

Orquestra de São Paulo

Biography

With more than 130 concerts during its annual season, the Orquestra de São Paulo (OSESP) is considered the most outstanding orchestra in Latin America. With broad-based programming, juxtaposing the great works of international classical music with world premieres and pieces by Brazilian composers, OSESP brings to Brazil some of the major current soloists and conductors, such as Maestro Kurt Masur, composer Krzysztof Penderecki, soprano Barbara Hendricks, baritone Sergei Leiferkus, pianists Stephen Kovacevich and Nelson Freire, flautist Emmanuel Pahud, guitarist Pepe Romero, violist Gerard Caussé, and violinists Benjamin Schmid and Leonidas Kavakos, among the more than 60 visiting artists each year.

Founded by Maestro Sousa Lima in 1954, OSESP alternated between periods of success and great difficulty, including a hiatus in its activities. After Italian Maestro Bruno Roccela's stay, the group was under the command of Maestro Eleazar de Carvalho for 24 years, until his death in 1996.

In 1997 Maestro John Neschling was taken on as the Orchestra's artistic director, with the conductor Roberto Minczuk as his assistant. The Orchestra was soon redefining and broadening the objectives set down by Mr. Carvalho. Auditions were held with musicians from around the world, and higher wages and better working conditions were offered. The Sala São Paulo (São Paulo Concert Hall) was opened in 1999 and, in following years, the orchestra has gone through major transformations, which has positioned them as the barometer of quality and excellence in the fields of art, culture, and education in Brazil. Other projects were put into operation, including four different choirs (the Symphony, Chamber, Youth and Children's choirs).

With the support of the State Government, OSESP created the Maestro Eleazar de Carvalho Musical Documentation Center, an orchestral subscription series, various educational programs and volunteer groups, a publisher for scores called "Criadores do Brasil," just very recently started the activities of a Music Academy, and initiated a partnership with the Swedish recording company BIS to launch more than 20 CDs of the Orchestra's performances. Almost half of these CDs have been recorded to date, among them a trilogy with all the symphonies of Camargo Guarnieri, Francisco Braga's opera Jupyra, works by Francisco Mignone and Claudio Santoro, the first CD with some of the Bachianas Brasileiras and the Choros by Villa-Lobos.

In 2005 a contract was signed with the Brazilian recording company Biscoito Fino to launch a collection of CDs highlighting important works of classical music, including the symphonies of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky as well as a Liszt piano concerto, among others.

After the tours through Latin America (2000), the United States (2002) and Europe (2003), OSESP celebrated its 50 years in Brazil with a tour of 14 of the state capitals of the country (2004). In 2005 Oseps made another tour through Latin America and state capitals in the south of Brazil. For the 2006 concert season, OSESP was back to the United States, for concerts in 14 cities, and will return to the United States in October 2009.