

ALTON THOMPSON

D. M. A. PEABODY CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

tel 886 921 644 280 • www.altonthompson.com • alton.arts@gmail.com



Stylistic versatility, innovative programming, and exciting performances have drawn audiences on both sides of the world to concerts featuring the conductor ALTON THOMPSON. Dr Thompson, an American of multi-ethnic European ancestry, now resides in Taiwan. He has appeared as a guest conductor with the Hsinchu Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Taiwan Normal University Symphony Orchestra, the Taipei Symphonic Winds, the Dafeng Performing Arts Symphony orchestra, the Soochow University Youth Orchestra, the Taipei Men's Chorus and the combined choirs of National Taiwan Normal University. He has served as music director of the Tainan University of

Technology Chamber Orchestra and director of Tainan Tech's chamber ensembles and choral conducting studios and as visiting conductor of the NTNU Senior Women's Concert Chorus. Dr Thompson has served as principal conductor of the Taoyuan Symphonic Winds. His engagements have led to performances in Taiwan's National Concert Hall and Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, in the Hsinchu Performing Arts Centre and Glass Arts Museum, and at the Chiayi Performing Arts Centre. A 2006 visit to China with the Taoyuan Symphonic Winds of Taiwan drew packed crowds at the Shenzhen Civic Centre. He also serves on the faculty of the Chungkuo University of Technology in Taipei and Hsinchu and maintains an active schedule as adjudicator for music contests and festivals.

In his native America Dr Thompson served as music director of the Keweenaw Symphony Orchestra and Michigan Tech Wind Symphony. Season concerts featured multimedia presentations, integration of music with dance and spoken theater, and many national and regional premieres. He first earned media attention in Memphis for conducting and producing the regional premiere of Tom Stoppard's *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, the innovative play for actors and orchestra featuring music by André Previn. Favorable press attention soon followed for his conducting of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and direction of music in Memphis professional theater productions. Since then he has worked with the Penns Woods Festival Orchestra (US), the Oskar Kolberg State Philharmonia (Poland), the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic (Czech Republic), the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra (US), the State Philharmonia of Zabrze (Poland), the Penn State Philharmonic (US), the Susquehanna Symphony Orchestra (US), the Clemson Symphony Orchestra (US), the Taipei Men's Chorus (Taiwan), the Eastman Wind Ensemble (US), the University of Pittsburgh Women's Chorus (US), the Michigan Tech Concert Choir (US), the Arion Gesangverein chorus (US), the Penn State Stravinsky Players (US), and the Musica Humana Chamber Orchestra (US). His theater experience includes work as music director in stage productions at the Circuit Playhouse and Playhouse-on-the-Square in Memphis and at the Fells Point Corner Theater and Vagabond Theater in Baltimore.

Dr Thompson has enjoyed collaborations with artists such as violinist Roger Chih-I Chiang, flutist Chen Li-Lin and clarinetist Yang Chiaohui, pianists Jeongwon Ham, Awadagin Pratt and Rachel Franklin, singers John Shirley-Quirk and Lorna March, conductors Apo Hsu and Pu-Qu Jiang, and stage directors Tim Crawford and M C Friedrich. His conducting mentors include Jonathan Sternberg, Tsung Yeh, Samuel Jones, Gustav Meier, Kate Tamarkin, Donald Hunsberger, Frederick Fennell, Bentley Shellahamer, Carl Bjerregaard, Robert Griffith, Frederik Prausnitz, Max Rudolf, and Alan Balter. He holds degrees from the Florida State University College of Music, the University of Memphis, and the Peabody Institute at the Johns Hopkins University.

Dr Thompson enjoys bringing music to new audiences. During the initial planning sessions for Martin Scorsese's film version of Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* he advised the Columbia Pictures production team on period details for the film's opera sequences. Michigan's WNMU-FM Public Radio 90 regularly broadcast his concerts with the Keweenaw Symphony Orchestra and Michigan Tech Wind Symphony. In Baltimore he appeared as a guest on WBJC's radio show *Face the Music*. His humorous verse about the life of classical musicians has been read on the air by David Zinman and Lisa Simeone in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's national radio program.

Dr Thompson maintains a gallery of original photography at *Alton's Images*. His pictures have been featured in PBS's *Independent Lens*, the book *Skyscrapers* by Judith Dupré, and the photography awards site of the Lonely Planet Travel Guides. His writing projects include an online journal entitled *Conductor's Notebook* and a novel, *Baltimore Nocturne*, that recently won a prize for opening chapters from the Baltimore Writers Alliance.