Pablo Varela

CONDUCTOR

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Biography

Pablo Varela

Born in Tijuana, Mexico, in 1973, Pablo Varela is an Italian-based conductor whose work encompasses opera, symphonic repertoire and music education. He has developed an international career with engagements across Europe and the Americas.

He graduated in Orchestral Conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan and studied composition with Franco Donatoni at the Accademia Lorenzo Perosi in Biella and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, where he was awarded a Diploma of Merit in Composition.

His early professional experience included assisting Mark Wigglesworth in Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He subsequently worked alongside Guido Maria Guida on the production of Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelungen at the Mexico National Opera.

His operatic repertoire includes *Don Pasquale, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Il viaggio a Reims, La bohème, Mese mariano, Cavalleria rusticana, Don Giovanni and L'elisir d'amore.* He also conducted the world premiere of *La muerte pies ligeros* by Mexican composer Víctor Rasgado with the Guanajuato Symphony Orchestra.

Varela has conducted orchestras and ensembles in Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Romania, Venezuela and Mexico, appearing at numerous international festivals. His extensive work with the Chorus of the Mexico

National Opera has encompassed a wide-ranging repertoire, including operatic productions such as Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*; major choral and orchestral works such as Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* and Ninth Symphony, Verdi's *Requiem* and *Quattro pezzi sacri,* Stravinsky's *Les Noces* and Rachmaninoff's *The Bells*; as well as works by Wagner and Verdi, including *Der fliegende Holländer, Otello, Macbeth* and *Stiffelio*.

In 2003, Varela founded the International Philharmonia of the Californias, serving as its Artistic and Music Director until 2005. Since 2019, he has maintained a regular artistic collaboration with I Solisti Lucani, performing alongside distinguished soloists and leading instrumentalists from major Italian orchestras. He also collaborates with I Solisti Fiorentini, an ensemble based in Florence.

Alongside his conducting career, Varela is Professor of Orchestral Conducting at the Luigi Boccherini Conservatory in Lucca and Artistic Director of Lucania Musicale, based in Matera, Italy. His educational activities reflect a longstanding commitment to nurturing young musical talent and preparing the next generation of orchestral musicians.

Last update: *October 2026.*

Cultural & Educational Commitment

Throughout his career, Pablo Varela has maintained a strong commitment to music education and the development of young musicians. Alongside his conducting activities, he has pursued educational initiatives aimed at broadening access to classical music and strengthening its role in society.
In 2006, at the invitation of Dr. José Antonio Abreu, he undertook a tour of Venezuela, working with the orchestral centres (núcleos) of FESNOJIV, the National Foundation for the System of Youth and Children's Orchestras of Venezuela. In the same year, he began an important artistic and educational collaboration with young Mexican musicians from orchestras affiliated with Mexico's Sistema Nacional de Fomento Musical.

Awards & Recognition

Pablo Varela received the National Fund for Culture and the Arts of Mexico (FONCA) Award twice, in 1999 and 2005, in recognition of his artistic achievements and contribution to cultural life.
In 1999, he was also named Cultural Ambassador of Tijuana to the World, a lifetime distinction conferred by the municipal government of his hometown in recognition of his artistic contributions.

Teaching & Artistic Leadership

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Press & Reviews

"He has the makings of a very fine conductor. He proved most professional under difficult circumstances and demonstrated great passion, intelligence and practicality at all times" [Regarding his work as assistant conductor with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Mahler / Symphony No. 2] - **Mark Wigglesworth**

"**Pablo Varela** proved to be an impressive conductor [About his Don Pasquale with the Tijuana Opera]. The entire opera passed by as light as a breeze. The opera is full of wonderful music and his sensitive interpretation brought beauty to every scene. Most special was the balance in the vocal ensemble in which the singers were carefully balanced as one voice with the orchestra. The Maestro's attention to these moments produced some of the most beautiful music I have ever heard" - **Max Gosezky**

"A conductor of great talent and a bright future. His astonishing talent and musical abilities have allowed him not only to distinguish himself in his field, but also to earn the respect of those who have had the opportunity to work with him. His activity in Italy has been welcomed with great enthusiasm" - **Sandro Gorli**, Composer and Artistic Director of **Divertimento Ensemble**, Milan

"With an emotive concert, Mexican maestro **Pablo Varela** bid farewell to Venezuela after two weeks of intense philharmonic work in the country. The José Félix Ribas Hall of the Teresa Carreño Cultural Complex was the setting for Varela to masterfully conduct the National Philharmonic Orchestra" - **Bolivarian News Agency**

"Our fellow citizen possesses craft and rigorous technique, great confidence in the baton, clear, precise dynamics. Seeing him in the orchestra pit facing the extreme difficulties that such a complex score presents gives us the feeling of being in the presence of a gifted and well-prepared musician" [About his work as an assistant with the Ópera de Bellas Artes, Wagner/Siegfried] - **Manuel Yrizar, Pro-Ópera Magazine**

"There are people who have the ability to create around themselves vibrant atmospheres of positive energy, who gather and lead the spirit, charging it with new forces... **Pablo Varela** possesses these qualities. His musical gesture is explosive.

There is no room for uncertainty in his baton. In him the difference between the interpreter and the executor is marked. And I must repeat that art is not only an object of efficient execution, but of unlimited interpretation. The presence of Pablo Varela will be memorable" [After the concerts with the Yucatan Symphony Orchestra] - **Víctor Salas, Por Esto! Journal**