



# Steven Byess



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# Steven Byess - Biography

The extraordinarily varied career of Steven Byess takes him not only to the stages of symphony orchestras and opera companies, but also to the stages and genres of Broadway, jazz and television. He is a dynamic conductor and has been hailed by critics as "**masterful and brilliant**", "**creating the epitome of instrumental elegance**" and "**a talented interpreter, able to capture the sweep of a piece without neglecting detail**".

He is the Music Director of the **Tupelo Symphony Orchestra**, the **Arkansas Philharmonic Orchestra**, the **Colorado Youth Symphony Orchestras**, Associate Music Director for the **Ohio Light Opera**, and formerly held the posts of Cover Conductor for the **Detroit Symphony Orchestra** and Conductor for the **International Vocal Arts Institute** in Tel Aviv, Israel. With the Ohio Light Opera he has conducted, to critical acclaim, over **400 performances of 50 diverse operas, operettas, and musical theater works**, and has recorded **thirteen** CD recordings by **Newport Classics, Albany Records, and Operetta Archives** of Johann Strauss' A Night In Venice, Victor Herbert's Naughty Marietta and The Fortune Teller, Emmerich Kàlmàn's Autumn Maneuvers, Countess Maritza, Das Veilchen vom Montmartre, Der Güte Komerad, Rudolph Friml's The Vagabond King, Schubert's Das Dreimäderlhaus, Sigmund Romberg's Maytime, Sullivan's The Sorcerer, and Sousa's El Capitan.

Former posts include Opera Conductor for the **Cleveland Institute of Music** (Ohio), Music Director of Opera for **California State University — Los Angeles**, and conducting faculty of the **University of Michigan School of Music** in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Mr. Byess recently conducted the **U.S. premiere** of Russian violinist **Alexander Markov's Rock Concerto**, and made his **Carnegie Hall** conducting debut leading the work in New York in October 2010.

Mr. Byess has been a frequent guest conductor at **the Pine Mountain Music Festival** in Michigan where he has conducted productions of Le Tragédie de Carmen (Bizet/Brook), a critically acclaimed production of Leonard Bernstein's Candide with director Joshua Major and the composer's daughter Jamie Bernstein, and Mozart's Die Zauberflöte. At the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel, he has conducted productions of Puccini's La Bohème and Robert Ward's The Crucible. In 2008, Mr. Byess conducted the members of the **Kansas City Symphony Orchestra** in a performance at the **National Flute Association** convention in August and the members of the **Cleveland Orchestra** in a memorial concert for oboist John Mack. Mr. Byess recently conducted his sixth tour of the U.S. with the **Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra** from Krakow, Poland, and in May 2012 he returned to Taipei, Taiwan and Nanning, China to lead orchestras in each city.

Mr. Byess received his Bachelor of Music Degree in classical performance and jazz studies from Georgia State University, and his Master of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied conducting with Louis Lane and Carl Topilow, bassoon with George Goslee and David McGill, violin with Carol Ruzicka, and piano with Olga Radosavljevich. He also attended the Pierre Monteux Memorial School for Conductors under the tutelage of Maître Charles Bruck. In addition to his conducting studies with Louis Lane, Robert Shaw, and Carl Topilow, he has worked under the auspices of the American Symphony Orchestra League with such noted conductors as Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, and Otto Werner Mueller. Mr. Byess was an assistant to conductor Robert Shaw at the Shaw Institute in Souillac, France.

Steven Byess is a **passionate advocate** for the arts, much sought after for his speeches on the arts, music, music education and general education. An important community leader, he has created and organized frequent and annual collaborations with numerous choruses, chamber music ensembles, and festivals of the arts. He also wrote, co-directed and is featured in a **PBS presentation** entitled **Count On It!**, which is designed for children grades K-3, and shows the correlation of music to mathematics.

Mr. Byess was chosen by **Walt Disney World Entertainment** to conduct the **2000 NFL E\*TRADE Superbowl Halftime show**. The production had over 400 performers, including the Walt Disney World Millennium Orchestra, and international artists **Phil Collins, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias, Toni Braxton, and Edward James Olmos**, and was broadcast to over 900 million viewers worldwide. Byess is also currently featured in a commercial video taping for the **Starz and Encore** movie channels, airing internationally.

