CRITICAL PRAISE

JAAP VAN ZWEDEN AND THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

“Mr. van Zweden had a reputation for formidable accounts of the 19th-century symphonic standards. But his adventurousness at the Philharmonic … has been the most welcome surprise of his time in New York.”

— The New York Times, September 19, 2019

“[Under Jaap van Zweden] and Deborah Borda … the orchestra is having something of a renaissance.”

— The Washington Post, June 14, 2019

“All power to the Philharmonic for its Project 19, a multiyear effort to commission new works from 19 women composers, in honor of the passage of the 19th Amendment.”

— The New York Times, January 30, 2020

“Jaap van Zweden doesn’t pull tempos or dynamics about, gives his orchestra time to play, and has that indefinable gift of getting them to excel.”

— BBC Music Magazine, June 2019

“The philosophy of the orchestra’s president and CEO Deborah Borda and first-year music director Jaap van Zweden couldn’t be clearer: We’re in a new era.”

— Classical Voice America, June 10, 2019

“Under Jaap van Zweden, the New York Philharmonic is a virtuosic machine, and a highly musical one.”

— The New Criterion, September 20, 2019

“[Jaap van Zweden will] deserve our thanks — as will Ms. Borda, who has suggested that this project will be the capstone of her career. New York music lovers will owe them both big time and want to cheer their success.”

— The New York Times, on the renovation of David Geffen Hall, December 3, 2019

“An intensely expressive monument to loss, labor, and political rage, Fire in my mouth received an incandescent world premiere by the New York Philharmonic.”


(over)
“This ambitious work, which concludes the Philharmonic’s ‘Music of Conscience’ series, is a high point of Mr. van Zweden’s first season as music director. Give him — and Deborah Borda, the orchestra’s visionary president — credit for thinking big.”

— The New York Times, on David Lang’s prisoner of the state, June 7, 2019

“This season is even more ambitious. Many institutions are devoting large swaths of their 2019–20 season to celebrating the coming 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth. Instead, the Philharmonic is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which brought the vote to women, by commissioning 19 female composers.”

— The New York Times, September 20, 2019

“Over the course of the past season, the Philharmonic’s programming and performances have been more ambitious and relevant than ever. What a great feeling it is to be excited about New York’s hometown orchestra again.”

— New York Music Daily, June 14, 2019

“This program of classics plus an exciting contemporary work is exactly the kind of eclectic, highly enjoyable evening that an elite orchestra can and should pull off regularly.”

— The New York Times, on Steve Reich’s Music for Ensemble and Orchestra, December 6, 2019

“Van Zweden kept time relentlessly with the baton in his right hand, but his left was like an independent living creature, coaxing and caressing, bringing together close to a hundred virtuosi from differing traditions into a synthesis of unity and exaltation.”

— Bachtrack, November 28, 2019

“Philharmonic Music Director Jaap van Zweden proved an ideal guide … bringing out the work’s nocturnal colors in a soundscape of trilling flutes, muted brass, and shimmering harp. Time and again he brought home how delicate this harrowing score actually is.”

— Musical America, about Schoenberg’s Erwartung, October 2, 2019

“Joined by some truly magnetic soloists, Jaap van Zweden and the Philharmonic succeeded in bringing the music, and mania, to the forefront of the evening.”

— OperaWire, on Schoenberg’s Erwartung and Bartók’s Bluebeard’s Castle, October 1, 2019