

## Guest Conductor



**Giampaolo Maria Bisanti**

Born in 1972, into a family of musicians, Giampaolo Maria Bisanti studied clarinet, piano, composition, and conducting at the

Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Music. At the age of 24, Mr. Bisanti made his official debut in Milan conducting the opera *La Lettera Anonima* by Donizetti at the Teatro Litta, within the Teatro Alla Scala's 1996-97 Opera Season. Through the years that followed, he was re-engaged to perform *Don Pasquale* by Donizetti, *La Cenerentola* by Rossini, *La Boheme* by Puccini and *L'Amico Fritz* by Mascagni.

In 1998, Giampaolo Bisanti was a prize winner at the Dimitris Mitropoulos International Competition for Conducting in Athens, chaired by Sir Neville Marriner. In 1999, he won the First Prize at the Franco Capuana International Competition in Rome. His opera performances have also received critical acclaim.

Giampaolo Bisanti has worked with many orchestras, including the Basel Symphony Orchestra, Kyoto Festival Symphony Orchestra, Sofia Festival Orchestra, the Mozart Milano Orchestra (principal conductor from 1995 to 2001), the Sanremo Symphony Orchestra, the Budapest Radio-TV Orchestra, the Danubia Symphony Orchestra, la Orquesta Sinfonica Juvenil del Ecuador, Orchestra "I Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano", Orchestra Milano Classica, Orchestra Sinfonica di Ferrara, Orchestra Teatro Lirico di Spoleto, Orchestra Filarmonia Veneta "GF.Malipiero", Orchestra "G.Cantelli" di Milano, I Solisti del Teatro Alla Scala, and collaborated with internationally acclaimed musicians and singers, including Daniele Abbado, Katia Ricciarelli, Fabrizio Meloni, Stefan Milenkovich, Marko Letonja, and Luciano Berio. Following the success of his performances, he was invited to become Luciano Berio's assistant for the 2001 "L'Arte della Fuga" European Project.

In 2004, Giampaolo Bisanti was elected Principal Conductor and, after one year, Artistic Director of the Filarmonia Veneta Orchestra "GF.Malipiero" by the Treviso Opera House with which he performed *Madama Butterfly*, *Otello*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La traviata*, *Nabucco*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I pagliacci* and others. Recently, he recorded a CD with the Soloists of the Milano Teatro Alla Scala.

In December, Mr. Bisanti conducted at the great La Fenice Theatre of Venice for the 2006/2007 symphonic season and was acclaimed by both the public and the critics. In January, he had his first international debut, conducting the prestigious Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in Tel Aviv.

## Guest Artist



**Andrew Armstrong**

Praised by critics for his passionate expression and dazzling technique, pianist Andrew Armstrong has delighted audiences around the world. He has performed with orchestras in Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the United States, including performances at Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, and Warsaw's National Philharmonic. He has performed with conductors such as Peter Oundjian, Gunther Herbig, Itzhak Perlman, and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski; and chamber music

with the Alexander, American, and Manhattan String Quartets, as a member of the Caramoor Virtuosi at the Caramoor International Music Festival, and as a member of the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players in New York City. January 2004 marked Mr. Armstrong's debut in St. Petersburg, Russia at Philharmonic Hall. The following month he performed the World Premiere of Lisa Bielawa's "The Right Weather" for piano solo and chamber orchestra with the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Zankel Hall.

Recently, Mr. Armstrong performed Brahms' Second Piano Concerto, Edward Joseph Collins' Third Piano Concerto, Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto and the Choral Fantasy, Mozart's Piano Concerto No.25, Chopin's Second Piano Concerto, and Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto. He made his debut with the Monterey Symphony in September 2005 with Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Having performed more than thirty-five concertos, Mr. Armstrong has impressed his international audiences with a large repertoire ranging from Bach to Babbitt, and beyond. Before beginning his career as a concert pianist, Mr. Armstrong received more than twenty-five national and international First Prizes. In 1996, he was named Gilmore Young Artist. At the 1993 Van Cliburn Competition, where he was the youngest pianist entered, he received the Jury Discretionary Award. The *New York Times* wrote, "Armstrong may have been the most talented player in the competition....He's a real musician. We'll hear more from him." As the *Fort Worth Star-Telgram* reported, Van Cliburn himself, "in a rare showing of enthusiasm for an individual competitor," called Mr. Armstrong "Fabulous! Fabulous!"

Mr. Armstrong's debut CD, featuring Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Sonata and Mussorgsky's *Pictures At an Exhibition*, was released in 2004 to critical acclaim. Wrote Bradley Bolen: "I have heard few pianists play [Rachmaninov's Second Piano Sonata], recorded or in concert, with such dazzling clarity and confidence" (*American Record Guide*, Nov/Dec, 2004). Upcoming releases will include an all-Schumann CD & an educational DVD. Mr. Armstrong is devoted to outreach programs and playing for children. In addition to his many concerts, his performances are heard regularly on National Public Radio and WQXR, New York City's premier classical music station.