



10 things cool things about Julian Pellicano

1. **What's the most unusual place you've ever conducted a performance?**

It's hard to narrow it down to just one since I've conducted in lots of interesting places, but to name a few, with the Winnipeg Symphony we performed to a totally packed, standing room only, house next to the giant steel tanks at Winnipeg's Little Brown Jug Brewery, I led a performance with musicians placed on the diving platforms of an olympic swimming pool and I directed the first sub-zero performance of John Luther Adams' percussion ensemble Inuksuit on the frozen Red River in -38c temperatures. Also memorable were concerts in the courtyard of a 17th century palace in Ovideo, Spain and an orchestra rehearsal inside of a former dockside warehouse in Porto Alegre, Brazil that involved a grand piano once owned by the legendary Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos.

2. **If you hadn't pursued a career in music, what do you think you'd be doing now?**

I've wanted to be a performing musician since I was about 10 years old and I've never wanted to do anything else, but beyond performing I've always been in love with instruments themselves. So if I weren't playing or conducting instruments, I'd probably be building them. I am a percussionist and timpanist, and so I'd likely be hammering out timpani bowls somewhere, forging triangles or restoring vintage xylophones.

3. **If you could have dinner with any historical figure, living or dead, who would it be and why?**

In 1607 in Mantua, Italy Claudio Monteverdi wrote the opera *L'Orfeo*, which is the first opera ever written that we still perform today. I've always felt that almost all of our symphonic music can be traced back and related to what was happening in opera, which for centuries also included dance music and theatrical underscoring. I'd love to have dinner with Monteverdi and talk to him about the early opera movement, get a sense of what musicians were thinking at the beginning, and if we can do it in Mantua, I know the meal will be a good one!

4. **Who would play you in a biopic about your life?**

Wow! This one could be filed under "Questions I have never thought about." Instead of coming up with my own answer I asked some of my oldest friends, and apparently if we could go back in time, Ralph Macchio from the early 80's would have to play the young me, and then fast forward in time and they need to get Stanley Tucci on board. I did like the Karate Kid back in the day, and Big Night is a great movie so I guess I approve.

5. **Who is your favourite Canadian artist, outside of classical music?**

I once saw a Swedish documentary that came to the conclusion that Canadians are the funniest people on the planet, and when you look at Canada's contribution to the world of comedy I think they're probably right. Laughter is underrated and comedy is definitely an art as far as I'm concerned. I grew up on a steady diet of Canadian comedians like John Candy, Mike Meyers, Rick Moranis, Phil Hartman, Jim Carrey and many others, but of them all I'd say my favourite is Martin Short who is just an absolute genius, able to blend intelligent ideas with a vaudeville sense of slap-stick silliness and perfect timing.

6. **What's the best piece of advice you've ever received, and who gave it to you?**

I'm lucky that I was blessed with parents who were very supportive when I wanted to go to music school. I remember as a young person feeling like most adults around me thought a career in music was too risky or unrealistic, but my parents told me not to listen to any of that and advised me to work hard and do everything I could to succeed at what I love, because life is too short not to do so. I wouldn't be where I am without their guidance and encouragement.

7. **What's a hobby or pastime you enjoy that might surprise people?**

I'm not sure if it's surprising but I love fishing. I obsessively fish the surf, inlets and back bays of Long Island's south shore when I take a holiday to visit my family in New York, and was introduced to fresh water fishing in the pristine waters of Western Ontario about 3 hours east of Winnipeg. Even though I've caught a lot of fish, my greatest accomplishment is choosing the spot where my friend landed his first Musky, a 50 inch 28 pound fish, on the Winnipeg River north of Minaki, ON.

8. **If you could instantly master any skill outside of conducting, what would it be?**

Ever since leaving New York at 18 years old, I've been trying to make great pizza, mostly out of necessity since I could never find the same quality that I was used to. I grew up going to an excellent pizzeria called Umberto's of New Hyde Park. If I could instantly know how to make a pizza as good as Umberto, that would be great. The man is truly an artist.

9. **What sport, and what team, do you cheer for?**

For me it's New York Islanders hockey first, but after 11 years in Manitoba if the Jets are playing anyone other than the Islanders I'll definitely cheer for them.

10. **What's your guilty pleasure?**

I know what you mean, but I don't feel guilty about the fact that if there is a Law and Order marathon on TV, it will be difficult to peel me away from it, especially if it's the old Law and Order with Detective Briscoe and D.A. McCoy.

