

## Spanish conductor Juanjo Mena returns to perform with the New York Philharmonic following a successful debut last season



**27, 28, 29 & 30 January 2016**

David Geffen Hall, New York

**New York Philharmonic Orchestra**  
**Juanjo Mena** *conductor*

**Beethoven** *Violin Concerto* (soloist James Ehnes)

**Bruckner** *Symphony No. 6*

***"The sheer energy generated by this exciting conductor [...] was one of the most exhilarating orchestral experiences in my recall."***  
**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

Following a successful debut last year with the New York Philharmonic resulting in a standing ovation, BBC Philharmonic Chief Conductor **Juanjo Mena** makes an immediate return for a series of four concerts in the New Year, 27 to 30 January. Of his debut, the **New York Times** commented that Mena led the orchestra ***"with brisk efficiency and lightness of texture"*** and that ***"the orchestra obliged with bright playing and energy"***. Following many notable appearances with all the leading American orchestras in recent years, the Spanish conductor received an instant re-invitation for the current season after just one rehearsal with the New York Philharmonic. Critically acclaimed for his Bruckner, Mena has chosen a programme of the composer's Sixth Symphony coupled with Beethoven's Violin Concerto to be performed by James Ehnes, who, prior to New York, performs with Mena and the BBC Philharmonic in Manchester on 4 December. In popular demand from Toronto to Dresden and Copenhagen during the 2015/16 season, Mena's other notable appearance is a much-anticipated debut with the **Berlin Philharmonic**.

Juanjo Mena has been Chief Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic since September 2011, and has undertaken numerous recordings and international tours with the orchestra. Mena's performances of the

German Romantic repertoire, in particular Beethoven and Bruckner, have drawn widespread praise. **The Telegraph** said of a 2011 performance of the Sixth Symphony with his orchestra : **"Rarely have I heard a Bruckner Sixth that displayed such masterful long-term vision, and never, I think, one that made the work seem so important."** Tim Smith at the Baltimore Sun said of Mena's performance of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony last September: **"Mena's incisive phrase-sculpting and attention to the smallest of details yielded one of the most consistently absorbing accounts of this symphony I've heard in a concert hall in years."**

In January 2011, Classical Source heralded **"the BBC Phil and Juanjo Mena, a partnership to watch"** in a review of their Gabriel Pierné disc. Further recordings received nominations for BBC Music Magazine and Gramophone Magazine awards. Mena's original three-year contract was extended in 2014 for a further two seasons. Last season, he conducted his first opera with the BBC Philharmonic, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, with **"power and subtlety"** (Tim Ashley, The Guardian). With a love of large scale choral works with which he commenced his career as a conductor, Mena will be joined by his brother countertenor Carlos Mena, in Manchester for Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* on 16 April.



With the BBC Philharmonic partnership, Mena has become a regular annual fixture at the **BBC Proms**, with their most recent performance of Messiaen's *Turangalîla-Symphony* drawing praise from the **Financial Times**: **"Mena palpably relished every moment of the Turangalîla's surging, life-affirming hymn to humanity."** An earlier performance of Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat* with the Antonio Márquez Dance Company, became a Prom first. This unique production drew accolades from across the UK press, with **The Arts Desk** saying **"It is utterly sensational"**.

The 2015/16 season reflects Mena's breadth of interests as a conductor. With the BBC Philharmonic, he celebrates both the best of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>-century British music and the life of perhaps America's greatest musical son, Leonard Bernstein, who died 25 years ago in October 1990. For his Berlin Philharmonic debut in May, Mena will conduct a Spanish-themed programme including Debussy's *Iberia*, Falla's *The Three Cornered Hat* and Alberto Ginastera's *Harp Concerto* to be performed by the orchestra's harpist Marie-Pierre Langlamet to mark the composer's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It also coincides with the release a new disc of Ginastera's orchestral works for Chandos Records, recorded with the BBC Philharmonic and due for release in January 2016.

