



# Gustavo Dudamel

## 2022-2023 Bio

Gustavo Dudamel is driven by the belief that music has the power to transform lives, to inspire, and to change the world. Through his dynamic presence on the podium and his tireless advocacy for arts education, Dudamel has introduced classical music to new audiences around the globe and has helped to provide access to the arts for countless people in underserved communities. He currently serves as the Music & Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Music Director of the Opéra National de Paris and Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.

Dudamel's bold programming and expansive vision led *The New York Times* to herald the LA Phil as "the most important orchestra in America – period." In the 2022/23 season, Dudamel and the LA Phil celebrate the 90th birthday of legendary film composer John Williams with a Gala event, while their visionary, multi-year Pan-American Music Initiative continues to celebrate the explosive creativity of the Americas. Further highlights with the LA Phil include a Fall tour with performances at Carnegie Hall, Boston, Mexico City, and Guanajuato, a ten-day exploration of the piano/orchestral works of Rachmaninoff with Yuja Wang, and a concert presentation of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Dudamel and the LA Phil celebrated the Hollywood Bowl's 100th anniversary season in summer 2022, with high-profile performances ranging from Gwen Stefani and Ricky Martin to the Paris Opera Ballet, *West Side Story*, and a semi-staged performance of Act III of Wagner's *Die Walküre*. In Spring 2023, Dudamel makes return appearances to lead programs with the Berliner Philharmoniker and New York Philharmonic.

Following his inaugural season as Music Director of the Paris Opera, the 2022/23 season features Dudamel leading productions of Puccini's *Tosca*, Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, a new production of John Adams' *Nixon in China*, directed by Valentina Carrasco, and Thomas Adès' *Dante* project, choreographed by Wayne McGregor. Dudamel has led over 30 staged, semi-staged, and concert productions across the world's major stages, including five productions with Teatro alla Scala, productions at the Berlin and Vienna State Operas, the Metropolitan Opera in New York and 13 operas in Los Angeles, with repertoire ranging from *Così fan tutte* to *Carmen*, from *Otello* to *Tannhäuser*, from *West Side Story* to contemporary operas by composers like John Adams and Oliver Knussen.

Over the course of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Dudamel has committed even more time and energy to his mission of bringing music to people across the globe, firm in his conviction that the arts play an essential role in creating a more just, peaceful, and integrated society. A landmark event was the highly anticipated launch of *Symphony*, a state-of-the-art immersive VR film experience designed as both a permanent exhibition in Barcelona and a touring exhibition in two mobile pop-up cinemas that will travel to hundreds of towns across Spain and Portugal, allowing tens of thousands of people to have access to the power of symphonic music. The LA Phil also released its groundbreaking Sound/Stage digital media initiative, featuring artists such as Billie Eilish, Father John Misty, Gabriela Ortiz, John Williams and Jessie Montgomery.

Dudamel's advocacy for the power of music to unite, heal, and inspire is global in scope. Inspired by his transformative experience as a youth in Venezuela's immersive musical training program El Sistema, Dudamel, the LA Phil, and its community partners founded YOLA (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles) in 2007, now providing 1,500 young people with free instruments, intensive music instruction, academic support and leadership training. In October 2021, YOLA opened its first permanent, purpose-built facility: The Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center at Inglewood, designed by architect Frank Gehry. Dudamel also created The Dudamel Foundation in 2012, which he co-chairs with his wife, actress and director María Valverde, with the goal "to expand access to music and the arts for young people by providing tools and opportunities to shape their creative futures." In 2017, he formed the "Orchestra of the Future," made up of young people representing five continents and over a dozen countries, around the Nobel Prize Concert in Sweden, where he also delivered a lecture on the unity of the arts and sciences. His 2018 "Americas" tour with the Vienna Philharmonic marked his first Encuentros program in Mexico City, which celebrated the symbolic union of a "United Americas," a bridge he further strengthened with an LA Phil residency there in 2019. In 2021, The Dudamel Foundation presented its first European Encuentros in Spain as a way to explore cultural unity and celebrate harmony, equality, dignity, beauty, and respect through music. In April 2022, Dudamel conducted the LA Phil and a star-studded cast in a new production of Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, produced in collaboration with Los Angeles's Tony Award-winning Deaf West Theatre, Deaf performers of El Sistema Venezuela's Coro de Manos Blancas (White Hands Choir), and The Dudamel Foundation. The Dudamel Foundation also brought its "Encuentros" initiative to the Hollywood Bowl as part of the 100th anniversary season, in a two-week intensive global leadership and orchestral training program for young musicians from around the world, culminating in a concert at the Hollywood Bowl and a tour with the "Orquesta del Encuentros" to the legendary Greek Theatre in Berkeley, California.

