

TONČI BILIĆ is one of the most versatile Croatian conductors. He makes successful appearances in concert halls, has conducted operas and ballets, and with diverse ensembles performs works ranging from the Renaissance to contemporary music. He was born in Split in 1969. Bilić received his master's degree in 1993 at the Zagreb Music Academy in the class of Pavle Dešpalj, who also supervised his post-graduate course. He won the Zagreb University President's Prize, and was a Lovro and Lilly Matačić Foundation scholar.

The performance of Mozart's Requiem with Wiener Concertverein orchestra in December of 2016, in Vienna's Musikverein, has been the grand finale of celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Croatian Radiotv Choir, following the performances of Bach: H moll Messe (with the Croatian Radiotv Orchestra) and Monteverdi: Vespro della Beata Vergine (with the English Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble). Since 1997. Bilić has been conducting large choral works (as a part of the various concert series organised by the Croatian Radiotv – Master series, Kanconijer and Sfumato Plus) and has conducted and presented Croatian premieres of the most important a cappella works.

His first cooperation with the Croatian Radiotelevision Choir dates as far as the year 1991. Since 1997. he has been the Choir's permanent conductor and more recently, for over 10 years, its Chief conductor. His ideas resulted in "...the launching of the new concert series named Sfumato in 2008. The Choir is the second largest ensemble of the Croatian Radio and it was an absolute novelty for them to have an independent season of six concerts. The huge importance of this new programming could be paralleled only with the appearance of first public concerts of the Croatian radio in 1942...." (Tanja Čunko, Croatian Radio and Croatian Music) Under his leadership, the Choir has developed into a high quality, award-winning ensemble that has recently (2016.) become member of TENSIO, the European Association of Chamber Choirs. He took part in the European Commission cultural project "On the frontiers of humanism in music" with appearances on Festivals in France and Czech Republic.

Through all these years, Tonči Bilić continues to promote Croatian music. Ever since the performance of Igor Kuljerić's monumental Croatian Glagolitic Requiem in 1999 he has recorded numerous CDs of Croatian pieces (Igor Kuljerić: Croatian Glagolitic Requiem 2000.-Cantus/HRT; Boris Papandopulo: Croatian Mass 2004.-Cantus/HRT; As a deer longs of flowing streams , The anthology of croatian a cappella XX century music 2006-Orfej/HRT;

A Composers' Dialogue, Ivo Josipović & Ivana Stefanović 2009.- Cantus; Croatian Music on Riva dei Schiavoni 2012.-Cantus/HRT; Croatian Christmas Story 2012.-Aquarius Records/HRT; Osor Trilogy, 2013.-Cantus/HRT; Ivan pl. Zajc: Night's Charm, 2014.-HRT;

Boris Papandopulo: PASSIO 2015.-HRT).

Recently, he has premiered some major Croatian pieces like Dalibor Bukvić's 'Récits de l'autre monde' ("Spatial" for electronics, "Actus" for orchestra, "Psalam" for choir and orchestra, "Vers le ciel" for actor, mixed and children's choir, orchestra and lighting in 2010), and Requiem by Srećko Bradić in 2015, which was also recorded by the Croatian radiotelevision.

While still a student, he made his debut in 1992 in the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, as the conductor in the multi-media project Osman. His experiences in the theatre include a highly successful premiere of the opera Animal Farm by Igor Kuljerić at the Zagreb Music Biennale in 2003. At the 2013 edition of Split Summer Festival he led the production of the Flying Dutchman, 50 years after the last Wagner performance in Split, marking the composer's 200th Anniversary. He worked as the choir assistant conductor and conductor in the opera company of the Ivan Zajc Croatian National Theatre in Rijeka. During that period he has conducted numerous productions such as Nabucco, Traviata, Rigoletto, Il Trovatore, Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Tosca, Turandot, Ero, Cavalleria Rusticana, Giselle and Swan Lake.

Since 1999 he has appeared regularly with the Croatian RTV Symphony Orchestra and has been a frequent guest of many Croatian ensembles: of the Zagreb Philharmonic, of the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, of the Croatian Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestras of the Zagreb and Rijeka operas, of the Split, Varaždin and Zadar chamber orchestras, of the Croatian Baroque Ensemble, of the Cantus Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of the Croatian Army. International guest appearances include those with the Wienerkonzertverein Orchestra in the Musikverein, the Choir of the Netherlands Radio and the Netherlands Chamber Choir/ the Nederlands Kamerkoor (on which occasion he won the special commendation of Eric Ericson), the Bratislava orchestra Musica Aeterna, Les Sacqueboutiers de Toulouse, the Witold Lutosławski Philharmonia in Wrocław, the Budapest Danubia Symphony Orchestra, the Dohnányi Symphony Orchestra and the Pannon Philharmonic (in the Palace of Culture in Budapest) and the string orchestra Dušan Skovran in Belgade

Bilić has performed at many festivals (the Zagreb Music Biennale – the first performance of the opera Animal Farm by Igor Kuljerić, the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, Varaždin Baroque Evenings, Musical Evenings in St Donat in Zadar, Osor Musical Evenings, Autumn Festivities in Bratislava, Belgrade Cello Fest etc).

He regularly records for radio, television and film production and is the recipient of several Porin recording prizes and the Milka Trnina Award (2008).

From 2000 to 2009 he created the programme of the Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall in Zagreb, working as producer, artistic director and general manager.

From 2012 to 2014 he ran the positions of the artistic manager of Opera, Drama and Ballet of the Croatian National Theatre in Split and the artistic director of the Split Summer Festival. Bilić is the President of the Jeunesse Musicale Croatia.