

Taijiro Iimori

Conductor

Taijiro Iimori is one of Japan's most distinguished conductors, widely respected for his broad repertoire and particularly as a strong advocate of **Wagner**.

After receiving his musical training at the Toho Gakuen Junior College, Mr. Iimori made his opera debut with a production of Puccini's *Suor Angelica* by the Fujiwara Opera Company, thus beginning a career strongly associated to the world of lyric theatre. He went on to win prizes at the Dimitri Mitropoulos International Music Competition for Conductors (1966), and at the First Herbert von Karajan International Conducting Competition (1969).

Taijiro Iimori currently holds the positions of **Honorary Conductor Laureate** at the **Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra** and the **Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra**. He has been designated as the **next Artistic Director** (Opera, 2014-2018) at **New National Theatre, Tokyo (NNTT)**, and has started his tenure as Artistic Consultant at NNTT from September, 2012.

As Principal Conductor at the Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra (a post he held from September 1997 to March 2012) and the Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra (from January 2001 to December 2010), he has been praised for his exciting programming in both cities. Highlights include a semi-staged version of **Wagner's Ring Cycle** and performances of the complete works of **Beethoven**. Also as Principal Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic (from April 1993 to March 1998), he earned the Agency for Cultural Affairs' 1996 Arts Award for a live recording of the Philharmonic's 30th Anniversary Concert in Tokyo.

Taijiro Iimori has been active in Europe, particularly in Germany, where he held various posts, notably at the **Richard Wagner Festival in Bayreuth** where he has been a musical assistant from 1970 until 1992. He was active in opera houses such as Bremen and Mannheim as conductor and pianist. During this time he won the Education Minister's Art Encouragement Prize for Freshmen in Tokyo (1972), the prize for 'Best Conductor of the Season' in **Barcelona Gran Teatro del Liceu**, Spain (1972). In the same year he conducted the **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** at the Vienna Festival and a year later was invited to the **Teatrocomunale di Bologna**. He went on to hold posts as **Resident Conductor at the Hamburg State Opera**. From 1978 to 1983 he was principal conductor of the Opera Forum Enschede in Holland, where he was also active as a conductor of the Enschede City Conservatory Orchestra until 1995.

Taijiro Iimori has totally 21 various recordings, mainly on Fontec. Among them, eleven with the Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra (including **two versions of Beethoven the complete symphonies**), two with Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra, two with the Nagoya Philharmonic orchestra, two with Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, all of which have been received to great acclaim: his recording **Bruckner** Symphony No. 4 was one of Gramophone Japan's March 2000 Critic's Best Choice 3.

Taijiro Iimori is the recipient of numerous citations, including the 32nd Suntory Music Award (2001), the 54th Arts Encouragement Prize of the Minister of Education (2004), Japan's Medal with Purple Ribbon (2004), 43rd Osaka City Cultural Contributor Award (2008). In 2010 he awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, the highest honor in Japan. In 2012, he has been named **Person of Cultural Merits of Japan**.

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