



### **JAN SÖDERBLOM – Conductor/Director**

With a dynamic background as a performer, including solo, chamber music and orchestral leading, exploration is the driving force behind **Jan Söderblom's** path as a conductor. Currently Artistic Director of the Finnish Chamber Orchestra, he is also Artistic Director of two annual festivals and a frequent guest conductor with the major Finnish orchestras. He also held the position of 1st Concertmaster of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra from 2016-2025, and frequently performs as play-director. Whether conducting, directing or playing, Söderblom's artistic vision clearly communicates a personal narrative where history and the present, and culture and nature meet in a distinctive and compelling way.

**Jan Söderblom** was appointed Artistic Director of the Finnish Chamber Orchestra in 2021, continuing the vision of the ensemble's founder, Jukka-Pekka Saraste; he is also the Artistic Director of the Tammisaari Summer Concerts and the Grankulla Musikfest. He was previously Chief Conductor of the Pori Sinfonietta (2012-2016), Artistic Director of the Lappeenranta City Orchestra (2002-2009) and Artistic Director of the 'Music by the Sea' Festival in Ingå, Finland until 2023.

Born into a musical environment immersed in the world of opera, Jan Söderblom started playing the violin at an early age. Growing up in a boom time in Finnish musical life, he studied with teachers such as Géza Szilvay, the creator of the internationally renowned 'Colourstrings' teaching method and Ari Angervo. A hunger for international exchange led to further studies with Endre Wolf, the Amadeus Quartet, Sandor Végh and David Takeno. He went on to perform as a soloist with, among others, the Swedish Radio Orchestra, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra and Japan Philharmonic Orchestra. Having a fundamental passion for chamber music, he was a founding member of the New Helsinki Quartet with whom he won several competitions and performed in Europe's most prestigious venues.

It was always evident that conducting would play a significant role in Jan Söderblom's professional identity, having been an aspiration from early on; while forging a career as a soloist and chamber musician, he enrolled at the Sibelius Academy's renowned conducting class with Jorma Panula and Leif Segerstam. Consequently, his dual career took a turn towards conducting, with engagements including all major Finnish orchestras and orchestras including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Orquesta RTVE, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, MDR Sinfonieorkester (Leipzig), Danish National Chamber Orchestra, Norwegian Radio Orchestra KORK, Norrköping and Helsingborg Symphony Orchestras and Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine. The 2025-26 season includes return engagements with the Helsinki Philharmonic, Turku Philharmonic, Lahti Symphony Orchestra and Tapiola Sinfonietta, and further afield with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra.

In opera, Jan Söderblom has collaborated with Swedish Royal Opera, Norrlandsoperan and Finnish National Opera; he conducted the premieres of Thomas Jennefelt's *'Sport och fritid'*, *'Svall'* by Daniel Börtz and Veli-Matti Puumala's *'Anna Liisa'*, the recording of which was also released on Ondine to critical acclaim, including Editor's Choice in Gramophone magazine. In 2025-26, he will conduct a production of Prokofiev's *Cinderella* by David Bintley at the Finnish National Ballet.

In addition to his conducting collaborations in Finland, Jan Söderblom was appointed concertmaster of the Helsinki Philharmonic in 2014, a post he will continue to hold until December 2025. Bringing together his vast experience as a chamber musician as well as his conductor's perspective to leading an orchestra from the concert-master's chair, he has developed his "conductorless" approach to symphonic directing; within this highly collaborative framework, he works closely with section principals to prepare large symphonic programmes performed without a conductor. He has successfully directed the Helsinki Philharmonic several times in this way in large-scale repertoire, such as the symphonies of Sibelius.

Away from the stage, Jan Söderblom enjoys nature equally by sailing or wandering in the woods. He currently resides with his family in the artisan and artist community of Fiskars in Southern Finland.

September 2025

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