

The son of German Jewish refugees, **David Stahl** was born in New York City, and made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of 23 with the Youth Symphony Orchestra of New York. He then was invited by Seiji Ozawa to become one of the select conducting fellows at Tanglewood where he first worked with the man who would become his mentor and colleague, Leonard Bernstein. The next year, Mr. Bernstein invited the 26-year-old Mr. Stahl to be Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic and a few years later asked him to take over the music directorship of West Side Story on Broadway and for its European tour.

A unique figure in the cultural history of Charleston, David Stahl has been Music Director and Conductor of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra since 1984. During this time, he has established himself as one of the most influential and charismatic artistic personalities in the South and is equally at home on both symphony and opera podiums around the world. He is among a select few who hold a Music Directorship of both a symphony orchestra and an opera house on both sides of the Atlantic. Since coming to Charleston, Mr. Stahl has literally transformed the Charleston Symphony into a leading cultural institution in the region and has received a national award for imaginative programming from the American Symphony Orchestra League. Many of the legendary artists of our time have performed with David Stahl and the Charleston Symphony including Itzhak Perlman, Pinchus Zukerman, Sherrill Milnes, John Browning, Joshua Bell, Gil Shaham, Nadja Salerno Sonenberg, Yefim Bronfman, Jean Yves Thibaudet, Lorin Hollander, Jerry Hadley, Carter Brey, Judy Collins, Chet Atkins and Paula Robison. His many recordings with the Charleston Symphony include collaborations with both Paula Robison and Enrique Graf. For his long-standing commitment to the Charleston community and the State of South Carolina, he has received numerous awards and honors including the Elizabeth Verner Award, the Order of the Palmetto and an Honorary Doctorate from the College of Charleston.

Maestro Stahl is also the Music Director and Chief Conductor of Munich's beloved Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz. He has a repertoire in Munich of more than 30 operas including many seldom heard masterpieces of Mozart, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Rossini, Puccini and Wagner. His performances of Wagner's early opera *Das Liebesverbot* was hailed as one of the finest new productions of a Wagner opera in the past decade in Munich.

In addition, new generations of music lovers first came to hear live symphonic music through the hundreds of Young Peoples' Concerts, Small Fry concerts, outreach programs and in-school performances that Maestro Stahl had initiated. He has toured with the Charleston Symphony all over the U.S., Canada and Israel with *Porgy and Bess*. Two of the unforgettable moments were performing for Prince Charles at the Dock St. Theater and the special Custom House concert performed two weeks after Hurricane Hugo which was telecast live statewide and lifted the community's spirits. As a mentor and pedagogue, Stahl has nurtured and encouraged countless young musicians, and dozens of former Charleston Symphony musicians can be found in America's great orchestras.