



Joonas Pitkänen

"He has a natural musical instinct; he is a passionate musician with a lively imagination and an inquisitive mind which radiates through his conducting." (Ari Rasilainen)

Joonas Pitkänen is a charismatic young Finnish conductor recognized for his natural gravitas on the podium and passionate musicianship. Pitkänen has been praised for the clarity and efficiency of his conducting and his ability to shape the sound of the orchestra. His approach is characterised by a sense of depth and quality, and in addition to the Nordic repertoire to which he feels a natural affinity, he is particularly drawn to the work of Mahler and Brahms as well as the work of Bartok and Shostakovich.

Pitkänen was principal conductor of *Monferrato Classic Orchestra* in Italy and is currently principal conductor of *Stadtorchester Zug* in Switzerland.

Pitkänen won 1st prize in *Citta de Brescia - Giancarlo Facchinetti conducting competition* and a distinction in the *11th Grzegorz Fitelberg International Competition for Conductors* in 2023.

The prize includes concerts in Italy, Romania and Czech Republic with orchestras like *Filarmonica Bacau* and *I Solisti Aquilani*.

His upcoming engagements include re-invitations to work with *Basler Festival Orchestra*, *Camerata Zürich* and *St. Michel Strings*, and debuts with *Helsinki Philharmonic*, *Hradec Kralove Philharmonic Orchestra* and *Presidential Symphony Orchestra* in Ankara.

*"Pitkänen exudes natural gravitas, and the economic podium action is pleasing to watch. Without having followed the rehearsals, I dare say that the communication with the eager musicians has been excellent...
...there is a musical grip in everything he does." (Hufvudstadsbladet)*

He has appeared as guest conductor of the *Kammerorchester Basel*, *Turku Philharmonic*, *Slovak Chamber Orchestra* and *Südwestdeutsche Philharmonie Konstanz*, among others. As an opera conductor he has appeared with *Opera Studio Würzburg* and *Opernkollektiv Zürich* where he conducted the *World Premiere Production and Recording* for the label *Naxos* of Joachim Raffs "*Die Eifersüchtigen*". He was handpicked to *LEAD! Foundations Excellence Platform for Young Artists* where he is being closely mentored by *Jukka-Pekka Saraste*. Pitkänen also acts as Artistic Director of Finnish concert series *Feeling blue & white* in Basel, which he co-founded in 2014.

Pitkänen studied conducting in *Musikhochschule Würzburg* with *Ari Rasilainen* and cello in *Hochschule für Musik Basel* with *Thomas Demenga*. He has also participated in masterclasses with *Neeme Järvi*, *Esa-Pekka Salonen*, *Mark Stringer*, *Ulrich Windfuhr*, *Jukka-Pekka Saraste* and *Hannu Lintu*.

"Joonas Pitkänen ... succeeded in the great art of creating a gradual rise without becoming bombastic or heavy and opaque in sound. With light, well balanced orchestral sound and well-felt tempos he made everything that is happening understandable." (Schwäbisches Tagblatt)