

CELEBRATING
ZUBIN
AT

MEHLI MEHTA
MUSIC
FOUNDATION



**Celebrating
ZUBIN
at 90**

The **Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra**
with **Zubin Mehta**
and soloists
Pinchas Zukerman *violin*
Lang Lang *piano*

January 15, 2026 at 6:30 pm with Pinchas Zukerman
January 16, 2026 at 6:30 pm with Lang Lang

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, NCPA



Our mission to offer children quality music education, engage experienced local and foreign teachers, collaborate with international musicians and present exciting concerts - continues to drive us forward.

An extraordinary life has to be celebrated in an extraordinary way! The Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, has completed 30 years of dedication to music, and is extremely privileged to begin Zubin Mehta's 90th birthday global celebrations with two concerts in Mumbai with the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the Maestro. This life-long friendship between Conductor and Orchestra began 68 years ago at the very start of Zubin's astonishing career. It is a relationship marked by warmth, mutual admiration and milestone performances in the Orchestra's history.

Pinchas Zukerman, the brilliant violinist and sensational pianist Lang Lang spontaneously agreed to perform with Zubin on this special occasion, affirming their enduring friendship and innumerable artistic collaborations spanning several decades. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them for honouring Zubin and paying tribute to the deep friendship and musical bonds that exist between them, shaped by generosity, mentorship and the love of music.

It is impossible to document Zubin Mehta's remarkable career on one page, but it is an undeniable fact that he stands as one of the greatest conductors of the 20th and 21st centuries. He has been decorated with the highest honours and doctorates from major countries and universities of the world, conducted thousands of concerts with the finest Orchestras, his operatic productions are legendary, and his recordings with major European and US Orchestras still remain a benchmark of excellence. Beyond the concert hall, he has used music as a bridge across cultures and a balm in times of conflict, and with his deep musical authority and charismatic leadership he has inspired countless musicians and audiences.

As fellow Parsis and Indian citizens, we take immense pride in celebrating Zubin Mehta's 90th birthday with admiration and affection. He has taken the spirit of our community and our country on to the world's greatest stages and we thank him for enriching the lives of those he has touched.

MEHROO JEEJEEBHOY
Founder Trustee



A Circle Completed in Music: A Historic Tribute to Maestro Zubin Mehta

The Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra carries the memory of an unforgettable journey, realized through two historic concerts in Mumbai with Maestro Zubin Mehta, to celebrate his 90th birthday. In more than a century of our history, this experience will remain written in golden letters among the most luminous moments of the Belgrade Philharmonic's artistic journey, as radiant as India itself.

We are deeply thankful for an experience we had never before known. Embraced by our hosts – the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, and Maestro Zubin Mehta, we felt music become a language of belonging, opening our hearts and reminding us what it truly means to be welcomed.

Our friendship with Maestro Mehta has endured since 1958, when the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra became one of the first orchestras to offer him a professional opportunity – an act of faith he has never forgotten, sustained through many shared performances over the decades, and one that has now brought us to India. In this deeply emotional moment, celebrating Maestro Mehta's 90th birthday, it felt like an honor of the rarest kind – to stand on stage alongside extraordinary artists Lang Lang and Pinchas Zukerman, and to celebrate the greatness of a Maestro who has shaped generations, inspired countless musicians, and whose presence continues to radiate warmth, wisdom, and love for music.

Beyond the concerts, Maestro Mehta opened the doors of his cultural world to us, allowing us to experience the richness of his Parsi heritage not as observers, but as welcomed guests, embraced with warmth, trust, and generosity.

We will never forget how the audience, completely new to us in this part of the world, welcomed us with such openness and sincerity. We felt their admiration – touching, immediate and sincere! It became unmistakably clear how deeply loved Maestro Mehta is in his homeland, far beyond the concert hall.

All of this was made possible through our beloved Maestro Mehta – our spiritual father, whose love, generosity, and unwavering trust remain our constant inspiration and support. It is his love for music, and for all of us who share it with him, that continues to warm our hearts and unite us in a harmony that feels complete, elevated, and eternal.

