

MAXIMIANN COBRA

www.maximiannocobra.net

The formative years: *A young pianist turns conductor*

Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1969, Franco-Brazilian conductor, pianist, composer Maximiano Cobra started music lessons at 5. When he was 13, his piano teacher, Maria José Repsold, noticing her young pupil's keen interest for composition, suggested he should study harmony and music analysis. He followed her advice and the course of his musical life veered quite naturally towards conducting and composition.

At 15, Maximiano Cobra met conductor Alceo Bocchino (a former student and friend of Villa-Lobos and collaborator of Hans Swarowsky) who taught him conducting, counterpoint, fugue and composition. He soon became Maestro Bocchino's assistant and honed his skills for the next three years, working with various Brazilian orchestras and opera houses.

First professional steps: *Music, Theater and Philosophy - the Three Pillars of Emancipation.*

In 1989, Maximiano Cobra made his Rio de Janeiro debut at the head of the Brazilian Philharmonic Orchestra. The all-Beethoven programme - Egmont Overture, 5th piano concerto ("Emperor") and 5th symphony - featured pianist Nelson Freire as a soloist. In the aftermath of this hugely successful concert, Maximiano Cobra was appointed music director of the Brazilian Philharmonic Orchestra, a position he held for five years. He was also invited to coach several opera workshops, focusing on training young professional opera singers for the stage.

All along his formative years, Maximiano Cobra had attended theater and philosophy master-classes, two disciplines he considers to be his "second nature". The works of Spinoza, Nietzsche and Deleuze forged his philosophical and political conscience. Discovering Shakespeare was - in his own words - "an existential upheaval". As his knowledge of theater deepened, so grew his interest in Constantin Stanislavsky's Acting Method, a defining element in his own quest for artistic identity, with a decisive influence on his musical and theater activities, especially conducting and stage directing.

In 1990, a grant enables him to further his studies in Europe, at the Vienna Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst. In spite of the distance, he still keeps strong professional ties to his native land where, at the invitation of Maestro Eleazar de Carvalho, he conducts the Sao Paulo State Symphony and the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra. He is also the producer of a concert series for TVE (Brazil's Ministry of Culture's public television channel - TV Brazil) featuring the Brazilian Philharmonic and the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra, under his direction. He made his European debut in 1992 in Paris, at Salle Pleyel, with Orchestre Lamoureux.

A new phase: *Europe - fighting for one's ideals*

In 1993, Maximiano Cobra toured France with the Hungarian State Opera and the Budapest Philharmonic, performing Beethoven's Fidelio and the complete Brahms symphonies. This first collaboration influenced the course of his professional life: over the next ten years, his schedule included regular guest-conducting appearances in the Hungarian capital. In 1999, the label HODIE-Tempus Collection entrusted him with the destiny of Europa Philharmonia, a newly-founded ensemble bringing together Hungary's best orchestra musicians for studio recording projects using the latest media technology. Maximiano Cobra has already conducted and produced some twenty-odd recordings for HODIE-Tempus, including a DVD-VIDEO & AUDIO of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

In parallel, Maximiano Cobra completed a Ph.D. in musicology and music history under the supervision of Professor Serge GUT, graduating in 1999 from Paris-Sorbonne/Paris IV University. His dissertation: *Les Symphonies de Ludwig van Beethoven : une étude analytique, critique et historique en vue d'une nouvelle édition* followed up on Prof. Willem Retze Talsma's research and focused on the issues of Beethoven's tempi and metronome markings. This in-depth study marks another decisive turn: from then on he'll dedicate himself to the TEMPUS theory. Maximiano Cobra's work has been reviewed in various musicology journals, notably the *Revue de Musicologie de la Suisse Romande*, and is mentioned in Carl Honorés' best-seller : *In Praise of Slow (Éloge de la lenteur)*.

A respected musicologist, he was appointed supervisor at the Mozart Center at the invitation of Philippe Autexier and responsible of the French Beethoven research institute *Centre d'Études Beethovéniennes de France*. More recently, he was appointed supervisor and head of the scientific committee of *Les Neuf Sœurs* research group whose aim is to safeguard, study and diffuse artistic works in relationship with various philosophical disciplines and humanistic movements.

The present: *Horizontality and horizons - notes, letters and symbols...*

Maximiano Cobra has been living in France since 1993. He's now dedicating himself to composition and, as a conductor, to the development and diffusion of the TEMPUS theory. In parallel to his musical activities, he writes for the stage and the screen (scenarios, adaptations...) as well as philosophical essays on aesthetics and art and political articles.

Maximiano Cobra's selective discography (see www.tempuscollection.com)

J.S. Bach : The Art of the Fugue – Goldberg Variations (harpsichord)

Ludwig van Beethoven : The Complete Symphonies

A. Bruckner : Symphony No 9

Maximiano Cobra: Symphony op. 1 "Ordo ab Chao"

W.A. Mozart : Symphonies 25, 40 and 41

W.A. Mozart : Opera overtures Vol. I – III

W.A. Mozart : Requiem

Gustav Mahler: Symphony No 5

F. Schubert: Symphony No 9 "La Grande"

Richard Wagner: Orchestral Music Vol. I - IV

Biography by Katarzyna LE FE, based on an October 2007 interview with Maximiano Cobra.