



JAMES GAFFIGAN

FULL BIOGRAPHY

Recognized worldwide for his natural ease and extraordinary collaborative spirit, American conductor James Gaffigan has attracted international attention for his equitable prowess as both a conductor of symphony orchestras and opera. The mutual trust he builds with artists empowers them to cultivate the highest art possible.

Gaffigan is uniquely poised with Music Directorships at two international opera houses. He is the newly appointed General Music Director of Komische Oper Berlin, a post that commences in the 2023/2024 season, and is in his second season as Music Director of the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, where his production of *Wozzeck* was widely acclaimed. He serves as Principal Guest Conductor of both the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, where he is in his ninth and final season, and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra & Opera. He additionally serves as Music Director of the Verbier Festival Junior Orchestra, where he champions the education of promising young musicians. In June 2021, Gaffigan finished his tenure as Chief Conductor of the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester, a position he held for 10 years where he raised the orchestra's international profile with highly successful recordings and tours abroad.

Gaffigan is in high demand working with leading orchestras and opera companies throughout North America and Europe. In the 2022/23 season, he leads productions of *La Bohème* and *Tristan und Isolde* at Valencia's Les Arts, *La Bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera, and *Tristan und Isolde* at Santa Fe Opera. Symphonically, he returns to the National Symphony Orchestra on two programs, first leading Bernstein's *MASS* in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Kennedy Center and on subscription later in the season; directs the Orchestre de Paris in the French premiere of Wynton Marsalis's Concerto in D with Nicola Benedetti; returns to the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl; makes his debut with the Orchestra of Teatro di San Carlo; reunites with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester in his first appearance following his tenure as Chief Conductor; and leads programs in his titled roles at the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, where he conducts a special concert with soprano star Lise Davidsen culminating his tenure as Principal Guest Conductor.

As Designated General Music Director of the Komische Oper Berlin, in the 2022/23 season Gaffigan will lead two special concerts: a New Year's program featuring HK Gruber's *Frankenstein!!* and the world premiere of a new work by Sven Daigger, a piece that will be a product used for outreach in Berlin schools, showcasing Gaffigan and the Komische Opera's united commitment to building and investing in young audiences and presenting unflinchingly relevant and inclusive programming.

Recent orchestral appearances include Staatskapelle Berlin, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Munich Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich. In North America, Gaffigan regularly works with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Toronto Symphony Orchestra among others.

A regular at the Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Opéra National de Paris, Gaffigan has also conducted the Zürich Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Staatsoper Hamburg, Dutch National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Santa Fe Opera.

James Gaffigan was First Prize winner of the 2004 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition, which opened Europe's doors to this young American. In 2009, he completed a three-year tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, a position created for him by Michael Tilson Thomas. Prior to that, he was Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, where he worked with Music Director Franz Welser-Möst. Gaffigan is an alumni of the Aspen Music Festival's Aspen Conducting Academy and the Tanglewood Music Center.

Passionate about music education and a product of the New York City public school system, James Gaffigan grew up in New York City and studied at the LaGuardia High School of Music and Art before pursuing his conducting studies. He believes that access to music education is the method by which America's concert halls will finally begin to reflect our community and shrink the racial and gender gaps that currently exist in performing arts today.

For more information on James Gaffigan:

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Contact:

Charlotte Lee

President & Founder

212 804 8301

charlotte@primoartists.com

www.primoartists.com