

JOSEPH MECHAVICH CONDUCTOR

Conductor Joseph Mechavich's passion and commitment to excellence in the art form has helped to forge lasting and career-defining relationships with numerous opera companies, composers and orchestras in the United States and abroad. Maestro Mechavich has presided over productions of *Porgy and Bess* for Deutsche Oper Berlin, *Nixon in China* for Auckland Philharmonia/New Zealand Opera, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for The Washington National Opera, *Madama Butterfly* for New York City Opera, and *Dead Man Walking* for Atlanta Opera. The Miami Herald lauded Mechavich's artistry in a recent production of *Werther* at Florida Grand Opera: "An astute conductor realizes that Massenet's music must be as emotive and expressive as the action on stage. Joseph Mechavich

brings out the French Romantic's lilting emphasis on strings and woodwinds in the opening strains and throughout the first act, and pushes his orchestra to full throttle for the tumultuous, dark, and dissonant third and fourth acts. Onstage the tug of war between duty and desire continues to build, while in the orchestra pit, the music heightens the tension." His 2019-2020 season includes *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for Minnesota Opera, *Everest* for Austin Opera, *Macbeth* for Florentine Opera, *Die Zauberflöte* for North Carolina Opera, *Riders of the Purple Sage* for Arizona Opera, and *Carmen* for Kentucky Opera.



In addition to his impressive command of the standard operatic repertoire, Maestro Mechavich is also known for his deep commitment to American opera. Of his *Nixon in China* at San Diego Opera, Broadway World extolled "The expertise in 21st century operatic repertoire that conductor Joseph Mechavich demonstrated in 2012's *Moby-Dick* has surely increased exponentially as portrayed in his rendering of John Adam's complex score. Mechavich showed great command and sensitivity throughout, both controlling and supporting the orchestra in their task of performing parts that were most difficult and intricate." He is a champion of the music of Carlisle Floyd and Jake Heggie. He has conducted productions of Floyd's *Susannah*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Cold Sassy Tree* and recorded *Wuthering Heights*, which is the first recording in a multi-year project to record Floyd's unrecorded operas. Of his recording of *Wuthering Heights*, Milwaukee Magazine states "but the real star here is Mechavich, who guided the orchestra and voices through Carlisle Floyd's often tempestuous orchestrations. He and the orchestra painted wonderful sonic pictures, but always in the service of the story and drama." Maestro Mechavich has conducted highly acclaimed productions by Jake Heggie such as *Moby-Dick*, *Great Scott*, *Out of Darkness: Two Remain*, and *Dead Man Walking*. In an interview with *Classical Singer Magazine* Heggie enthuses, "Joey is the very best kind of opera conductor...A real theater man who understands that dramatic pacing is absolutely everything. He's a wonderful storyteller with baton in hand. He loves singers, loves words, loves the stage, loves the orchestra, and forces collectively to tell compelling stories..."

In past seasons Maestro Mechavich has conducted productions for Calgary Opera, Utah Opera, The Aspen Music Festival, Tulsa Opera, Arizona Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Dayton Opera, Madison Opera, New England Conservatory of Music, Oberlin Opera Theatre, Opera Saratoga and Virginia Opera. On the concert stage, Maestro Mechavich has appeared with the Florida Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, The Oberlin Chamber Orchestra, Naples Philharmonic, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, Virginia Symphony and the Sarasota Orchestra. In 2010, Maestro Mechavich was named Principal Conductor of Kentucky Opera and currently serves as the company's Artistic Advisor. A native of Long Lake, Minnesota, he studied at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and the Yale University School of Music.

