

ANGEL GIL-ORDÓÑEZ, conductor

Selected Press & Other Quotes

[Re Dvorak's "American Suite"] "Exuberant, unfettered, almost cinematic in its rich colors and heady sweep of ideas, the work seemed to explode with vitality and a sense of freedom and infinite possibility. Much of that was due to superb playing by the ensemble itself — led with fluidity and precision by music director Angel Gil-Ordóñez."

Stephen Brookes, *The Washington Post*, 3/3/13

"Angel Gil-Ordóñez' insight into Shostakovich's music is astounding. He discovers in Rudolf Barshai's string orchestra arrangement of the Eighth Quartet a profound spirituality and greatly enriches our appreciation of Shostakovich's stature as a great twentieth century composer."

Solomon Volkov, author, *Testimony*

"...under the nuanced and utterly fluid direction of Angel Gil-Ordóñez, the work [Chamber Symphony for Strings in C Minor, Op. 110a, transcription by Rudolf Barshai of Shostakovich's autobiographical eighth quartet] lost none of its roiling, acrid bite nor its unearthly luminosity. The wild-eyed allegretto was as menacing as ever, the three largo movements even more sweeping and ethereal than in the quartet version.... The quartet may be a whirlwind, but in these hands, the chamber version became a tornado."

Stephen Brookes, *The Washington Post*

"Charismatic P-CE Music Director Angel Gil Ordóñez led a taut, unforgettable reading."

Brett Campbell, *MusicalAmerica.com*

"Conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez drew lovely, chamberlike sonorities from the Ensemble orchestra, both here and in the "Pastorale" movement from the oratorio "Christus," where some ravishing wind playing brought to mind Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*."

Joe Banno, *The Washington Post*

"...it was also utterly charming, so lovingly cast and accompanied with such ardor by Angel Gil-Ordóñez and the Post-Classical Ensemble that it would have taken a curmudgeon to resist its appeal"

Anne Midgette –*The Washington Post*

"Under the skillful Spanish conductor Angel Gil-Ordoñez, the Post-Classical Ensemble performed Revueltas's score in live accompaniment to this hour-long 1936 film about village fishermen struggling against the power of a monopoly. The orchestra gave a wonderfully lucid account of the score. The phrasing, dynamics and general sound were alive to the evolving sense of desperation, anger and empowerment expressed in the film. Gil-Ordoñez kept everything moving apace and always synced with the images on-screen."

Daniel Ginsberg, *The Washington Post*

“These historic, engrossing and artistically rich films (“The Plow That Broke the Plains” and “The River”), directed by Pare Lorentz with original scores by Virgil Thomson, can be seen in a new DVD release from Naxos...Naxos recruited the conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez to record the scores freshly with the Post-Classical Ensemble. The performances are lively and stylish.”

Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*

“The Post-Classical Ensemble synced precisely with the film [[Aaron Copland](#), “The City] (a challenge Gil-Ordóñez likened to “conducting an opera where the singers are robots”) and vividly rendered Copland’s striking music: a pastoral evocation of a [New England](#) village, rich with lambent wind chords; little melodic stabs matching frenetic cuts in a famous lunchroom montage; and a breezy ditty called “Sunday Traffic,” mocking the ancestors of our random Beltway backups.”

Andrew Lindemann Malone, *The Washington Post*

“The surprise of the evening was conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez, who enticed considerable flair from the orchestra and molded it with sensitivity and elan. He should be engaged for one of the big shows of Opera Colorado.”

Glenn Giffin, *The Denver Post*

“(Weill’s Threepenny Music) performance under the conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez had verve.”

George Loomis, *Financial Times*

“The conductor Angel Gil-Ordoñez is pioneering one of the most remarkable experiments in the musical scene in the United States.”

Eusebio Val, *La Vanguardia (Spain)*

“But much of the evening’s pleasure came from the Post-Classical Ensemble and its expressively kinetic conductor, Angel Gil-Ordóñez, who turned in lively, detailed and almost mischievous playing, making this work seem as fresh as it must have more than a century ago - back in the first heady years of freedom.”

Stephen Brookes, *The Washington Times*

“...one couldn’t do better than Wednesday’s evening program offered by the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Madrid-born Angel Gil-Ordóñez. The concert captured brilliantly the delightful torments, ineffable longing, tenderness and muscularity of the flamenco spirit (in Falla’s “Amor Brujo”). The PSO sounded balanced and articulate, Gil-Ordóñez leading the players through the sweep, grandeur and frenzy of the work with an unflappable demeanor.”

Peter Lefevre, *The Orange County Register*

"The Post-Classical Ensemble, . . . presented a mini (Lou) Harrison festival . . . Charismatic P-CE Music Director Angel GilOrdonez led a taut, unforgettable reading. . . the engaging performance, expertly shaped by Gil Ordonez, made a strong case for "Strict Songs" to be in the pantheon of American vocal music."

