

## GILBERT BLIN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Gilbert Blin was born in 1960 in France. He studied Theatre History and Stage Direction at the Sorbonne in Paris. Upon graduating in 1986, Gilbert Blin concentrated on Rameau's operas and their relation to the stage, an interest that has since broadened to encompass French opera and its relationship to Baroque theatre, his fields of expertise as historian and stage director.

During his apprenticeship, Gilbert Blin collaborated with some of the greatest directors: Robert Altman, Pier Luigi Pizzi, Vittorio Rossi, Helmut Polixa, and Nicolas Joël, among others. These engagements have taken him from Paris to Stockholm, Lausanne, Copenhagen, Montréal, and Sydney. In 1987, Gilbert Blin was assistant stage director in residence at the Opéra de Paris, and under the artistic directions of Jean-Louis Martinoty and Thierry Fouquet, he worked at Opéra-Comique in Paris. From 1987, with *Don Giovanni*, to 1991, with *Idomeneo*, Gilbert Blin explored various pieces under the visions of artists like Göran Järvefelt, Volker Schlöndorff, and Sir Charles Mackerras. He also worked with sculptors and painters like Arman, Bernar Venet, and Jennifer Bartlett on sets and costumes.



For his debuts, in 1991, Gilbert Blin directed Massenet's *Werther* for the Opéra de Nancy, which was invited to Saint-Etienne, native city of the composer, for the centennial of the piece in 1993. For Opéra-Comique in Paris, Gilbert Blin presented a new version of the show in 1994 with Laurent Petitgirard conducting, and in 1995 directed Delibes' *Lakmé* for the same house, a production frequently revived in France until 2000. In 1996, he was dramaturge for *Carmen* of Bizet, directed by David Radok, at the Royal Opera of Copenhagen. In 1999, Gilbert Blin was the first French stage director invited by the Prague State Opera: his successful production of Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable* conducted by Vincent Monteil has been performed for many seasons.

Gilbert Blin has worked extensively with the operas of Gluck. He was French adviser for Arnold Östman's productions of *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Drottningholm, 1990) and *Alceste* (Amsterdam, 1993); he also directed a workshop for young singers on *Iphigénie en Tauride* for the Opéra de Massy in 1995. As stage director for the Drottningholm Theatre, Gilbert Blin presented *Orfeo and Euridice* in 1992. This production, conducted by Arnold Östman, was filmed and recorded and was revived in 1998, as part of the Gluck Festival presented for Stockholm's year as the "European City of Culture".

Gilbert Blin founded, in 1999, the Académie Desprez, *Association Française pour le Rayonnement du Théâtre du Château de Drottningholm*. This Swedish theatre of the eighteenth century allows Gilbert Blin, in partnership with musicologist Rémy-Michel Trotier, to lead researches on opera and develop a whole practice through stage productions. Realizations include a production, designed and directed, in 2001, of Vivaldi's *Orlando furioso* for the State Opera of Prague and, in 2003, a staged reconstruction of Vivaldi's *Rosmira fedele* for the Opéra de Nice. Returning to the latter house in 2007, Gilbert Blin designed the staging, sets, costumes, and lights of his acclaimed production of Handel's *Teseo*. Recently, for the Ensemble Baroque de Nice, he directed a staged version of *La Giuditta*, oratorio of Alessandro Scarlatti, conducted by Gilbert Bezzina; This restitution of a 17th century Roman performance was successfully touring France in 2009.

Since 2006, Gilbert Blin has been working on a project of reconstructing the original sets and costumes of Mozart operas. With Czech stage director Lubor Cukr, he presented *Don Giovanni* at the Prague Estates Theatre in 2006 and 2007 and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Opéra de Nice in 2008.

Gilbert Blin made his American début with the Boston Early Music Festival in 2001 by directing a fully-staged production of Lully's *Thésée*. With musicians Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, Gilbert Blin directed, in 2007, Lully's *Psyché* at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston. "Stage Director in Residence" at the Boston Early Music Festival since 2008, Gilbert Blin has been directing Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, presented in 2009 at the Boston Center for the Arts and at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington. For the BEMF Chamber Opera Series at Jordan Hall in Boston, he staged Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Charpentier's *Actéon*. He will present soon Handel's *Acis and Galatea*.