



## DAVID AFKHAM

### Conductor

Known for his impeccable technique and compelling artistry, David Afkham has received worldwide acclaim and is one of the most sought-after conductors of his generation. Afkham is the Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España, a position he has held since September 2019. Prior to this role, Afkham enjoyed a highly successful tenure as the orchestra's Principal Conductor since 2014.

Afkham's impressive career has been marked by a series of critically acclaimed performances and collaborations with some of the world's leading orchestras. He has appeared with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Munich Philharmonic, hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt, SWR Symphonieorchester, Vienna Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, as well as with the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra among others. On tour, he has appeared with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Staatskapelle Dresden, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

With regular appearances in North America, Afkham has previously led the Boston Symphony in Tanglewood, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, and Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra in New York.

Recent successes at the opera pit, include performances of Richard Strauss's *Arabella* at the Semperoper Dresden and a new production of the work at the Teatro Real, Madrid. Afkham has also conducted productions of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hänsel & Gretel* at the Frankfurt Opera, Richard Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* at the Staatsoper Stuttgart and Alberto Ginastera's *Bommarzo* at Madrid's Teatro Real. He also conducted Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, later reviving the production for performances in the UK and Ireland for Glyndebourne on Tour. Furthermore, he conducted semi-staged projects with the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España, including Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Tristan und Isolde*, Strauss' *Elektra* and *Salome* and Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*.

Highlights of the 2023/24 season include debuts with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Detroit Symphony, as well as a return to the Minnesota Orchestra, among others. Afkham's symphonic projects with the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España this season will encompass a diverse repertoire, including works such as Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Bruckner's Symphony No. 8, Rachmaninoff's choral symphony *The Bells*, Schmitt's Symphony No. 4, and Zemlinsky's Lyric Symphony.

Born in Freiburg, Germany, Afkham began piano and violin lessons at an early age. He went on to study piano, music theory and conducting at the Freiburg Music University, before continuing his studies at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt in Weimar. Afkham was the first recipient of the Bernard Haitink Fund for Young Talent and has assisted Maestro Haitink on several major projects, including complete symphonic cycles with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Concertgebouw Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra. From 2009-2012 he was Assistant Conductor of the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester.

Afkham won first prize at the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition in London in 2008 and was the inaugural recipient of the Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award in 2010.