Guest conducting for 2011-2012 included **the Anaheim Symphony Orchestra, the Albany Symphony Orchestra, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the Denver Philharmonic Orchestra, the Lamont Symphony Orchestra, the Alabama All-State Orchestra, a return to China to lead the Guangxi Symphony Orchestra (Nanning, China), a seventh U.S. tour with the Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra from Krakow, Poland, a multi-national performance of Handel's Messiah in Branson, Missouri, and opera productions of Gianni Schicchi and Suor Angelica (Puccini), Carmen (Bizet), Così fan tutte (Mozart), Amahl and the Night Visitors (Menotti), Faschingsfee (Kàlmàn), A Connecticut Yankee (Rodgers), Blossom Time (Romberg), The Mikado (Sullivan), and Utopia Limited (Sullivan).**

Steven is an ardent wine aficionado, a passionate Shakespeare enthusiast, an avid motorcycle rider, and loves skiing.

# Steven Byess-Critical Acclaim

an exceptionally stylish and animated production of a masterpiece... The expert pacing that conductor Steven Byess achieves allows the narrative to unfold with swift, flexible assurance. Mozart's score was treated like a trunkful of jewels at Wednesday's opening performance. Byess' conducting had enormous forward motion, as well as ample room for expressive nuances...the CIM orchestra sounded like an elegant, seasoned Mozart ensemble. Memorable Mozart.

**Donald Rosenberg, The Plain Dealer** (Cleveland, Ohio)

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This new recording from the Ohio Light Opera...is delightful from beginning to end. ...I can recommend this with enthusiasm. ...Steven Byess captures the full spirit and vitality of the score perfectly. ...a truly delightful release.

**Henry Fogel — Fanfare Magazine**

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... Carl Orff created his "medieval romp," a setting of ancient texts and modern orchestration that itself seems occasionally to flirt with chaos. This fate was avoided under the suave direction of Maestro Byess, who flirted provocatively with edginess while providing the kind of incisive, intensely rhythmic conducting and tempos the work demands.

**Bruce Smith, The Daily Journal** (Tupelo, Mississippi)

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Crowning this seamless enterprise was conductor Steven Byess and his orchestra. Byess did more than just sensitively accompany his singers (plenty of room given for individuality of phrasing);... crucial scenes in Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals are underscored in a uniquely expressive way to enhance the emotional pull of a scene, and Byess' handling of such moments was masterful, even brilliantly judged...the score somehow coalesced in such a way that really made me aware of Rodgers' painstaking work in presenting a totality of atmosphere. Thanks to Byess and his astute, intuitive feel for these delicate balances, I was made aware for the first time of the overall impact of this score's apparently organic wholeness. I feel as if I have heard and seen the real CAROUSEL for the first time.

**Niel Rishoi, Classical Singer Magazine**

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Indeed, the finest aspect of this recording is the orchestral playing. Steven Byess conducts a performance that throws its arms around Kálmán's music and exults in the poetic shadows and whimsical moments.

**Donald Rosenberg, Gramophone Magazine**

...this extraordinary performance was lead by Steven Byess, who, as always, draws out a full bodied sound, like a fine wine, from the OLO orchestra.

**Thomas Harper, The Review** (Alliance, Ohio)

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The operetta begins with an extended overture, and Associate Music Director Steven Byess took full advantage of its strengths, urging his orchestra to an expansive, full-bodied performance.

**Charles H. Parsons, American Record Guide**

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Johann Strauss II's bubbling, sensuous operetta Eine Nacht in Venedig has not received much modern attention, so this joyful live recording is a welcome addition on disc. The ensemble work proceeds as smoothly as Swiss clockwork under the dynamic conducting of Steven Byess, creating a performance that is the epitome of froth and frivolity.

**Janet Mullaney, Daedalus Books**

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Byess was especially deft in juggling Creston's complex syncopations, balancing the extended harmonies, and coordinating the polyrhythmic interplay between soloist and orchestra.

**Mark Stryker, The Dayton Daily News**

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Under Byess, the orchestra played with extraordinary clarity and exuberance.

**Burt Saidel, The Oakwood Register**

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The conductor revealed himself to be not merely an effective disciplinarian, but also a talented interpreter, able to capture the sweep of a piece without neglecting detail. He handled the tricky transitions in the Dvorak symphony smoothly, avoiding the sectionalization that afflicts many performances of this popular work.

**Derrick Henry, The Atlanta Journal Constitution**

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Byess kneaded and molded its intricate phrases with zest and spirit. This alternately lyrical and heraldic work, with its ghostly, warbling waltz, achieved a fine singing line under Byess.

**Gary Lemco, The Marietta Daily Journal**

Steven Byess deserves special praise for holding together such a large ensemble. His clean technique and musicality provided outstanding accompaniments and showed the orchestra at its very best.

**Eugenia Toole Glover, The Augusta Chronicle**

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Mr. Byess deserves much praise for taking his time with Scheherazade, letting the emotional diversity and intensity of the piece really come across. He even made the simplicity of the string section's 'plucking' in the second movement seem electric.