One of the few classical musicians to become a bona fide pop culture phenomenon, Dudamel conducted the score to Steven Spielberg's new adaptation of Bernstein's *West Side Story* and starred as the subject of a documentary on his life, *¡Viva Maestro!*, which was released by Participant Media. He voiced the character of Trollzart in the DreamWorks animated feature *Trolls World Tour* and appeared in Amazon Studio's award-winning comedy series *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Sesame Street*, *The Simpsons*, and Disney's *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*, for which he also recorded the score. At John Williams' personal request, he guest conducted the opening and closing credits of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and performed with the LA Phil at the 2019 Academy Awards\*. In summer 2021, Dudamel performed with pop icon Christina Aguilera at the Hollywood Bowl in her first-ever full performance with orchestra and also led the LA Phil alongside international superstar Billie Eilish and FINNEAS as part of the concert film experience *Happier Than Ever: A Love Letter to Los Angeles*, which premiered in September 2021 on Disney+. It was a first for a classical musician when Dudamel, together with members of YOLA, participated in the 2016 Super Bowl halftime show alongside pop stars Coldplay, Beyoncé, and Bruno Mars. In 2019, Dudamel was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, joining Hollywood greats as well as such musical luminaries as Bernstein, Ellington, and Toscanini.

His extensive, multiple-Grammy Award\*-winning discography includes 65 releases, including recent Deutsche Grammophon LA Phil recordings of Mahler's Symphony No. 8, which won the Grammy\* for Best Choral Performance, and the complete Charles Ives symphonies and Andrew Norman's *Sustain*, which both won the Grammy Award\* for Best Orchestral Performance. Sony Classical released audio and video recordings of the *Sommernachtskonzert 2019* with the Vienna Philharmonic, following their 2017 New Year's concert recording, where he was the youngest conductor in history to lead the famous annual performance. He has made several acclaimed recordings with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, including the soundtrack to the feature film *Libertador*—about the life of Simón Bolívar—for which Dudamel composed the score, and digital releases of all nine Beethoven symphonies.

Gustavo Dudamel was born in 1981 in Barquisimeto, Venezuela. His father was a trombonist and his mother a voice teacher, and he grew up listening to music and conducting his toys to old recordings. He began violin lessons as a child but was drawn to conducting from an early age. At the age of 13, as a member of his youth orchestra, he put down his violin and picked up the baton when the conductor was running late. A natural, he began studying conducting with Rodolfo Saglimbeni. In 1996, he was named Music Director of the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, where his talent was spotted by José Antonio Abreu, who would become his mentor. In 1999, at the age of 18, he was appointed Music Director of the Simón Bolívar Youth Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, composed of graduates of the El Sistema

program. Dudamel gained international attention when he won the inaugural Bamberger Symphoniker Gustav Mahler Competition in 2004. Dudamel went on to become the music director of the Gothenburg Symphony (2007–2012), where he now holds the title of Honorary Conductor. Dudamel’s talent was widely recognized, notably by other prominent conductors of the day, but it was the Los Angeles Philharmonic that took the initiative to sign the 27-year-old Dudamel as music director in 2009.

Since then, Dudamel has become one of the most decorated conductors of his generation. Among his many honors, he has received Spain’s 2020 Gold Medal for Merit in Fine Arts, the 2019 Konex Foundation Classical Music Award, Distinguished Artist Award from the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA), the Gish Prize, the Paez Medal of Art, the Pablo Neruda Order of Artistic and Cultural Merit in 2018, the Americas Society Cultural Achievement Award in 2016, the 2014 Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society from the Longy School of Music, and the Medal of the University of Burgos, Spain, in 2021. Leading publications such as *Musical America* and *Gramophone* have named him as their artist of the year. He has received honorary doctorates from the Universidad Centroccidental Lisandro Alvarado in his hometown and also from the University of Gothenburg and the Colburn School. He was inducted into l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres as a Chevalier in Paris in 2009. The Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela was awarded Spain’s prestigious annual Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts in 2008. He was named one of *Time* magazine’s 100 most influential people in 2009. In 2016, Dudamel delivered the keynote speech for recipients of the National Medal of Art and National Humanities Medal.

For more information about Gustavo Dudamel, visit his official website at [gustavodudamel.com](http://gustavodudamel.com) and Dudamel Foundation at [dudamelfoundation.org](http://dudamelfoundation.org)

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