

Wes Kenney

The 2007 Grand Prize Winner of the Varna (Bulgaria) International Conducting Competition and now a winner of the Ernst Bacon Memorial Prize for excellence in performance of American Music, Wes Kenney is celebrating his just concluded 15th season as Music Director of the Fort Collins (Colorado) Symphony and Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University. Named in 2004 to an additional post as Music Director of Opera Fort Collins, he currently conducts three professional operatic productions as well as numerous orchestra concerts and dance performances each season throughout Northern Colorado. Wes Kenney also just concluded his fifth season with Denver Young Artist Orchestra—the premier youth orchestra in the state of Colorado—an orchestra recognized by the city of Denver for outreach as well as recently awarded the Ernst Bacon Memorial Prize for the performance of contemporary music.

Mr. Kenney's guest conducting activities include the Vietnam National Symphony, Acadiana Symphony (LA), Alabama Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony, Dubuque Symphony, Lafayette (IN) Symphony, Long Beach Symphony, New Mexico Symphony, Richmond Symphony, Savannah Symphony, and the Virginia Symphony. International guest conducting includes performances with the Vietnam National Symphony (Hanoi), Vidin State Philharmonic, Stara Zagora Opera Company in Bulgaria as well as the Edinburgh (Scotland) Music Festival. In June he will make his debut with the Changwon Philharmonic in Busan, Korea.

Mr. Kenney has also enjoyed success directing opera, ballet and musical theater. Previous positions include Music Director of the Virginia Ballet Theater, Co-Principal Conductor of the Oakland Lyric Opera, and Guest Conductor with Universal Ballet Korea. Since 2004 he has conducted productions of *Carmen*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Turn of the Screw*, *Barber of Seville*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Cenerentola*, *Rigoletto*, *Tosca*, *Otello*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Fledermaus*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Street Scene*, *La Bohème*, *Pagliacci*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Falstaff*, *Turandot*, *Marriage of Figaro*, *Serse*, *The Merry Widow*, *Aida*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Tenderland*. In addition he has conducted over one hundred performances of *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *The Firebird*, and many other dance works.

In six seasons as the Virginia Symphony's Associate Conductor, Mr. Kenney appeared more than 350 times with that orchestra where he was responsible for programming and conducting Pops, Family and Young People's Concerts. During his tenure with the Virginia Symphony, he was also invited to guest conduct the Williamsburg Symphonia, Virginia Chorale, Norfolk Chamber Consort and Virginia Waterfront International Arts Festival.

Named Educator of the Year by the Colorado Chapter of the American String Teachers Association in 2008, Mr. Kenney enjoys working with talented young people in his position as Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University and has served as Guest Conductor with the Alabama, New Mexico, and Virginia All-State Orchestras. Awarded the prestigious Carmen Dragon Conducting Prize in 1992, Wes Kenney is a founder of the CSU Summer Master of Music Education with an emphasis in conducting program, now in its 10th year.

He was recently a guest lecturer at the Conductor's Institute held at Bard College in upstate New York, teaching alongside founder Harold Farberman and American Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leon Botstein.

Mr. Kenney is a past president of the Conductors Guild, a 2000 member service organization to the conducting profession. He currently is on the Guild's advisory board. He is a graduate of the University of Southern California and San Francisco State University. Additional studies include three years as a fellow at the Conductors Institute, several American Symphony Orchestra League and Conductors Guild Workshops, and the Sandpoint Festival. His teachers include Harold Farberman, Hans Beer, Gunther Schuller, Hans Swarovsky and Miltiades Carides.