

## **Jaap van Zweden: a maestro touring the world (7x35')**

The series focusses on both the work and the personal life of the highly driven, passionate and fanatic maestro Jaap van Zweden, the Dutch conductor who was appointed the next music director of the New York Philharmonic this januari. A camerateam followed him around the world for a full year, a year that turned out to become a crucial year in the life of the maestro, both professionally and personal.

The series shows maestro Van Zweden working with his regular orchestra's – the Dallas Symphony and the Hong Kong Philharmonic – as well as during numerous guest appearances, with some of the greatest orchestra's in the world. This includes the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony and the Orchestre de Paris, to name a few. Both during rehearsals and concerts it becomes clear: Jaap van Zweden is prepared to go far – very far – to achieve his musical goals. In the last episode of the series, Van Zweden is presented as the new chef of the New York Phil: the crowning achievement of many years of hard work.

Besides his musical adventures, there is a more personal storyline in the series, a story that is inspired by the autistic son of Jaap van Zweden and his wife Aaltje: Benjamin. Jaap and Aaltje van Zweden established the Papageno Foundation, the objective being to support families of children with autism. During the series, the Papageno House, a home for autistic young adults and children, was opened in Laren, The Netherlands, with Queen Maxima of the Netherlands in attendance. The series not only shows the construction and the opening of the house, but also the very emotional moment when their son Benjamin leaves the parental house, to live on his own in the Papageno house.

The series features beautiful music, including Van Zweden working with famous soloists like Lang Lang, Itzhak Perlman, Mathias Goerne and many others. Musicians, journalists, family members and many others speak about maestro Van Zweden's work and personality.

## **Background on maestro Jaap van Zweden**

Jaap van Zweden has risen rapidly in the past decade to become one of today's most sought-after conductors. On January 27, 2016, the New York Philharmonic announced that Jaap van Zweden will be their new Music Director starting with the 2018-19 season, and will act as Music Director Designate during 2017-18. He has been Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra since 2008. He has also been Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra since 2012. The Amsterdam-born van Zweden was appointed at nineteen as the youngest concertmaster ever of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and began his conducting career twenty years later in 1995. In November 2011, van Zweden was named Musical America's 2012 Conductor of the Year in recognition of

his critically acclaimed work as Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and as guest conductor with the most prestigious US orchestras.

Jaap van Zweden has appeared as guest conductor with many leading orchestras around the globe which, in addition to those above, include the Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Recent highlights have included highly successful appearances with the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, the Boston and London Symphonies, and his BBC Proms debut.

In 1997, Jaap van Zweden and his wife Aaltje established the Papageno Foundation, the objective being to support families of children with autism. Over the years, that support has taken shape through a number of programs in which professional music therapists and musicians, receiving additional training from Papageno, use music as a major tool in their work with autistic children. Papageno House, a new home for autistic young adults and children, was opened in Laren, The Netherlands, in August, 2015, with Her Majesty Queen Maxima in attendance.

## **Episode 1: Dallas, Texas**

Maestro Van Zweden has been the musical director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra since 2008. This episode features Jaap van Zweden during the preparations for an exclusive gala evening to honour the sponsors of the orchestra. A grand concert is prepared, with world famous violinist Itzhak Perlman as a soloist. He will perform the piece that brought him even more fame worldwide: the theme of the movie Schindler's list. Perlman speaks about working with Jaap van Zweden. Amongst others, mayor Mike Rawlings of Dallas, daughter Anna-Sophia van Zweden and former presidential candidate Ross Perot are interviewed. After the concert – which is also shown live on a large screen in the central park of the city of Dallas, as a gift to the public – Jaap van Zweden travels to the Netherlands, for a concert with the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. Furthermore, the maestro's father – Daniel van Zweden – speaks about Jaap as a young boy.

## **Episode 2: Hong Kong, Chicago, Hong Kong**

Busy times for maestro Van Zweden. With the Hong Kong Philharmonic, a concert with world famous pianist Lang Lang is scheduled. Meanwhile in Amsterdam, the maestro's wife Aaltje van Zweden accompanies their autistic son Benjamin to a performance with his choir: an ensemble that consists entirely of people with autism. After the Lang Lang concert, Jaap van Zweden heads for Chicago, for a Beethoven Fifth performance with the Chicago Symphony, as a guest conductor. He returns to Hong Kong for one of the largest and most complex musical projects of his year: Das Rheingold, the first part of Wagner's Ring Cycle will be performed by the Hong Kong Philharmonic. Bariton Matthias Goerne,

amongst others, is a soloist. It's an extremely demanding piece, especially since the young orchestra lacks experience with Wagner opera's. Jaap van Zweden has to pull out all the stops to get the orchestra on the level he demands. Furthermore, Van Zweden speaks about the tough schedule he is on, and the fact he has to miss out many important family moments. It is the price one has to pay for a succesful international career in music.