Brett Campbell, *MusicalAmerica.com*

"The continuing struggle to reinvigorate the classical-music scene has led to some interesting and rewarding new vehicles for the art form. In the Washington area, the Post-Classical Ensemble has been livening things up with an embrace of a broad cultural spectrum, including film, dance, folk music and poetry. In one program earlier this season, the group celebrated the vibrant music of Mexican composers; another offered traditional Chinese music and a chamber version of Gustav Mahler's Chinese poetry-inspired "Das Lied von der Erde." On Saturday, the group presented its audience with a rare opportunity to see two acclaimed New Deal-era documentaries by Pare Lorentz, performed with live orchestral accompaniment at the American Film Institute's Silver Theatre in Silver Spring. Angel Gil-Ordonez, music director of the Post-Classical Ensemble, led a tightly in-synch performance that unlocked the score's expressive potency."

Tim Smith, *The Baltimore Sun*

"The ensemble, directed by Angel Gil-Ordoñez with a precise sense of idiom and style, used the chamber music reduction by Arnold Schoenberg, which requires only 13 players and preserves all the music's subtly varied colors."

Joseph McLellan, *The Washington Post*

"(Angel Gil-Ordonez and Joseph Horowitz) launched an unusual D.C.-based group called the Post-Classical Ensemble as a sort of working laboratory for new ideas. And they've turned the traditional model on its head. The bold approach is part of a wider movement to shake the classical world out of its torpor and to drag it -- kicking and screaming, if necessary -- into the 21st century."

Stephen Brookes, *The Washington Post*

"Within this year's Peralada Festival (Cataluna, Spain), Leonard Bernstein's Mass was a very interesting program. Angel Gil-Ordóñez's fine conducting integrated the different styles (of the Mass) and brought the Valencia Orchestra and Combo del Taller de Músics de Barcelona to a high quality musical level."

Albert Vilardell, *El Mundo (Spain)*

"The Post-Classical Ensemble may be the most thought-provoking music group in town. It's certainly one of the most innovative, using its concerts as laboratories for musical thought experiments. Their performances can be demanding -- but they're invariably beautiful, and never dull. That was the case Friday night at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, when the ensemble focused on the "The Farewell" -- the final movement of Mahler's song-symphony "Song of the Earth...Barely pausing for breath, conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez led the ensemble into the Mahler -- and it was a revelatory performance."

Stephen Brookes, *The Washington Post*

"An obscure and fascinating chapter of African-American history came vibrantly to life Saturday night, *Free to Sing: The Story of the First African-American Opera Company*...The orchestra of the Post-Classical Ensemble played with an admirable sheen. Conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez brought to the score delightful rhythmic flexibility and lyrical nuance."

Tim Smith, *Baltimore Sun*

"Music Director Angel Gil-Ordóñez and the Post-Classical Ensemble presented (Mexican composer Mario Lavista) *Reflections of the Night*...The sheer otherworldliness of the sounds dominated first impressions, but upon closer acquaintance, the piece's glissandi, dynamic shifts and flickering melodies conjured a hypnotic musical landscape."

Andrew Lindemann Malone, *The Washington Post*

"Angel Gil-Ordóñez, music director of the Post-Classical Ensemble, led a tightly in-synch performance that unlocked the score's expressive potency. The original, often quite poetic narration of both films [Virgil Thompson scores] was also performed live, delivered by Floyd King, a veteran of the Washington Shakespeare Company. "

Tim Smith, *Baltimore Sun*

"The Post-Classical Ensemble has added a new and engaging dimension to our musical life in the years since it was founded -- all of its programs are of both musical and intellectual interest."

Tim Page, *The Washington Post*

"The ambition to offer the music in connection with other pieces and with the cultural phenomena that explains or resounds in them is central. A few years ago, the Post-Classical Ensemble presented a spectacular *Retablo de Maese Pedro* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music that had the virtue of taking Falla's music from the ghetto that has been so harmful to the folkloric and the Spanish.

In 2006, I had the luck to be involved in an adventure that took me to the Guggenheim Museum in New York where they then celebrated a great exposition of Spanish paintings from El Greco to Picasso. The public not only left enthusiastic, it left *informed* - their stereotypes about Spanish music and culture having been shaken up.

Now, Gil-Ordóñez, "double agent" between Spain and America, brings from there the images and music of *The City*, all of this a discovery: in 1939, still under the effects of the depression of the United States, is a documentary about the disasters of uncontrolled, built up urban areas and an exercise in imagination between rationalists and utopians- very rooted in the urbanistic debates of that time. The dream of that what we called Garden Cities, communities of limited size with comfortable living spaces and luminous and large green spaces, that would extend in rings of forests around traditional cities, and that favored a new form of life- healthier and more just.

The music of Copeland, in correspondence jumps from the agitation of the city that is much idyllic pastoral of the future city. Just like a movie osculates between a syncopated fast editing and long slow playing times. Image and music adjust themselves with a mastery that never allows us to fixate on one and forget the other. The difficulties of synchronizing the score with the film were almost diabolical above all in those scenes of the city in which Copeland, a Jew from Brooklyn, forgets the noble intentions of urban utopia and celebrate the chaotic world he knows. The vitality of those monstrous, and at the same time, captivating spaces that were the great cities for the modern artist of those times. We say goodbye because Gil-Ordóñez is leaving very quickly - indefatigable in his activism, leaving us Copeland and taking the best Spanish music to America- always the least expected music."

