



## RAFAEL PAYARE Conductor

*“electrifying in front of an orchestra.”* LA Times

*“combines a rare gift of auditory perfection with a profound, delicate, intense, quivering sensitivity.”* France’s Le Monde

The 21-22 season will mark Rafael Payare’s third season as Music Director of San Diego Symphony and already their relationship has been recognised as one of the most dynamic in North America.

Rafael was previously Principal Conductor and Music Director of the Ulster Orchestra from 2014 – 2019 with whom he appeared twice at the BBC Proms in 2016 and 2019. He now holds the title of Conductor Laureate in recognition of the vast artistic contribution he gave to the Orchestra and City of Belfast during his three year tenure.

In January 2021, Payare was announced as the next Music Director of Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal from the 22-23 season.

His profound musicianship, technical brilliance and charismatic presence on the podium has elevated him as one of the most sought-after conductors. During the 14-15 season Payare made his acclaimed debut with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducting concerts at the Vienna Musikverein and Théâtre des Champs Elysées in Paris and also saw his London debut with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre and debuts with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival.

During the 2015-16 season he made his first appearance with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra at the Cologne Philharmonie and returned to London to make his debut at the Southbank Centre with the Philharmonia Orchestra with whom he has continued a close association. Other notable debuts that season included the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and the Sinfonieorchester de Bayerischen Rundfunk in Munich and at the Bad Kissingen Festival.

During the 2018-19 season, he returned to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra to make his debut at the Wiener Konzerthaus and on a Baltic tour with mezzo soprano, Elina Garanca. Other leading ensembles Payare has enjoyed working with include Staatskapelle Dresden, Pittsburgh Symphony, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchester, Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and the Cleveland Orchestra. Soloists with whom he has enjoyed collaborations include Daniil Trifonov, Frank Peter Zimmerman, Gil Shaham, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Nikolai Lugansky, Christiane Karg, Alisa Weilerstein, Nikolaj Znaider, Piotr Anderszewski, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Sergey Khachatryan, Emmanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, and Dorothea Röschmann.

Payare kicks off the 21-22 season with his San Diego Symphony, to inaugurate the Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, their stunning new open-air venue. He then looks forward to giving his first concerts as Music Director Designate of Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal, opening their season with concerts at La Maison Symphonique as well as Montreal’s Olympic Stadium. Further highlights in the 21-22 season include debuts with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Houston Symphony as well as his subscription debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

As an opera conductor, he made his acclaimed debut at Glyndebourne Festival in 2019 conducting *Barbiere* and has conducted *Madame Butterfly* and *La Boheme* for Royal Swedish Opera and a new production of *La Traviata* at Malmo Opera. During the 21-22 season, Payare will make his debut at the Danish Opera conducting *Tosca*. In July 2012, he was personally invited by his mentor, the



late Lorin Maazel, to conduct at his Castleton Festival in Virginia and in July 2015 he was appointed Principal Conductor and conducted performances of Gounod 'Romeo and Juliette' and a performance of Beethoven Symphony No 9 in memory of Lorin Maazel.

An inspiration to young musicians, Payare has forged a close relationship with the Royal College of Music in London where he visits every season to lead their Symphony Orchestra and has led projects with the Chicago Civic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Americas and the Filarmonica Joven de Colombia.

Born in 1980 and a graduate of the celebrated El Sistema in Venezuela, Payare began his formal conducting studies in 2004 with José Antonio Abreu. He has conducted all the major orchestras including the Simón Bolívar Orchestra. Having also served as Principal Horn of the Simon Bolivar Orchestra, he took part in many prestigious tours and recordings with conductors including Giuseppe Sinopoli, Claudio Abbado, Sir Simon Rattle and Lorin Maazel.

In May 2012, Payare was awarded first prize at the Malko International Conducting Competition.

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For the most up-to-date biography, please contact us. This biography should not be edited without permission from Askonas Holt.

For further information on this artist, please contact:

TERRY SHEW, Associate Director

[Terry.shew@askonasholt.com](mailto:Terry.shew@askonasholt.com) | +44 (0)20 7400 1738

TANJA SCHNITZER, Assistant Artist Manager

[Tanja.schnitzer@askonasholt.com](mailto:Tanja.schnitzer@askonasholt.com) | +44 (0)20 7400 1766