

Swiss conductor Monica Buckland has been based on Tyneside since 2016, after 25 years in Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Germany.

She originally trained as an opera conductor but has gone on to enjoy a wide-ranging career, from guest concerts with orchestras such as the Tonhalle Zurich, through conducting ballet at the Semperoper Dresden, to conducting the backing orchestra for a rock group. She has worked with both professional and amateur orchestras and choirs, and has recorded for CD and radio.

Monica Buckland has won several awards, including a scholarship to the Musik-Akademie Basel, a prize at the Leeds Conductors' Competition (England), and the conducting prize of the Schweizerischer Tonkünstlerverein / Kiefer-Hablitzel Stiftung.

From 2004 to 2006, Monica Buckland was Principal of the Conservatoire Supérieur et Académie de Musique Tibor Varga in Sion, Valais, becoming the first woman to head a conservatoire in Switzerland.

From 2008 to 2014, Monica Buckland was Artistic Director of orchestras at the TU Dresden. She also lectured at the TU Dresden, and at the Palucca Hochschule für Tanz, where she still teaches. In the UK, she is actively involved in higher education, as an Associate of Newnham College, Cambridge, and as teacher or conducting at Durham University.

In addition to working regularly with the New Tyneside Orchestra, projects for 2018 have included masterclasses at the National University of Singapore, and concerts with the Çukurova State Symphony Orchestra (Turkey), and Orchestra North East.

Two strands have always been a particular focus: music composed by women, and music by Swiss composers: her three commercially available CDs are of contemporary Swiss music.