

SONIA BEN SANTAMARIA

BIOGRAPHY

Named Rising Star of Classical Music by the BBC Opera magazine, following her conducting of Verdi's *Un Ballo in maschera* for Opera Holland Park, the French conductor Ben-Santamaria is rapidly establishing herself as one of the UK's most promising opera conductors.

A trailblazer in her field, Sonia Ben-Santamaria made history as the first female conductor appointed as a Link Artist with the Royal Ballet & Opera House, London. She later became the first Associate Conductor of Opera North - a landmark in the evolving representation of women in classical music in the UK and was chosen to be one of the six female conductors worldwide invited to The Dallas Opera House Hart Institut.

Before establishing herself as a conductor, Sonia began her career as a vocal coach and répétiteur working successfully with all the major Opera Houses in the UK, collaborating under the batons of esteemed conductors such as Edward Gardner OBE, Sir Richard Armstrong, Sir Andrew Davis, Lawrence Foster.

Equally at ease in both the symphonic and operatic repertoires, Sonia has a deep-rooted passion for opera, stemming from her first career as a répétiteur and vocal coach. Her clear and refined technique, paired with a keen sensitivity to singers' needs, has made her a sought-after opera conductor, particularly in the field of contemporary opera and world premieres.

2022 marked her conducting debut in France, alongside her appointment as Professor of Orchestral Conducting at the Institut Supérieur des Arts et du Design de Toulouse.

Sonia Ben-Santamaria's guesting conducting highlights include leading, among others: the Dallas Opera Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera North Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestre National de Lille, and Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier.

In 2025/26 the conductor will make her debut with the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne before returning to the Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier and the Grand Théâtre de Genève.

TRAINING

- . Royal Ballet & Opera, Covent Garden, London
- . English National Opera
- . National Opera Studio
- . Royal Academy of Music of London

MENTORS

- . Bernard Haitkin
- . Gabriel Feltz
- . Paul Nadler

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR FOR

- . Sir A. Pappano
Tchaikovsky's Queen of Spade, Bizet's Carmen gala concert (Royal & Ballet Opera House)
- . Gabriel Feltz
Jost's Voyage vers l'Espoir world premiere (Grand Théâtre de Genève)
- . Titus Engel
Parra's Justice world premiere, Zappa's 200 motels (Grand Théâtre de Genève)