JOSEPH MECHAVICH

CONDUCTOR

Conducting Experience

Florentine Opera	<i>Macbeth</i>	Verdi	2020
North Carolina Opera	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Mozart	2020
Arizona Opera	<i>Riders of the Purple Sage</i>	Bohlmer	2020; '17
Austin Opera	<i>Everest</i>	Talbot	2020
Minnesota Opera	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Rossini	2019
Kentucky Opera	<i>Carmen</i>	Bizet	2019
Florida Grand Opera	<i>Werther</i>	Massenet	2019
Atlanta Opera	<i>Dead Man Walking</i>	Heggie	2019
Arizona Opera	<i>Silent Night</i>	Puts	2019
Opera Tampa	<i>Die Fledermaus</i>	J. Strauss	2018
Madison Opera	<i>Cavalleria rusticana/ Pagliacci</i>	Mascagni/Leoncavallo	2018
Kentucky Opera	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Mozart	2018
Atlanta Opera	<i>Out of Darkness</i>	Heggie	2018
San Diego Opera	<i>Florencia en el Amazonas</i>	Catán	2018
Utah Opera	<i>Moby Dick</i>	Heggie	2018
Curtis Institute of Music	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Tchaikovsky	2017
Kentucky Opera	<i>Dead Man Walking</i>	Heggie	2017
Kentucky Opera	<i>Ariadne auf Naxos</i>	Strauss	2017
Calgary Opera	<i>Turandot</i>	Puccini	2017
Kentucky Opera	<i>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</i>	Mozart	2016
Kentucky Opera	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Puccini	2016
San Diego Opera	<i>Great Scott</i>	Heggie	2016
Auckland Philharmonia	<i>Nixon in China</i>	Adams	2016
Kentucky Opera	<i>Showboat</i>	Kern	2016
Arizona Opera	<i>Florencia en el Amazonas</i>	Catán	2015
Nashville Opera	<i>Turandot</i>	Puccini	2015
Kentucky Opera	<i>Macbeth</i>	Verdi	2015
Opera Colorado	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Mozart	2015
San Diego Opera	<i>Nixon in China</i>	Adams	2015
Kentucky Opera	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	Previn	2015
Florentine Opera	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	Floyd	2015
Calgary Opera	<i>Silent Night</i>	Puts	2014
Kentucky Opera	<i>Fidelio</i>	Beethoven	2014
Calgary Opera	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Puccini	2014
New England Conservatory	<i>Poppea</i>	Monteverdi	2014
Florentine Opera	<i>La traviata</i>	Verdi	2013
Kentucky Opera	<i>La bohème</i>	Puccini	2013
Sugar Creek Festival	<i>Cold Sassy Tree</i>	Floyd	2013
Opera Saratoga	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>	Donizetti	2013
Madison Opera	<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Mozart	2013
Kentucky Opera	<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Mozart	2013
Kentucky Opera	<i>Tosca</i>	Puccini	2012
Florida Grand Opera	<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>	Gounod	2012
Florentine Opera	<i>Susannah</i>	Floyd	2012
San Diego Opera	<i>Moby Dick</i>	Heggie	2012
Calgary Opera	<i>Moby Dick</i>	Heggie	2012
Kentucky Opera	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Mozart	2011
Kentucky Opera	<i>Carmen</i>	Bizet	2011
Calgary Opera	<i>Aida</i>	Verdi	2011
Kentucky Opera	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Puccini	2010

Conducting Experience, cont...

Kentucky Opera	<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	Donizetti	2010
Kentucky Opera	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Floyd	2009
The Washington National Opera	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Rossini	2009
Tulsa Opera	<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	Donizetti	2009
Kentucky Opera	<i>Werther</i>	Massenet	2008
Utah Opera	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Puccini	2008
Aspen Music Festival	<i>Cendrillon</i>	Massenet	2008
Deutsche Oper Berlin	<i>Porgy and Bess</i>	Gershwin	2008
New York City Opera	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	Puccini	2008
Kentucky Opera	<i>Il trovatore</i>	Verdi	2007
Kentucky Opera	<i>Les pêcheurs de perles</i>	Bizet	2007

