

ROBERT CASTEELS (Chair of Panel 4. "Recording" Heritage)
Independent Conductor, Researcher, and Composer, Singapore



Dr Robert Casteels is a Belgian born Singaporean composer, conductor, educator and researcher. He has conducted more than 50 professional orchestras in 20 countries in a repertoire of 600 works ranging from the early classics to contemporary music, from symphonic to vocal and dance repertoire. Casteels studied composition with Fernand Quinet in Brussels and Peter Maxwell Davies in Dartington, England. He graduated from the French and Flemish Royal Conservatories in Brussels in piano and orchestral conducting, as well as from the Eötvös Institute in Hungary, the Guildhall School of Music in London and the Juilliard School in New York. His conducting mentors included Bernstein, Boulez, Eötvös and Mehta.

In 2001, Casteels became the youngest recipient and the second musician ever to receive the prestigious Christoffel Plantin Prize, the Flemish Government's highest award for cultural achievements, in recognition of his contribution to cross-cultural research. Casteels has written a growing corpus of more than 100 musical works that cross cultures, genres and disciplines. These range from miniature to large-scale works in the European tradition, as well as multidisciplinary works which combine European, Chinese and Indian instruments, as well as the gamelan, together with computer-generated sound and images.

Casteels is one of those composers whose music makes an immediate impact on the audience. The idea of following tradition, rules and stylistic imperatives is completely foreign to a body of music, which really mixes it up. His compositions have been premiered in Australia, Belgium, China, England, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand and The Netherlands. Nine audio and two video compact disks entirely devoted to Casteels' works have been published thus far. The year of 2014 marked his debut in Japan where he conducted *Semisopchnoi* his concerto for electric guitar, *Cityscape* for guitar orchestra and electro-acoustic sounds, as well as the premiere of his symphonic poem *Kaze Ni Noru* with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, as part of the 32nd Asian Composers League.