**Jason Wells, The Marietta Daily Journal**

# Steven Byess-Stage Repertoire

Repertoire excerpts from previous seasons

## **Simon**

The Secret Garden

## **Mozart**

Le Nozze di Figaro

## **Leoncavallo**

Pagliacci

## **Puccini**

Gianni Schicchi

## **Lehar**

Land of Smiles

## **Friml**

Rose Marie

## **Kálmán**

Countess Maritza

## **Offenbach**

Les Brigands

## **Loewe**

My Fair Lady

## **Sullivan**

The Mikado

Pirates of Penzance

The Grand Duke

## **Puccini**

Madama Butterfly

## **Mozart**

Così fan tutte

## **Schubert**

Das Dreimäderlhaus

**Von Suppé**

Boccaccio

**Kálmán**

Autumn Maneuvers

**Künnecke**

Der Vetter aus Dingsda

**Herbert**

Sweethearts

**Lerner**

Brigadoon

**Sullivan**

H.M.S. Pinafore

Ruddigore

**Sondheim**

Sweeney Todd

**Bernstein**

Candide

**Offenbach**

La Périchole

**Herbert**

The Red Mill

**Strauss**

Der Lustige Krieg

**Sullivan**

The Gondoliers

**Offenbach**

Orpheus In the Underworld

**Kálmán**

Der Zigeunerprimas (Sari)

**Rodgers**

Carousel

**Sullivan**

The Yeomen of the Guard

**Menotti**

Amahl and the Night Visitors

**Strauss**

Der Zigeunerbaron

**Herbert**

Naughty Marietta

**Lecocq**

Le Petit Duc

**Lerner**

Camelot

**Sullivan**

Utopia Limited

The Mikado

**Weill**

The Firebrand of Florence

**Offenbach**

La Vie Parisienne

**Chuéca/Valverde**

La Gran Vía

**Bretón**

La Verbena de la Paloma

**Strauss**

A Night In Venice

**Sullivan**

Cox & Box

The Zoo

**Winter**

The Carp (World Premiere)

**Romberg**

The Student Prince

**Sullivan**

Pirates of Penzance

Princess Ida

**Purcell**

Dido and Aeneas

**Lully**

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme

# Steven Byess- Symphonic Repertoire

Repertoire excerpts from previous seasons

## **BARBER**

Violin Concerto

## **FAURE**

Requiem

## **WEILL**

A Little Threepenny Music

## **STRAVINSKY**

L'Histoire du Soldat (with actors)

## **STRAUSS**

Ceremonial Music for Organ & Orchestra

## **HANDEL**

Organ Concerto #13

## **GUILMONT**

Concerto #1 for Organ & Orchestra

## **MENDELSSOHN**

Symphony No 5 Reformation

## **BEETHOVEN**

Symphony No. 9

*Original excerpts (with filmclips):*

Lawless Breed World Premiere Overture for a New Frontier World Premiere

Wichita Town World Premiere Smoke Signal World Premiere

High Noon A President's Country

Dances with Wolves True Grit

How the West Was Won The Magnificent Seven

## **HAYDN**

Symphony No. 104

## **LISZT**

Totentanz

**TCHAIKOVSKY**

Piano Concerto No. 1

**BEETHOVEN**

Piano Concerto No. 2: III. Rondo. Molto Allegro

**RACHMANINOFF**

Piano Concerto No. 2: I. Allegro

**MAHLER**

Symphony No. 4: IV

**BARTOK**

Concerto for Orchestra

**HAYDN**

Trumpet Concerto

**HOLST**

The Planets

**DEBUSSY**

Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune

**PUCKETT**

A Cry Unheard (World Premiere)

**PROKOFIEV**

Piano Concerto No. 1

**GINASTERA**

Concerto for Harp and Orchestra

**LISZT**

Les Préludes

**HOWARD**

Grand Canyon Fanfare

**COPLAND**

Old American Songs

**HOLRIDGE**

Jefferson Tribute

**BARBER**

Knoxville: Summer of 1915

**GERSHWIN**

An American in Paris

**JAMES LEE**

Papa Lapa (World Premiere)

**GERSHWIN**

An American in Paris

**CORIGLIANO**

Piano Concerto

**ELLINGTON**

Night Creature

*Original excerpts (with filmclips) from:*

Breakfast at Tiffany's Life With Father

Tom Jones Airplane!

