012, and, since 2015, she has been the director of the newly founded Festival of Culture.

Maria Makraki is widely known as an Ambassador working between the 'Known' and the 'New': in her concerts she manages to build bridges between the classical repertoire and contemporary music – symphonic as well as opera – and every season she gives several world premieres and first performances. A focal point of her artistic work is the development and implementation of innovative and integrative programme-concepts, and across European cultures. She is also regularly invited to serve on the jury of various music competitions and often works as guest lecturer in orchestral conducting classes all over Europe; she also gives talks on the topic of 'Leadership'. In 2019, she was awarded the prestigious 'Exaleiptron' prize for her significant contribution in promoting Greek culture in the field of music.

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