JELENA MILAŠINOVIĆ
PR Manager

Zubin Mehta and the Belgrade Philharmonic – 68 Years of Friendship

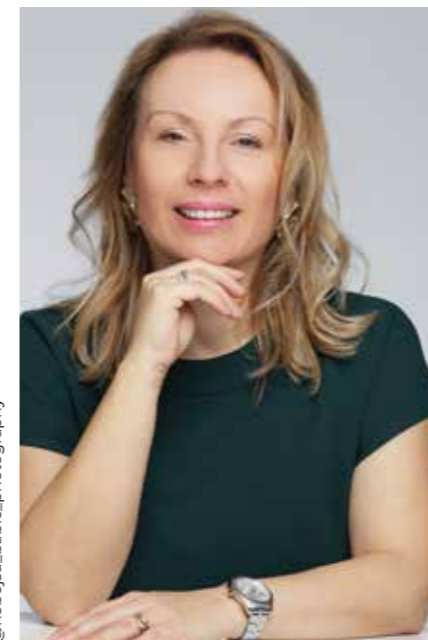
It was one snowy winter morning in 1958, when Zubin Mehta, a young Indian conductor and winner of the Liverpool competition, arrived at the Belgrade railway station, set to lead the Belgrade Philharmonic for the very first time. Serbia welcomed him wholeheartedly, and that warmth has embraced him at every one of the many concerts he has performed with us ever since. Hence, the answer to the frequently asked question – Why does the world's most famous conductor return to an orchestra from a small country in the Balkans? – perhaps reveals most clearly who Zubin Mehta truly is. His relationship with our orchestra has flourished and endured for almost seven decades, guided unmistakably by the saying Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds (Humata, Hukhta, Huvareshta).



Asja Radonjić

A gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return.

– Bhagavad Gita, 17:20



@nebojsa_babic_photography

Danica Maksimović

Just as Tagore wrote that friendship shines better when everything has darkened, Zubin Mehta remained a loyal and true ally in the moments when we needed him the most. Beyond the many concerts he conducted with us, he vigorously supported the acquisition of new instruments, the promotion of our U.S. tour, the Balkan tour centenary celebration of the orchestra back in 2023, and, above all, advocated for the importance of building a new concert hall for the Belgrade Philharmonic.

The invitation from Zubin Mehta and the MMMF to open the grand celebratory season marking the Maestro's 90th birthday is therefore a profound honor. It also marks a historic moment for the Belgrade Philharmonic representing our first-ever performance in beautiful India, the cherished homeland of our beloved Maestro.

We wish Maestro Mehta a very happy birthday, and many more concerts yet to come.

ASJA RADONJIĆ AND DANICA MAKSIMOVIĆ
Artistic Planning and Program Managers
Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra

JANUARY 13
2026

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
with
ZUBIN MEHTA
in rehearsal



JANUARY 14
2026

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
rehearses with
ZUBIN MEHTA
PINCHAS ZUKERMAN
and the
MMMf STRING ENSEMBLE





JANUARY 14
2026

A TRADITIONAL PARSI DINNER





JANUARY 15
2026

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
rehearses with
ZUBIN MEHTA
and
LANG LANG





JANUARY 15
2026

CONCERT

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

with

ZUBIN MEHTA

PINCHAS ZUKERMAN

and the

MMMf STRING ENSEMBLE

Programme

6 Romanian Dances for String Orchestra
String Ensemble of the MMMf
& the BPO strings

B. Bartók
(1881 - 1945)
(arranged by A. Willner)

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major K 219
Allegro aperto
Adagio
Rondeau: Tempo di Menueto

W. A. Mozart
(1756 - 1791)

INTERVAL

**Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major,
Op. 55 "Eroica"**
Allegro con brio
Marcia Funebre: Adagio assai
Presto – Assai meno presto
Allegro con brio

L. van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)





JANUARY 15
2026

CELEBRATORY DINNER
at the
TAJ MAHAL PALACE HOTEL



As I've said for many, many years to many, many people: this guy was born to be on that podium. There will never be another one like him. Never.