**[www.juanjomena.com](http://www.juanjomena.com)**



**[@maestromena](https://twitter.com/maestromena)**

## Highlights of the 2015/16 Season

### 4 December 2015

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

#### **BBC Philharmonic**

Dvorák *Carnival Overture*

Thomas Adès *America*

Britten *Violin Concerto*

(soloist James Ehnes)

Brahms *Symphony No. 3*

### 14th and 15th January 2016

Koncerthuset, Copenhagen

#### **Danish National Symphony Orchestra**

Strauss *Don Quixote*

(soloist Asier Polo)

Strauss *Ein Heldenleben*

### 27, 28, 29 & 30 January 2016

David Geffen Hall, New York

#### **New York Philharmonic Orchestra**

Beethoven *Violin Concerto* (soloist James Ehnes)

Bruckner *Symphony No. 6*

### 5, 6, 7 February 2016

Auditorio Nacional, Madrid

#### **Spanish National Orchestra**

Chopin *Piano Concerto No 2*

(soloist Christian Zacharias)

Bruckner *Symphony No. 6*

### 5 March 2016

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

#### **BBC Philharmonic**

William Schuman *American Festival Overture*

Barber *Piano Concerto*

(soloist Garrick Ohlsson)

Copland *Quiet City*

Mussorgsky arr. Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*

### 16 April 2016

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

#### **BBC Philharmonic**

Bernstein *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*

Ginastera *Harp Concerto*

(soloist Marie-Pierre Langlamet)

Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms*

Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*

(soloist Carlos Mena)

### 28 & 29 April 2016

Schauspielhaus, Dresden

#### **Dresden Philharmonic**

Prokofiev *Symphony No. 1*

Kabalevsky *Cello Concerto No. 1*

(soloist Jan Vogler)

Bruckner *Symphony No. 6*

### 12 May 2016

Oslo Concert Hall, Oslo

#### **Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra**

Mozart *Vorrei spiegarvi, oh dio*

Mozart *ach, ich fühl's* from *The Magic Flute*

Mozart *Al destin, che la minaccia* from *Mitridate*

(soloist Mari Eriksmoen)

Brahms *Symphony No. 3*

### 26 & 27 May 2016

Philharmonie, Berlin

#### **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**

Debussy *Iberia*

Ginastera *Harp Concerto*

(soloist Marie-Pierre Langlamet)

Falla *The Three-Cornered Hat*

(soloist Raquel Lojendio)

### 1 & 2 June

Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto

#### **Toronto Symphony Orchestra**

Granada *Goyescas, Intermezzo*

Nielsen *Violin Concerto*

(soloist Pekka Kuusisto)

Ravel *Daphnis et Chloe*

## Juanjo Mena



Juanjo Mena has been Chief Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic for the past four seasons, with highlights including concerts both at home in Manchester and at the BBC Proms, performances of Mahler and Bruckner symphonies, a Schubert cycle, several acclaimed recordings and four worldwide tours.

As one of Spain's most highly regarded conductors, he has been Artistic Director of the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra, Chief Guest Conductor of the Orchestra del Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa and Principal Guest Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has worked with many prestigious orchestras such as the Oslo Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, Milan, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Turin, Münchner Rundfunk Orchester, Dresden Philharmonic, Göteborg Symphoniker, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony Orchestra and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra.

Since his American debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 2004 he has conducted most of the leading orchestras in the United States, including Chicago, Boston, Houston, Cincinnati and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras, New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestras, the Cleveland Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

His operatic work includes *The Flying Dutchman*, *Salome*, *Elektra*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* and productions including *Eugene Onegin* in Genoa, *The Marriage of Figaro* in Lausanne and *Billy Budd* in Bilbao.

His future highlights include his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, as well as return visits to the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, the Oslo and Dresden Philharmonic Orchestras and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra.

He has made several recordings with the BBC Philharmonic, including a disc of works by Manuel de Falla, which was a *BBC Music Magazine* Recording of the Month, a Gabriel Pierné release which was a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice, and works by Montsalvatge, Weber and Turina which have gained excellent reviews from the specialist music press. He has also recorded a collection of Basque symphonic music with the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra, and a critically acclaimed rendering of Messiaen's *Turangalila Symphony* with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

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