High Anxiety The Pink Panther

Young Frankenstein It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World

Addams Family Values Mary Poppins

**DELIUS**

Prelude to Irmelin

**ZANINELLI**

Through Eudora's Eyes

**MOZART**

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor

**RACHMANINOFF**

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

**CORELLI**

Concerto Grosso, Op. 6, No. 8

**MENOTTI**

Amahl and the Night Visitors

**HANDEL**

Coronation Anthem (Zadok The Priest)

**HANDEL**

Coronation Anthem (My Heart is Inditing)

**BRITTEN**

Cantata Misericordium

**DVORAK**

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88

**BEETHOVEN**

Overture to Egmont

**WEBER**

Concertino for Clarinet and Orchestra

**MAHLER**

Symphony No. 4

**FALLA**

Jota from El Sombrero de Tres Picos

**COPLAND**

Piano Concerto

**FITTISOVA**

Crystal Domes (World Premiere)

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV**

Capriccio Espagnol

**LISZT**

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2

**LISZT**

Piano Concerto No. 2

**SHOSTAKOVICH**

Piano Concerto No. 2

**KODALY**

Háry János Suite

**BEETHOVEN**

Ruins of Athens: Turkish March  
Violin Concerto  
Symphony No.6  
Overture to Egmont, Op. 84

**SCHUBERT**

Symphony No. 4 in C Minor, Tragic, D. 417

**KHATCHATURIAN**

Adagio of Phrygia and Spartacus from Spartacus

**KODALY**

Háry János Suite

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS**

The Lark Ascending

**ORFF**

Carmina Burana

**SIBELIUS**

Finlandia

**RAVEL**

Piano Concerto in G

**DAUGHERTY**

Desi

**ARGENTO**

Tango

**DVORAK**

Symphony No. 8 in G Major

*Original excerpts (with filmclips) from:*  
Star Wars Classic Love Themes (Franz Waxman)  
Schindler's List Peyton Place  
Love Story Young Man  
Somewhere In Time Elephant Walk  
Breakfast at Tiffany's Lost Command

**BERNSTEIN**

Candide Overture

**BEETHOVEN**

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor

**RACHMANINOFF**

Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor

**MOZART**

Concerto for Flute and Orchestra in G Major, K. 313

**AMLIN**

Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra (World Premiere)

**ROBERT DICK**

Concerto for Flute/Bass Flute, Strings, and Percussion

**REINECKE**

Concerto in D for Flute and Orchestra

**PUCCINI**

Madama Butterfly (Sung in Italian)

Selections included: the Flower Duet, Un bel di, and the Humming Chorus

**JOHANN STRAUSS**

Die Fledermaus (Sung in English)

Selections included: Adele's Laughing Song, Brüderlein, and Orlofsky's Aria

**VIVALDI**

Piccolo Concerto

**J. S. BACH**

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2

**MENDELSSOHN**

Concert Piece in F Minor

**MUSSORGSKY**

Pictures at an Exhibition

**BANTOCK**

The Pierrot of the Minute

**MENDELSSOHN**

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor

**STRAVINSKY**

Suite from The Firebird

*Original excerpts (with filmclips) from:*

Dr. Zhivago Mission Impossible

Taras Bulba Gone With the Wind

A Place in the Sun The Bride of Frankenstein

Captain from Castile Raiders of the Lost Ark

Schindler's List Ben Hur

Making Contact

**COPLAND**

Rodeo

**ROSAURO**

Concerto for Marimba — Despedida (Farewell)

**REVUELTAS**

Sensemaya

**GUÀRNIERI**

Dansa Brasileira

**DONIZETTI**

Chacun le sait from La fille du régiment

**TCHAIKOVSKY**

Capriccio Italien

**ROSSINI**

Overture to William Tell

**JENKINS**

Diamond Music from Palladio

**GINASTERA**

Variaciones Concertantes

**GLUCK**

Dance of the Blessed Spirits

**RESPIGHI**

The Pines of Rome

**DUKAS**

Fanfare to La Peri

**RAVEL**

Le Tombeau de Couperin

**CHABRIER**

Bourée Fantasque

**DEBUSSY**

Dances Sacred and Profane for Harp and Strings

**SAINT SAËNS**

Carnival of the Animals

*Opera Highlights (Soloists, Chorus, and Orchestra) — Selections from:*

**WAGNER** Die Walküre

**VERDI** Il trovatore

**BIZET** Carmen

**PURCELL** Dido and Aeneas

**STRAUSS** Der Rosenkavalier

**WAGNER** Tannhäuser

**VERDI** Aida

**GERSHWIN** Porgy and Bess

**BIZET**

L'Arlesienne Suites 1&2 (Selections)

**RAVEL**

Concerto in G for Piano and Orchestra

**BEETHOVEN**

Symphony No. 7