

## **George Matthew, Bio**

Singaporean-born Indian conductor, George Mathew, founder and Artistic Director of MUSIC FOR LIFE INTERNATIONAL and UBUNTU-SHRUTI, has emerged as one of the leading forces in the classical music world bringing symphonic music to focus on global humanitarian issues and crises at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In 2010-11 he makes appearances in the US, India, Panama, Morocco and South Africa as conductor and ambassador for transformative action through music.

Mr. Mathew returned to Carnegie Hall in January 2011, as Artistic Director and Conductor of BEETHOVEN FOR THE INDUS VALLEY, a benefit concert of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, focusing on renewal and sustainable development for the millions of people affected by the devastating 2010 monsoon floods in Pakistan.

His previous appearance at Carnegie Hall was in January 2009, as Artistic Director and Conductor of MAHLER FOR THE CHILDREN OF AIDS, a humanitarian concert of Gustav Mahler's Third Symphony to raise public consciousness and funds for global Pediatric AIDS and the Prevention of Mother-to-Child-Transmission of HIV. He also appeared at Carnegie in January 2007, to conduct the REQUIEM FOR DARFUR, a benefit performance of the Verdi *Requiem* he organized together with UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Mia Farrow, to aid and highlight the plight of the survivors and refugees of the ongoing conflicts in Darfur and Chad. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in January 2006 as Artistic Director and Conductor of BEETHOVEN'S NINTH FOR SOUTH ASIA (BNSA), a benefit concert, to raise funds and public awareness for survivors of the devastating earthquake of 2005. The concert brought together global leaders from the musical, philanthropic, business, academic, governmental and diplomatic communities and raised over US\$164,000 in a single evening for relief programs managed by Doctors Without Borders/*Médecins sans Frontières*. Since then concert partners have included UNICEF, Refugees International, Catholic Medical Mission Board, American Jewish World Service and National Council of Churches in the USA. Future plans include concerts focusing on Global Climate Change, Pediatric AIDS and the Vertical Transmission of HIV, Parkinson's Disease, Violence against Women, and Slavery/Human Trafficking.

These concerts, which have cumulatively raised more than US\$620,000, brought together distinguished musicians from major international orchestras and other ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, MET Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, St. Louis Symphony, San Francisco Symphony and other orchestras as well as artists from the Emerson, Mendelssohn, American, Guarneri String Quartets, the Metropolitan Opera and many others.

George Mathew and these humanitarian concerts were profiled in the global media, including BBC WORLD TV and Radio, CNN International, THE WORLD on Public Radio International, the New York Times, New York magazine, Radio France, Voice of America, NY1 television, National Public Radio's *Weekend Edition* and *Morning*

*Edition*, the Indian Express, the Pakistan Daily Times, DNA India, Musical America and Symphony magazine. He also appears as narrator and conductor in the forthcoming documentary film on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, *FOLLOWING THE NINTH*.

In December 2010, Mr. Mathew launched UBUNTU-SHRUTI, a new professional training orchestra of young empowered musicians and distinguished mentors creating inspired music and programming dedicated to immigrants, community, and education through music. The Orchestra will be modeled after the Berlin Philharmonic Academy and be mentored by distinguished musicians from the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, MET Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic.

In 2010, Mr. Mathew was named Artistic Director and Conductor of the New Year's Eve Concert for Peace at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. This historic concert, held annually in the largest Cathedral in North America, was founded in 1985 by Leonard Bernstein. His first Concert for Peace there, held on December 31, 2010, was titled "MASS IN TIME OF A DRONE WAR" and featured Josef Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* as well as Jewish, Christian and Muslim music. The concert marked the first public appearance of the new orchestra UBUNTU-SHRUTI, an initiative of MUSIC FOR LIFE INTERNATIONAL. The second New Year's Eve Concert on December 31, 2011 will feature Michael Tippett's "*A CHILD OF OUR TIME*" with the Dessoff Choirs and UBUNTU-SHRUTI.

In March 2010, George Mathew spoke at the United Nations Development Program's 'Capacity IS Development' Global Event in Marrakech, Morocco, presenting the orchestral paradigm as a new leadership model for developing institutions and capacity in the twenty-first century. In December 2010, he was a featured speaker at the INK conference held in association with TED, in Lavasa, India. In October 2011 Mr. Mathew will be the 2011 Distinguished S.T. Lee Lecturer on Social Justice and Public Policy at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

He made his Central American debut in June 2010 at the Music Festival of Panama in Panama City and was immediately re-engaged for return appearances in 2012. In May 2011, he made his African debut with the Johannesburg Philharmonic. In 2012, he will lead the world premiere of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Bollywood legend Javed Akhtar's Hindustani language translation.

Mr. Mathew made his conducting debut at the United Nations in October 2007. He made his Brooklyn Philharmonic conducting debut in June 2007 at the South Street Seaport, New York and served as assistant conductor with the Brooklyn Philharmonic for two seasons. He served on the conducting staff at the Manhattan School of Music 2003-06 and has held previous teaching positions in music theory, music appreciation, and musicianship at Amherst College, the University of Minnesota, and Tufts University, where he served as Director of Orchestral Studies. His recent conducting activities have taken him to several orchestras and opera

companies in the US, India and Europe including the Spokane Symphony Orchestra in Washington State, the Manchester Symphony Orchestra in Connecticut, the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra in New York, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Pescara in Italy, and the Silesian State Opera in Czech Republic. He has also conducted orchestras and other ensembles at Manhattan School of Music, Columbia University, Amherst College, Tufts University, Duke University, Mt. Holyoke College, The University of Minnesota, Susquehanna University and William Paterson University.

George Mathew graduated in 2003 from Manhattan School of Music with the Postgraduate Diploma after studies under Zdenek Macal and George Manahan. His mentors have included Sir Colin Davis, Sergiu Comissiona, Wilson Singh, Gunther Schuller, Michael Gilbert, Lorenzo Muti and Kenneth Kiesler. His conducting studies include masterclasses with Leonard Bernstein, Sir Colin Davis, Kurt Masur, Zdenek Macal, David Zinman, Sergiu Comissiona, and George Manahan. He is also a *magna cum laude* graduate of Amherst College and an alumnus of Duke University and the University of Minnesota.

Mathew lives in Harlem, New York with his wife, Bowie Snodgrass, who is Executive Director of the interfaith organization, FAITH HOUSE MANHATTAN, and son, Akbar Jacob Mathew. He divides his time between New York and India.