

Biography Zoi Tsokanou

Making a name for herself across multiple engagements in Opera and Concert, showing a vivid temperament and a true love of making music on stage, Zoi Tsokanou is the first Woman in history to lead a major Greek Orchestra. Since 2017/2018 she is Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra, leading 120 musicians in a new area of repertoire, public profile, accessibility, educational and community engagement, reaching an outstanding point in audience development by increasing the concert visitors by 50%.

Highlights of the 2019/2020 Season include Debut with the Karajan Academy of the Berliner Philharmoniker and Artist in Residence Marlis Petersen and performances at the Grand Theatre de Geneve with the contemporary opera *Electric Dreams* by M. Shlomowitz. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the concerts will be rescheduled.

Recent engagements include concerts with Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Nationale de Lille, Düsseldorfer Symphonikern, Sofia Philharmonic, Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock, Radio and Television Orchestra Madrid RTVE, Philharmonisches Orchester Biel, Georgisches Kammerorchester Ingolstadt as all major Greek orchestras: Athens State Orchestra, Radio Orchestra, Greek National Opera. She participated in famous festivals such as Lucerne Festival, Athens Festival, Schumann Festival Düsseldorf, Domstufen Festival, and worked together with artists like Daniel Müller Schott, Alena Baeva, Valeriy Sokolov, Ramon Vargas.

In 2014-2017, she served as permanent conductor at the Theater Erfurt conducting a wide Opera and Concert Repertoire. For two years, she held the position of Associate Conductor at the oldest Czech Orchestra, the Westbohemian Symphony, and in 2011-2014 she was Music Director of Arosa Music Theater at the Arosa Festival, Switzerland.

In Spring 2018, she conducted Spontini's rarely performed Opera *Agnes von Hohenstaufen* at Theater Erfurt creating an international sensation. At the Greek National Opera, she led renowned Opera productions such as Barrie Kosky's *Magic Flute*, Katie Mitchell's *Lucia die Lammermoor* and Elijah Moshinsky's *Simon Boccanegra*.

Her Opera Repertoire includes a.o. *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *Macbeth*, *Otello*, *Tosca*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Glucks Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Die verkaufte Braut*, *Gounods Faust*, *Zandonai's Giulietta e Romeo*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *die Lustige Witwe*, *Die Fledermaus*, *West Side Story*, working together with Opera Theaters in Erfurt, Bremen, Regensburg, Hagen, Athens, Thessaloniki.

One of her remarkable moments is her assistantship with Bernard Haitink, her important mentor, together with Tonhalle orchestra Zurich. She was invited several times from Lucerne Festival to participate at the conducting Master Class with Bernard Haitink as well from Tonhalle Orchestra and David Zinman. She won several prizes in International Conducting Competitions.

Zoi Tsokanou was born in Thessaloniki, held piano and musicology degree in her hometown, and studied piano in Zurich with Konstantin Scherbakov and Conducting by Johannes Schlaefli. Her family grew recently, and she lives with her newborn son, daughter, and husband in Zurich and Thessaloniki.