

Bob Tucci

Biography

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Robert "Bob" Tucci once indicated that he had the good fortune of being able to look back on sixty years of a life with and for the tuba, his first love. Serious study began in 1955 as a student of Harold Mc Donald, tubist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra from 1952-1983. This continued in 1958, with Arnold Jacobs in Chicago. To this day he „remains a student of Arnold Jacobs.

In 1960 and due to a recommendation by Mr. Jacobs he became a member of the Louisville Orchestra, continuing studies at the School of Music of the University of Louisville. In 1962 he relocated to Vienna, became first a member of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, later tubist of the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Within a few short months he moved from an American orchestra famous for its Commissioning Series, to premiere and record twentieth century music by living composers, to one of great centers of traditional European culture and music. The young tuba player who once had a concert band audience smiling when he missed the opening note of the R. Strauss Concerto No. 1 for Horn found himself looking at Herbert von Karajan, Karl Boehm, Paul Kletzki, Josef Krips, George Solti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Zubin Mehta along with many others.

From 1966-69 he served with the United States Army Field Band, played most of the 1969-70 season with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and returned to Europe thereafter. In 1971 he joined the orchestra of the State Theatre in Kassel, followed in 1972 by a position at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich.

Munich and the Bavarian State Opera became his home. Over the years he performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Munich Philharmonic, the Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, the Berlin Radio Symphony, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Hamburg Opera and Philharmonic, the

State Orchestra of Baden-Wuerttemberg and the Symphony Orchestra of the South German Radio in Stuttgart, the orchestras in Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Chemnitz, Augsburg, Ulm, Regensburg, Innsbruck, Zurich, the Salzburg Festival, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in Geneva, the Orchestra of the Arena di Verona, at La Scala in Milan, the Orchestra Nazionale Santa Cecilia, the Cleveland Orchestra along with studio recording, brass quintets and ensembles including Summit Brass. He always said that he had much for which to be grateful.

Wolfgang Sawallisch and Zubin Mehta went on to become General Music Directors of the Bavarian State Opera, from 1972-93 and 1996 to 2006 respectively. During the 1985-86 season the Bavarian State Opera presented all thirteen of Richard Wagner's opera, four complete "Ring" cycles included, as well as all twenty-three operas, eighty-six performances, and most of the symphonic music by Richard Strauss. Bob once referred to Wolfgang Sawallisch as his "General Music Director for Life".

Bob Tucci enjoys close cooperation with leading manufacturers, to develop Perantucci brass wind instruments and mouthpieces, lines that have become the equipment choice for thousands of musicians worldwide.

Bob never felt that being a tuba player in some of Europe's finest orchestras was something special. In Germany alone there are over one hundred full-time professional orchestras, each with a tuba player, some with two. There are countless other American musicians who have or had similar careers in Europe. Arnold Jacobs often referred to his chair in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as "The Best Seat in the House". That is how Bob felt, having the opportunity to listen to great orchestral string sections, unique instrumental artists and in particular, to most of the great vocal artists of the second half of the twentieth century. For someone who grew up in a Western Pennsylvania coal-mining town, that was truly "The Best Seat in the House".

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