

ERNEST MARTÍNEZ IZQUIERDO

Born in Barcelona, Ernest Martínez Izquierdo is currently Honorary Conductor of the Navarre Symphony Orchestra of Pamplona and the Principal Guest Conductor of the ensemble Barcelona 216. He is also Professor at ESMUC (Catalonia High School of Music) in Barcelona.

Following his studies in Barcelona and Paris, he began his conducting career by founding the ensemble “Barcelona 216”, specializing in contemporary music, with which he has performed at the most prestigious international festivals. He was appointed assistant conductor of the Spanish National Orchestra, and Pierre Boulez invited him to be his assistant at the Ensemble Intercontemporain (Paris). From 1997 to 2013, he served as chief conductor of the Navarre Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, from 2002 to 2006, he was chief conductor of the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, and he continued to serve as principal guest conductor until 2009.

In addition to his roles as chief conductor, he has conducted the principal Spanish orchestras and ensembles. Internationally, he has worked with orchestras such as the Tokyo Symphony, Kyoto Symphony, Finnish Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic, Trondheim Symphony (Norway), Philharmonique de Radio France, Lyon National, Warsaw Philharmonic, Gulbenkian Orchestra (Lisbon), Sinfónica do Porto, Sinfónica Municipal de São Paulo, Zagreb Philharmonic, Orchestra Comunale di Bologna, Orchestra La Fenice di Venezia, Beethoven Academie of Antwerp, Tonkünstler-Orchester (Vienna), and ensembles such as Ensemble Contemporain of Montreal, Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt, Trondheim Sinfonietta, Klangforum Wien, and Avanti! Chamber Orchestra in Helsinki.

In the operatic realm, his outstanding productions include Kaija Saariaho’s opera *Adriana Mater*, staged by Peter Sellars (with premieres at the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki and at the Santa Fe Opera, USA), Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, staged by Emilio Sagi, Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, staged by La Fura dels Baus, and the production of Kaija Saariaho’s *L’amour de loin* at the Quebec Opera, staged by Robert Lepage, as well as the world premiere of *L’Ombre de Venceslao* by Martin Matalon, staged by Jorge Lavelli in Rennes Opera with further productions in Avignon, Toulouse, and Marseille. He conducted Kaija Saariaho’s opera *Only the Sound Remains* at the Paris National Opera, staged by Peter Sellars, a production he also conducted at Teatro Real in Madrid, as well as at Lincoln Center’s White Light Festival in New York. In 2023, he conducted the world premiere of Raquel García Tomás’s opera *Alexina B*, staged by Marta Pazos, at the Liceu Opera house in Barcelona.

He has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Telarc, Harmonia Mundi, Col Legno, Ircam, Stradivarius, and Naxos.

He has been honored with several prizes, including the Ojo Crítico, a prize awarded by the Classical Division of the Spanish National Radio, the Catalan Roland Journalism Prize for Classical Music, the City of Barcelona Prize, the Diapason d’Or, and the Latin Grammy. Since 2006, he has been a member of the Reial Acadèmia Catalana de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi. In 2018, the State of Finland decorated him with the Knight of the Order of the White Rose of Finland.