



Biography - Manfred Honeck, Conductor

- Music Director Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra
- Ehrendirigent Bamberger Symphoniker

Manfred Honeck has firmly established himself as one of the world's leading conductors, renowned for his distinctive and revelatory interpretations that have garnered international acclaim. As Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, where he has now started his 18th season, he continues to shape the orchestra's artistic identity with a deep sense of purpose and passion. His tenure, extended through the 2027–2028 season, has seen the orchestra flourish both artistically and as a cultural ambassador for the city of Pittsburgh. Celebrated at home and abroad, guest appearances under his leadership include Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, as well as the major venues of Europe and leading festivals such as the BBC Proms, Salzburg Festival, Musikfest Berlin, Lucerne Festival, Rheingau Music Festival, and Grafenegg Festival. In summer 2024, he led the orchestra in a nine-city European Festivals Tour, beginning with their appearance as the only American orchestra at the prestigious Salzburg Festival and concluding at Vienna Konzerthaus.

Manfred Honeck's successful tenure in Pittsburgh is extensively documented by a series of recordings on the Reference Recordings label, featuring works by Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Shostakovich, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, and others. They have received widespread critical acclaim and multiple GRAMMY® nominations, including a win for "Best Orchestral Performance" in 2018. In August 2025, he and the orchestra released *Requiem: Mozart's Death in Words and Music*, an original concept imagining a Funeral Mass for Mozart, combining the composer's Requiem with Gregorian chant, poetry, and other Mozart choral music.

Born in Austria, Manfred Honeck completed his musical training at the University of Music in Vienna. His many years of experience as a member of the viola section in the Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna State Opera Orchestra have had a lasting influence on his work as a conductor, and his art of interpretation is rooted in a desire to venture deep beneath the surface of the music. He began his conducting career as an assistant to Claudio Abbado and as director of the Vienna Jeunesse Orchestra. Subsequently, he was engaged by the Zurich Opera House, where he was awarded the European Conducting Prize in 1993. He has since served as one of three principal conductors of the MDR Symphony Orchestra Leipzig, as Music Director of the Norwegian National Opera, Principal Guest Conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, and Chief Conductor of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Stockholm. In 2023, he was appointed Honorary Conductor by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, following decades of close collaboration.



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Manfred Honeck also enjoys a distinguished profile as an opera conductor. In his four seasons as General Music Director of the Staatsoper Stuttgart, he conducted premieres of operas by Berlioz, Mozart, Poulenc, Strauss, Verdi, and Wagner. He has also appeared as guest at leading houses such as Semperoper Dresden, Komische Oper Berlin, Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, Royal Opera of Copenhagen, and the Salzburg Festival. In 2020, Beethoven's anniversary year, he conducted a new staging of *Fidelio* (1806 version) at the Theater an der Wien. In autumn 2022, he made his much-acclaimed debut at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, leading a revival of Mozart's *Idomeneo*. Beyond the podium, Manfred Honeck has created a series of symphonic suites, including Janáček's *Jenůfa*, Strauss's *Elektra*, Dvořák's *Rusalka* as well as Puccini's *Turandot* which he regularly performs around the globe. The most recent arrangement, of Strauss's *Arabella*, was premiered by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 2025.

As a guest conductor, Manfred Honeck is a regular presence with all leading international orchestras, including Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Staatskapelle Dresden, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Accademia di Santa Cecilia Rome and the Vienna Philharmonic. In the United States, he has conducted all major orchestras from New York to San Francisco. He has also been Artistic Director of the International Concerts Wolfegg in Germany for over three decades.

In the 2025-2026 season, he will record Mahler's Symphony No. 2 *Resurrection*, and Bruckner's Symphony No. 8 with the Pittsburgh Symphony, in addition to leading a variety of American orchestral music as part of celebrations around America's 250th anniversary. He will continue to have a strong presence in the USA, returning to the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony and Los Angeles Philharmonic. Honouring the composer's 200th birthday anniversary, works by Johann Strauß are at the centre of many of his concert programmes from Stockholm to Bamberg, including the jubilee concert at the Vienna Musikverein in October 2025, where he will be joined by world-famous violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter.

Manfred Honeck holds honorary doctorates from several universities in the United States and was awarded the honorary title of Professor by the Austrian Federal President. In 2018, the jury of the International Classical Music Awards declared him "Artist of the Year".