Antonio Munoz Molina, *SCHERZO Magazine*

"[The Post-Classical Ensemble] - A welcome, edgy addition to the musical life of Washington."

Daniel Ginsberg, *The Washington Post*

"On Sunday night at the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, Angel Gil-Ordóñez and the Post-Classical Ensemble put musical aspects of modern Spain on beautiful display...Harolyn Blackwell and the Post-Classical players swirled effortlessly from wistful emotion to an insistent, percussion-dominated sound."

Mark J. Estren, *The Washington Post*

"(The City) this Great Depression-era product has now re-emerged on DVD by Naxos, with Post-Classical's freshly recorded soundtrack, just as the country is in the grip of the Great Recession and the air is full of talk about government projects, large-scale and green. Seems like great timing to me. Movie and history buffs will want to check out The City, which looks and sounds great on the DVD That score, here conducted by the ensemble's music director, Angel Gil-Ordóñez, with his usual care and expressiveness, comes through as vibrantly as the camerawork."

Tim Smith, *The Baltimore Sun*

"The crisp new recording sounds great".

Anne Midgette -*The Washington Post* on "The City"

"The concert was an outstanding success--a wonderfully conceived program with outstanding execution. The response of our players was uniformly positive. They really enjoyed working with Angel. Again congratulations!"

Michael Geller, Executive Director, American Composers Orchestra

"On behalf of everyone at the Brooklyn Philharmonic, I want to thank you for your extraordinary performance on Saturday evening. The concert, from start to finish, was absolutely stunning, and as I spoke with some of our constituents at the evening's close, many of them were just floored by the creativity and artistry of the performances. The Brooklyn

Philharmonic takes pride in its consistent programming of innovative and inventive work. We hope to have the opportunity to work with you again in the near future.”

Catherine Cahill, Chief Executive Officer, *Brooklyn Philharmonic*

“Angel is the perfect collaborator for hauling classical music into the twenty-first century. He profoundly understands the challenges facing arts organizations and musicians. He welcomes change and creatively pursues it. He is the rare conductor whose artistic vision is bigger than his own (healthy) ego. And Angel is at the same time pragmatic. He is a keen and trustworthy facilitator. He gets things done.

What is finally most remarkable about Angel is that everybody likes him. I have never met anyone with a comparable gift for getting along with people in a multitude of situations. Not the least beneficiaries of his personal equanimity are the professional musicians he organizes, inspires, and conducts. In Washington, the musicians with whom he works are not his harshest critics but his biggest fans. They eagerly seek to take part in his concerts. They vow that this will be a fresh experience, and that, however unconventional the repertoire or formal, they can depend upon him to be prepared, efficient, and persuasive.

To hear Angel in Manuel de Falla’s *El amor brujo* — our signature piece—is the surest evidence of his artistic stature. I have presented this music twice under other batons. I have heard it many times on records. No one else does it as eloquently. A couple of seasons ago Angel led a Spanish program with the Pacific Symphony — California’s third largest orchestra, composed of top-flight Hollywood studio musicians. Their general manager, an old-timer with a connoisseur’s ear and record collection, called Angel ‘one in a million’ comparable to the legendary Ataúlfo Argenta.”

Joseph Horowitz, Artistic Director, *Post-Classical Ensemble*

“I would like to underscore the contribution made to this dialogue by the Post-Classical Ensemble and you personally, and for your contribution to the fruitful cultural relations between our two countries.”

Juan J. Bremer, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States

“It is with pleasure and without reservation that I offer my considered view that maestro Angel Gil-Ordóñez is an extraordinary interpreter of the Spanish classical literature today. I have had the opportunity to attend his concerts of this repertoire and the experience is scintillating!

The deep insight he brings to this repertoire releases its unique flavor evocative of the amazing performances of the great mid-twentieth century Spanish conductor Ataúlfo Argenta. Indeed, in the last fifty-plus years I have not heard anyone approach this repertoire (on recordings or in concert) in a manner comparable to Argenta until Gil-Ordóñez. He draws from this literature a sense of the Spanish soul in a way otherwise not heard in today’s concert halls. Maestro Gil-Ordóñez is a recognized accomplished conductor of extraordinary talent and skill in most any classical repertoire but in my view his unique understanding of the great Spanish repertoire sets him apart.

With performances under the direction Angel Gil-Ordóñez the depth of this repertoire may once again be discovered and receive the attention it deserves in serious classical concert programs.”

James T. Medvitz, General Manager (retired), *Pacific Symphony Orchestra*

“...IberArtists presented a series of concerts, discussions and exhibitions devoted to 20th-century Spanish music and architecture. Among the most inviting programs was a concert on Wednesday evening by the Perspectives Ensemble, with Ángel Gil-Ordóñez conducting. “

Allan Kozinn, *The New York Times*