Guest Faculty/Master Classes

University of Minnesota, School of Music Vocal Arts Community Residency 2017

University of Alabama-Birmingham Jemison Scholar Residency 2017

San Diego State University Master Class 2016

Opera Saratoga Young Artist Program Master Class 2013

Florida Grand Opera Young Artist Program Master Class 2012

University of Dayton Master Class 2011

St Petersburg College Vocal Seminar Master Classes 2011

Calgary Opera Emerging Artists Program Master Class 2011

University of South Florida Master Class 2011

Kentucky State University Master Class 2010

University of Louisville Master Class 2010

St Petersburg College Vocal Seminar Master Class 2010

The Florentine Opera Studio Artist Master Class 2010

University of Alabama/Birmingham Master Class Opera Theater 2007

Birmingham Southern College Master Class voice Department 2007

Concordia College Master Class Voice Department 2006

University of Houston Guest Faculty Coach Voice Department 2002-05

University of Texas Master Class Opera Theater 2005

New College of Florida Professor and Conductor New College Chorus 2003

University of South Florida Guest Faculty Coach Voice Department 2002

Education

1991-1993 Yale University School of Music

1987-1991 Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

***Repertoire and References available upon request

JOSEPH MECHAVICH
CONDUCTOR
SELECTED PRESS EXCERPTS

"Under conductor Joseph Mechavich, the FGO Orchestra performed Massenet's score [**Werther**] with attention to detail and a flair for drama."
-Schmopera

"An astute conductor realizes that Massenet's music [**Werther**] must be as emotive and expressive as the action onstage. Joseph Mechavich brings out the French Romantic's lilting emphasis on strings and woodwinds in the opening strains and throughout the first act, and pushes his orchestra to full throttle for the tumultuous, dark and dissonant third and fourth acts. Onstage, the tug of war between duty and desire continues to build, while in the orchestra pit, the music heightens the tension. For an opera to run on all cylinders, all the elements must be in sync, from the direction to the singers and orchestra. Florida Grand Opera's "Werther" has this and more, down to the letter."
-Miami Herald

"Joseph Mechavich drew outstanding playing from the orchestra, and his pacing was masterful, alive to the score's shifting moods. He did not pause at the conclusion of Werther's famous aria and, while this deprived Pittas of an ovation, Mechavich kept the tension at fever pitch during the final confrontation between the protagonists. He also skillfully kept the brass from dominating the orchestral fabric, minimizing the orchestration's Wagnerian overtones."
-South Florida Classical Review

"The lens of idealistic affection was realized early, when the orchestra, under the baton of Joseph Mechavich, played the opening series of descending discordant chords, portending the audience's journey with the protagonist through a glass darkly. . . Maestro Mechavich adroitly navigated the score [**Werther**], helming the excellent FGO orchestra."
-Miami Artzine

"The Atlanta Opera Orchestra, led by conductor Joseph Mechavich, provided an outstanding performance [**Dead Man Walking**] that underscored the drama's emotional angst and turmoil."
-Arts ATL

" conductor Joseph Mechavich draws out the lush, romantic elements of the sumptuous score [**Dead Man Walking**] "
-Atlanta Journal Constitution

"These two scores [**Cavalleria rusticana** and **Pagliacci**] involve workhorse orchestral writing, but conductor Joseph Mechavich does an excellent job finding expressive nuances when he can."
-Madison Isthmus

". . . it brought the capable Joseph Mechavich, who had considerable success with the San Diego Opera conducting productions of Jake Heggie's "Moby-Dick" and "Great Scott" and John Adams' "Nixon in China." With the San Diego Symphony in the pit, Mechavich offered an equally convincing reading of Catan's lush, atmospheric score [**Florencia en el Amazonas**]."
-Opera News

"Catán's well-orchestrated score [**Florencia en el Amazonas**] is gorgeously filled with the colors of the Amazon. Under the nuanced conducting of Joseph Mechavich, you can hear the shimmering of the river water in the strings, the wind and the birds in the woodwinds, the rhythm of the paddleboat's engines in the percussion and, very subtly, the soul of Latin America in the marimba and steel drums."
-The San Diego Union-Tribune

"Under the baton of Joseph Mechavich, the San Diego Symphony transports us to this other world [**Florencia en el Amazonas**], dexterously lulling us with the murmur of the water and the beauty of the sun-and moon-rise, then unsettling the surface calm with the ferocity of the storm and the menace of the cholera epidemic on land."
-Times of San Diego

"Joseph Mechavich conducted members of the Utah Symphony Orchestra with clarity and canny balance, illuminating Heggie's luscious score [**Moby Dick**]."
-Opera News

"emotional highs and lows were further enhanced by conductor Joseph Mechavich and the orchestra, who propelled the plot [**Moby Dick**] with a robust interpretation of Heggie's lyrical, swelling music."
-Oper! Das Magazin

