



**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC ACADEMY  
SWITZERLAND** Seiji Ozawa - Founder and Director

## **Seiji Ozawa**

Founder and director of IMAS – International Music Academy Switzerland

Seiji Ozawa, who was born in China of Japanese parents in 1935, in 1959 won the First Prize in the Besançon Contest. Charles Munch, the musical director of the Boston Symphonic, invited him to the Tanglewood Music Center. He trained with Karajan and Bernstein. Once he had become assistant to the New York Philharmonic 1961/62, his career really took off.



Photography Frédéric Paschoud

He successively became musical director of the Toronto Symphonic (1965/69), and the San Francisco Symphonic (1970/76). In 1973, he was appointed to the head of the Boston Symphonic with which he remained until 2001. Since 2002, he has been musical director of the Vienna Staatsoper.

Despite his international commitment he is closely connected to his mother country Japan and he creates the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra with whom he performs regularly.

In 1984, he founded the International Saito Kinen Orchestra which each Summer assembles in Japan the principal Japanese instrumentalists belonging to Western orchestras. In 1992, the Saito Festival was held for the first time around this orchestra in the town of Matsumoto in the Japanese mountains.

Seiji Ozawa also acts as musical mentor to the Mito Chamber Orchestra which was founded in Mito (Japan) in 1990. He conducts the ensemble with the 34 brilliant musicians twice a year.

In 2005 on the shores of the Lake Geneva he established a Music Academy in Switzerland (IMAS) for young musicians in order to teach them the practice of chamber music and to exercise them in orchestral performance.

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