

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Gael García Bernal and Gustavo Dudamel

Elisa Leonelli · Wednesday, October 7th, 2015

[Gustavo Dudamel](#), 34, music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic since 2009, has been in the news lately. Last week he penned an op-ed piece for the Los Angeles Times to explain why he does not get involved in politics. A proud Latino, he's reluctant to criticize the socialist government of his native country, Venezuela, because he was able to study music through its equal opportunity education program.



Gael Garcia Bernal conducts the LA Philharmonic (c) Amazon Studios

I am reminded of that summer evening when I met Dudamel, after a concert devoted to Mozart at the Hollywood Bowl July 30). With him was Mexican actor [Gael García Bernal](#), 36, who had just conducted the overture to *Marriage of Figaro*, briefly replacing Dudamel at the podium, for a scene of the second season of the Amazon series *Mozart in the Jungle*. In the TV show, based on the 2005 memoir by Blair Tindall, subtitled *Sex & Drugs and Classical Music*, Bernal plays Rodrigo, the revolutionary new conductor of the fictional New York Symphony, a character modeled after Dudamel.



Gael Garcia Bernal and Gustavo Dudamel (c) Amazon Studios

Standing next to each other during our informal talk, the two men really sound like kindred spirits. Dudamel had admired Bernal's work in *The Motorcycle Diaries*, the 2004 movie by Brazilian director Walter Salles, where he played a young Che Guevara, and he's thankful that the TV show has caught the attention of people that were not used to having classical music around in their lives.

And that includes Bernal.

The actor says that he used to only listen to classical music occasionally, but now he's really into it and follows various artists. He has learned to appreciate the importance of symphonic music as a place of encounter that erases all kinds of prejudices, and he often talks about it with his friends, like Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón. Dudamel says that most of the time he listens to other kinds of music. He likes Latin music, Salsa, Meringue and Mariachi; he loves groups like Pink Floyd and the Rolling Stones and owns a collection of Nat King Cole recordings; he recently worked with Philip Glass. Because "in the end all music is one." When he is on stage conducting, he opens his soul to the audience and gives them what he feels in that moment. He shares his love with the orchestra in front of him in a beautiful interaction. And when he meets another artist, like

Bernal, he's interested in getting to know him as a person.

This week Dudamel is in the midst of conducting at Disney Hall all of Beethoven's 9 symphonies, as performed by both the LA Philharmonic and the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela.

For the second season of *Mozart in the Jungle*, you'll have to wait until 2016. In the meantime, if you missed it earlier this year, you can watch the 10 episodes of the very entertaining first season on Amazon Prime.

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