"Under conductor Joseph Mechavich, the members of the Utah Symphony playing for this production executed the score [**Moby Dick**] with finesse and lyricism and well-defined, dynamic clarity and expression."
-Opera Wire

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich displayed equal flair for both the rhapsodic and intimate extremes in this varied score [**Moby Dick**], and he shaped the evening's musical arc with a firmly controlled reading." **-Opera Today**

"Capping this operatic triumph [**Moby Dick**] was the Utah Symphony's vivid performance of Heggie's rich score, conducted by Joseph Mechavich." **-Salt Lake Tribune**

"Utah Opera, along with director Kristine McIntyre and conductor Joseph Mechavich saw the potential to present an accessible production [**Moby Dick**] so that this masterwork might be better showcased with more companies to more audiences. . . With such a difficult and complex score, it is always comforting to have the direct and guiding hand of a skilled musician like Mechavich leading the way through the battlements. . . " **-Front Row Reviewers Utah**

"The storytelling quality of Heggie's music [**Moby Dick**] also stood out as a character, giving each main sailor aboard the Pequod a chance to shine through a variety of duets, vocally complex solos and moving ensemble numbers led by conductor Joseph Mechavich." **-Deseret News**

"Across two substantial acts, the 75-strong Utah Symphony [**Moby Dick**] under Joseph Mechavich do a superb job of bringing these resourceful scorings to life, playing with grace and strength in equal measure. " **-Limelight Magazine**

"And the CPO under conductor Joseph Mechavich contributed a richly textured accompaniment. The tempos well chosen, with the orchestra-vocal balance handled expertly." **-Calgary Herald**

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich leads the performance [**Wuthering Heights recording**] with unflagging energy and unusual sensitivity to the extremes of mood and style." **-Opera News**

"Joseph Mechavich's Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra are outstanding; this doesn't sound like an easy score [**Wuthering Heights recording**] to perform." **-TheArtsDesk.com**

"A significant role is played by the orchestra, and Joseph Mechavich gets a fine performance from the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and they take full advantage of the opportunities that Floyd gives them." **-PlanetHugill.com**

"Maestro Joseph Mechavich leads his Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the choral forces of the Florentine Opera Company [**Wuthering Heights recording**], one of America's oldest such vocal organizations, in a precedent setting performance that will make listeners unfamiliar with this work sit up and take notice." **- TheaterByte.com**

"The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, firmly directed by Joseph Mechavich, does full justice to Floyd's dramatic score [**Wuthering Heights recording**] with responsive and vibrant playing sumptuously recorded." **-HRAudio.net**

"Finally, like the principals themselves who bring such proven talent to bear in these portrayals, Joseph Mechavich conducts with mastery an orchestra of six, each of whom plays beautifully, emotionally Jake Heggie's poignant score [**Out of Darkness**]. Each instrument has moments to speak its own truth and passion in recalling this important past; and together, they blend in a sound that sinks deep into one's soul." **- Theater Eddys**

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich supplied essential musical personality [**Great Scott**]." **-LA Times**

"Heggie obviously had a grand time toggling between modern and classical genres [**Great Scott**], and the San Diego Symphony, under the baton of Joseph Mechavich, is persuasively along for the ride." **-Times of San Diego**

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich, whom San Diego audiences remember for his masterful work with the orchestra in last season's Nixon in China and the 2012 Moby-Dick, again proved his skill in drawing bright, cogent responses from the pit. [**Great Scott**]." **-San Diego Story**

"Maestro Joseph Mechavich brought out the San Diego Symphony Orchestra's ability to play the music of both bel canto and twenty-first century opera with consummate skill. This was a wonderful night at San Diego Opera and a most auspicious rendition of a fabulous new opera [**Great Scott**]." **-Opera Today**

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich, last seen here helming *Nixon in China*, provided strong leadership in the complex score [**Great Scott**]." **-Broadway World/Bachtrack**

"From time to time there's a snatch of melody, such as Gershwin amongst a collage of American jazz, and some Strauss, but mostly we are immersed in full-on surround sound [**Nixon in China**]. The time signatures are extremely complex, especially when the layers start to accumulate, and conductor Joseph Mechavich seems deceptively relaxed, given the immensity of the task he is handling."

