

**Juan Pablo Contreras** (b. 1987, Guadalajara, Mexico) is a Latin GRAMMY®-nominated composer who combines Western classical and Mexican folk music in a single soundscape. His works have been performed by 40 major orchestras around the world including the National Symphony Orchestra (USA), the Extremadura Orchestra (Spain), the Jalisco Philharmonic (Mexico), the Córdoba Symphony (Argentina), the Medellín Philharmonic (Colombia), and the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. He is the winner of the 2023 Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise in Music and is celebrated as the first Mexican-born composer to sign a record deal with Universal Music, serve as Sound Investment Composer with Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and win the BMI William Schuman Prize.

In the 2022-23 season, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra will premiere his new orchestral work “Lucha Libre!,” a musical battle between good and evil that will feature 6 soloists wearing luchador masks. Contreras will also premiere “MeChicano,” a co-commission by Las Vegas Philharmonic, California Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Tucson Symphony, Fresno Philharmonic, and Richmond Symphony, created in partnership with New Music USA’s Amplifying Voices Program. His orchestral music will be performed by the State of Mexico, Guanajuato, and Minería orchestras in Mexico; the Phoenix Symphony and Berkeley Symphony. Contreras’ new arrangement of “Mariachitlán,” for wind ensemble, will be played by 20 wind bands in the United States.

Contreras has received commissions from Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Jalisco Philharmonic, The Riverside Choir, Carlos Prieto, and the Onix Ensemble. He has won awards including the Presser Music Award, the Jalisco Orchestral Composition Prize, the Brian Israel Prize, the Pi Kappa Lambda Award, the Arturo Márquez Composition Contest, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, the Dutch Harp Composition Contest, the Nicolas Flagello Award, and the Young Artist Fellowship of Mexico’s National Fund for Culture and the Arts. Contreras has also served as Composer-in-Residence with Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the *soundON Festival of Modern Music* in San Diego, the *Cactus Pear Music Festival* in San Antonio, and at the Turtle Bay Music School and *Concerts on the Slope* in New York.

He holds degrees in composition from the University of Southern California (DMA), the Manhattan School of Music (MM), and the California Institute of the Arts (BFA). His most influential teachers include Richard Danielpour, Daniel Catán, Nils Vigeland, Andrew Norman, and Donald Crockett. Contreras’ music has been recorded on Universal Music Mexico, Albany Records, Epsa Music, and Urtext Digital Classics. He lives in Los Angeles, and currently teaches orchestration and music theory at the USC Thornton School of Music.

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