

## CITATION

### **Award of Doctor of Music *honoris causa***

#### **Maestro Johannes Fritzsch**

Chancellor

Maestro Johannes Fritzsch is the acclaimed Conductor Laureate of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra who has lifted the orchestra to new heights and built a durable legacy that includes loyal audiences, a pipeline of vigorous talent, and rising international respect for the orchestra and its artists.

When he came to Queensland in 2008 Maestro opened a new chapter in a passion-fuelled career which had begun at the knee of his father, a church organist and chorus master in the East of a then-divided Germany.

Schooled by his father in organ and piano, he also learned violin and trumpet, then majored in conducting and piano at the University of Music Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden.

On the unforgettable night 25 years ago when the Berlin Wall began to fall, Maestro was conducting in the Dresden opera house.

Once Germany was reunified, he found a vast new audience that was receptive to a conductor with his exceptional training and passion. He travelled widely, explored opportunities beyond Eastern Europe, and at the age of 33 became Chief Conductor of the Städtische Bühnen and Philharmonic Orchestra in Freiburg.

Before his appointment as Chief Conductor in Queensland, Maestro recorded Richard Strauss tone poems with the orchestra, which was then known as *The Queensland Orchestra*. After appointment he became the front man not only for the company's artistic enterprise, but also for its brand transition to the *Queensland Symphony Orchestra*, or QSO.

He has appointed 25 new musicians, built rapport with audiences throughout Queensland, reassured devotees of the classics that their state orchestra is technically proficient and committed to consistent high standards, and secured new fans through a variety of popular features.

His links with great companies such as the Staatsoper Dresden, Opera Bastille Paris, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Royal Opera Stockholm, Opera Australia and numerous orchestras in Europe, Asia and Australia, have helped cultivate esteem for the QSO.

For most of his QSO tenure, Maestro also worked as Chief Conductor of the Graz Philharmonic Orchestra and the Graz Opera in Austria. He ended these roles in early 2013 to give more focus to his Australian-based family and the career of his wife, violinist and academic Dr Susan Collins.

Maestro has a long-standing dedication to education and training, and for more than a decade has taught and mentored through the Young Conductor Development

Program of Symphony International (formerly Symphony Australia). He also mentored young musicians and singers at The University of Queensland, where his insights into operatic repertoire have been highly valuable for students in the vocal program.

While he recently conducted his final concert as QSO Chief Conductor, he has been named a QSO Conductor Laureate, and will continue to uplift Queensland audiences and musicians.

Chancellor, I present to you Maestro Johannes Fritsch, Master of Music of the University of Music Carl Maria von Weber, and Conductor Laureate of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, for the award of Doctor of Music *honoris causa*, bestowed by the Senate of The University of Queensland.