“I’ve been practicing for 67 years for this moment. You can laugh if you want, but it’s not that funny. Laughter is good. Music is good. And friendship is even more important.”

It’s hard for me to describe my relationship with Zubin. I can quote you so many words, adjectives, about this extraordinary human being whom I met back in 1969. I was bewildered by his ability on the stage. And it hasn’t diminished. In fact, I think it has only gotten better. It’s so phenomenal. As I’ve said for many, many years to many, many people: this guy was born to be on that podium. There will never be another one like him. Never.

He has given us so much, from his heart, from his knowledge, from his kindness, from his whole love as a human being. He’s given us something I will cherish for the rest of my life. I will never, ever know anything like it.

When he phoned me and said, “Could you come and play? Because our dear friend, dear Barenboim, can’t”, I said, “hold on a minute, I gotta look in my book.” And I did, and I said, “I’ll be there!” He said, “Oh God, wonderful!” I could hear his smile over the phone. I told him I would go to the ends of the world to play with him, to be with him.

He comes from a very extraordinary family, which I was so privileged to know. His dad, an extraordinary musician, had a heart of gold. His mama, every time I came to Los Angeles, she would phone me and say, “I’ve made some curry for you. Come and eat.” So, I’d go and eat. It was like being home with my own mama, you know? It was phenomenal. I fell in love with the family – with Zarin, his brother, his children, his grandchildren. They are my family. We don’t see each other that much anymore, because today’s travel is really impossible. However, when we are together, it’s like we never left each other.

I can’t say enough about how I feel when I’m on stage with him. It is beyond music. It’s beyond friendship. His soul is right in front of me.

I said to him yesterday, “I hope you make it to a hundred,” because the world needs this guy now more than ever before. We have such problems today, but music, the way he makes music, can resolve and solve quite a few differences between people.

I’ll finish by saying this: he has been so extraordinary, mainly where I was born, in Israel. He gave his heart, his life, his time. We spent some time in different wars together. There’s never been anyone like him who has given so much to the country of my birth.

Zubin, thank you! ”

PINCHAS ZUKERMAN



“ Dear Maestro, happy birthday and my dear Nancy, as well. I’m so happy to be here.

I still remember my first audition for you, when I was a teenager, at Lincoln Center. I still remember you encouraged me to play better already in that first audition. And now, after 25 years, i’m really privileged to come for your 90th birthday.

When you called me that night, I was over the moon. I was so excited to play for you. And I just want to say thank you so much for always caring about me so much from the very beginning of my career. I really feel that you are one of my greatest mentors. Every time playing with you, it’s like a new universe experience. Your heart, your soul, are always so inspiring, and I always play better. I still remember the last concert that we did in Salzburg—the Beethoven Third. That was probably the best one I ever played.

Thank you for giving me this great love and inspiration. And I hope to play for you on your 100th birthday.

Love you so much.”

LANG LANG





The BPO presented Zubin Mehta with his favourite hot sauce from Serbia – ajvar – and gave an impromptu performance of Serbian folk music.



JANUARY 16
2026

CONCERT

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
with
ZUBIN MEHTA
and
LANG LANG

Programme

Le Nozze di Figaro, Overture K 492

W. A. Mozart
(1756 - 1791)

*Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major,
Op. 73 "Emperor"*

L. van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

Allegro

Adagio un poco mosso

Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92

L. van Beethoven

Poco sostenuto – vivace

Allegretto

Presto – Assai meno presto

Allegro con brio











Photographs courtesy: Noshir Gobhai, Sooni Taraporevala, Kurush Umrigar, Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, Design: Rishita Chandra

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**MEHLI MEHTA
MUSIC
FOUNDATION**

B/2, Banoo Mansions, Cumbala Hill Road, Mumbai 400 026.
T: +91 22 35403076 www.mmmfindia.org