

Tania León - Short biography (312 words)

Cuban-born American composer, conductor, and educator **Tania León** is one of the most acclaimed and influential musicians of her generation. She was the first Latin American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2021. In 2022, she was awarded a Kennedy Center Honor for lifetime artistic achievements. In 2023, she received the Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music Composition from Northwestern University and became the first woman to be honored with the highest composition prize conferred by Spain, the XIX Premio SGAE for Iberian American Music Tomás Luis de Victoria. In 2024, she earned the Distinguished Artist Award from the International Society for the Performing Arts. And in 2025, she was the recipient of the Recording Academy's Special Merit Award, the Trustees Award. She was also recognized by Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of their 2025 Class of Great Immigrants, Great Americans. In addition, Columbia University selected her as the 2025 recipient of the prestigious William Schuman Award.

As a composer, León has been commissioned by leading orchestras around the world, held Carnegie Hall's Richard and Barbara Debs Composer's Chair for its 2023-2024 season, and served as Composer-in-Residence with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for its 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 seasons. As a conductor, she studied under Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa, and has guest-conducted the New York Philharmonic, Gewandhausorchester, Santa Cecilia Orchestra, and many more. As an educator, she has guest-lectured and served as Visiting Professor at Harvard University, Yale University, Chicago University, Musikschule in Hamburg, and others, and has received Honorary Doctorate Degrees from Brooklyn College, Colgate University, Columbia University, The Curtis Institute of Music, Dominican University, The Juilliard School, Oberlin, New Jersey City University, and SUNY Purchase College. León has served as an advisor to the New York Philharmonic and American Composers Orchestra, and in 2010 she founded Composers Now with the mission of empowering living composers.