-*The NZ Performing Arts & Directory*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich led the APO, getting the most out of the minimalist music of Adams [**Nixon in China**], carefully steering the orchestra so that it never dominated the singers yet brought out all the drama and melodies of the work."

-*National Business Review*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich leads the orchestra in an energetic performance of Catán's mystical score [**Florencia en el Amazonas**]."

-*The Arizona Republic*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich handled Puccini's massive blocks of instrumentation with a nuanced subtlety [**Turandot**]."

-*Nashville Arts Magazine*

"Joseph Mechavich's lean, rhythmically focused conducting [**Nixon in China**] kept everything in focus."

-*Los Angeles Times*

"...Joseph Mechavich had the San Diego Symphony playing in top form in this highly rhythmic, challenging score [**Nixon in China**]. Mechavich's pacing perfectly matched the activity on stage and the proportions of the score."

-*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich, who brought us an electric **Moby-Dick** a few season back, drew a fine performance [**Nixon in China**] from the orchestra, stressing warmth and supple lines in even the most minimal textures. He paced Adams' magnificent orchestral climaxes for maximum effect, especially in the crowd scenes. The orchestra exhibited precise ensemble playing throughout."

-*SanDiegoStory.com*

"...Joseph Mechavich balances the volume of his fine orchestra [**Die Zauberflöte**] with extreme sensitivity." -*Denver Post*

"The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra under Conductor Joseph Mechavich played this complex score [**Wuthering Heights**] with an easy aplomb as if they have been long familiar with it."

-*Milwaukee Express*

"...Joseph Mechavich handles Andre Previn's [**A Streetcar Named Desire**] atmospheric music which such technical skill and beauty..."

-*Louisville.com*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich makes a welcomed return to the Florentine...he and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra delivered a Verdi score [**La traviata**] that was warm, dramatic and brightly colored"

-*Milwaukee Magazine*

"...Joseph Mechavich knows his way around this music [**Susannah**], and he proved it with an orchestral performance that was satisfaction in itself."

-*Opera News*

"Joseph Mechavich conducted [**Moby-Dick**] with enthusiasm and he San Diego Symphony played with color in the pit."

-*Los Angeles Times*

"One of the best things about this production [**Roméo et Juliette**] is the conducting of Joseph Mechavich, who led the proceedings superbly. Tempos were beautifully judged, and the orchestra played wonderfully for him. You rarely hear this score with the kind of big-boned force with which Gounod wrote it, but Mechavich let it rip, with first rate results."

-*Palm Beach Artspaper*

"Conductor Joseph Mechavich, a Kentucky Opera veteran, leads the orchestra, getting both the romance and humor out of each note. The score was evocative of so many early films [**Elixir of Love**]."

-*Opera News*

"As if to demonstrate to the fullest what KO audiences would lose, the orchestra, under the dynamic leadership of Joseph Mechavich, launched into an almost savage opening [**Butterfly**], the strings digging deeply into the music, then calming to a gentle, relaxed atmosphere to introduce the singers. Butterfly's entrance shimmered; Similar musical insights and excitement continued throughout the performance, concluding with an emotion-fraught death scene" -*Opera News*

Maestro Joseph Mechavich captured the American folk idiom of [**Susannah**] deftly. Choral work was first-rate; "Come sinner, tonight's the night" in the Floyd literally induced chills, as any feverish revivalist interlude should.

-*Opera News*

The music weaves hymns and folk tunes [**Susannah**] with a layer of dissonant 20th century harmonies, punctuated by menacing snarls from the low brass, and conductor Joseph Mechavich delivers the whole thing with both precision and dramatic heft.

–*The Des Moines Register*

“Conductor Joseph Mechavich led the Louisville Orchestra [**Werther**] with exceptional verve and style, drawing some of the best playing from this ensemble in the pit that I've heard in recent outings.”

–*The Courier Journal* (Louisville, KY)

“The Utah Symphony made the most of the score's exotic beauty [**Madama Butterfly**] under music director Joseph Mechavich's baton...”

–*Opera News*

“Joseph Mechavich led a performance that was exhilarating yet precise in control. He whipped up a frenzy for the storm in the Act II [**Les Pêcheur des perles**] finale and an outpouring of religious fanaticism from the powerful KO chorus.”

–*Opera News*