

Richard Novák, bass (CZE)

Richard Novák graduated from Brno Conservatory (1955) and later became winner of the vocal competitions in Toulouse (1961) and s'Hertogenbosch (1962). As early as 1954 he was accepted to the National Theatre in Ostrava as a soloist, transferring later to the Janáček Opera in Brno and becoming a significant contributor to its golden period. Bedřich Smetana, whose complete operatic works Novák had absorbed, played a significant role in his career. The singer ranks among the most significant promoters of Czech musical works. To name a few of his other experiences with Czech composers Bohuslav Martinů (*Comedy on the Bridge, The Voice of the Forest, Alexandre bis, Juliette, Greek Passion*), Leoš Janáček (*Kaťa Kabanová, The Makropulos Affair, The Cunning Little Vixen*) come to mind. Foreign composers' works he has worked on include those of Gioacchino Rossini, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Giuseppe Verdi, Sergei Prokofiev or Alban Berg. He was a guest at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires (Dr. Kolenatý in *The Makropulos Affair*), in Paris, Madrid and Venice (Forester in *The Cunning Little Vixen*) or at the Salzburger Festspiele (*From the House of the Dead* under Claudia Abbado's musical direction). Richard Novák is valued by many contemporary composers, who have composed pieces directly for him. His performances of Lieder are masterful, and until this day he frequently participates in oratorio works. He has been cooperating with the Czech Philharmonic on a long-term basis. His performance of Verdi's *Requiem* and Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, which he recorded under Sir Charles Mackerras and later for DECCA, directed by Riccardo Chailly. He was awarded the Thálie prize for his lifelong mastery of his art. In 2005 he was awarded the Prize of the Minister of Culture for his contribution to music.