### **Episode 3: New York, Rotterdam**

In this episode maestro Van Zweden visits New York, as a guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. For two full weeks he will be working with the world class orchestra. The stakes are high, especially since Jaap van Zweden is mentioned in the American press as the possible new chef of the New York Philharmonic. Being in the city of New York is extra special for Van Zweden, since he studied here at the famous Juilliard School of Music as a 16 and 17-year old boy. With Leonard Bernstein as one of his demanding teachers. Jaap van Zweden visits his old school, for a masterclass with the current students, to work with the school orchestra and to reminisce about the days he studied here himself. It was a most exciting and defining period in his life, but at times a lonely period as well. Back in the Netherlands, Jaap van Zweden inspects the Papageno House: a new home under construction for children and young adults with autism. The construction of the Papageno House is a lifelong dream of Jaap van Zweden and his wife Aaltje. The initiative was inspired by their own autistic son, Benjamin. The house is almost ready to be opened, by Queen Maxima of the Netherlands personally. While in his own country, maestro Van Zweden leads the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra: the ninth symphony of Mahler is scheduled.

### **Episode 4: Vienna, Zurich, Eindhoven, Amsterdam.**

Jaap van Zweden has just become a grandfather for the very first time, but there is not an awful lot of time to enjoy his new status: with his Hong Kong Philharmonic an exciting two-week-tour through Europe is scheduled, with performances in many famous concert halls. The tour will be an important test for the orchestra: how will the European critics judge the work Van Zweden has done with the orchestra since he took over? Has he brought them to another level? Especially the concert in the Musikverein in Vienna, arguably the most famous concert hall in the world, with the most critical audience, will be an important moment in the history of the orchestra. Meanwhile, Jaap van Zweden is preparing another piece: after the tour, he will have to conduct the world premiere of a very modern and complex piece of music, in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

## **Episode 5: Amsterdam, Paris**

Exciting times in the life of maestro Jaap van Zweden, both musically and personally. Not only has he just become a grandfather for the very first time, also, a lifelong dream of Van Zweden and his wife Aaltje is about to become reality: the opening of the Papageno House, a new home for autistic children and young adults. The house, inspired by their own autistic son Benjamin, will be opened officially by Queen Maxima of the Netherlands. Furthermore, Jaap van Zweden travels to Paris. He will be guest-conducting the Orchestre de Paris. Das Klagende Lied, the famous yet complex piece of Gustav Mahler is scheduled. With only two days of preparation, the performance will be a huge challenge for the maestro and the orchestra. Meanwhile, rumours of Jaap van Zweden becoming the next chef in New York become stronger.

## **Episode 6: Dallas, Amsterdam**

In Dallas the Soluna festival is about to take place: a large festival with both modern and classical music, and many other forms of art as well. The festival is an interesting family affair for the Van Zweden's, since Jaap van Zweden's daughter Anna-Sophia is one of the directors of the festival. Jaap van Zweden and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra will perform pieces by Gustav Mahler and Leonard Bernstein, as well as a Salute to the Armed Forces on Memorial Day. Back in Amsterdam, the most emotional event in the year of Jaap van Zweden and his wife Aaltje is about to take place: their autistic son Benjamin will leave the parental house, to start living on his own.

## **Episode 7: Amsterdam, New York.**

In the final episode of the series, Jaap van Zweden is presented as the new music director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. For Van Zweden, who studied in New York as a 16-year old boy, it is a dream come true. In Amsterdam, the maestro is followed during the preparations for one of the musical highlights of his year: in the Concertgebouw Wagner's opera Tristan und Isolde will be performed by an ensemble of world class singers and the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. With the day of the concert approaching fast, many problems occur. Not the least of Van Zweden's worries is that only one day before the concert, the Tristan-singer has to opt out of the production, due to problems with his voice. A new Tristan has to be found within 24 hours. After the concert, at his Amsterdam home, Jaap van Zweden reflects on the year that has passed: an eventful and emotional year, both professionally and personally.