

CARLOS IZCARAY

Conductor / Composer

Music Director, Alabama Symphony Orchestra

Now in his tenth season as the Music Director of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Izcaray has garnered significant acclaim for his innovative leadership and contributions to the organisation. His artistry and depth of expression have been praised by international media, establishing him as one of the leading conductors of his generation. He has performed with a wide array of world-class artists and renowned orchestras, including the St. Louis, Pacific, Fort Worth, North Carolina, and San Antonio symphonies, as well as leading the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Naples Philharmonic, Orchester der Komischen Oper Berlin, Malmö Symfoniorkester, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini, Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá, and many others.

In opera and ballet, Izcaray has earned accolades for his performances at prestigious venues such as the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Utah Opera, Opera Omaha, and the Wexford Festival Opera, where his 2010 production of Mercadante's Virginia won the Best Opera prize at the Irish Theatre Awards. In December 2024, he made his Lincoln Center debut, conducting performances of George Balanchine's 'The Nutcracker' with the New York City Ballet.

His recordings with Orchid Classics, featuring compositions from award-winning composers such as Max Richter and Kris Bowers, have received widespread acclaim and consistently high rankings on Classical Music streaming charts. Notably, Izcaray is the featured conductor in the innovative film 'Philharmonic Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra', available on Apple TV+.

Increasingly active and highly regarded as a composer, Izcaray's recent work 'Exultate' was commissioned by the Orchestre national d'Île-de-France for their 50th Anniversary. The world premiere took place at the Philharmonie de Paris with repeat performances across France, including at the Royal Chapel of the Palace of Versailles and a broadcast on Radio France. Other significant premieres include original works at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in LA, and new concertos for international artists, including cellist Santiago Cañón-Valencia, violinist Tessa Lark, and clarinetist Anthony McGill. Izcaray's 'Requiem' was premiered with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, as well as his First Piano Concerto with Conor Hanick as soloist. Izcaray is set to premiere his First Symphony in May 2026 to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence.

Imaginatively navigating the challenges of the pandemic, he both composed and directed several multimedia works, including 'Geometric Unity' for virtual orchestra, 'Bloom' for percussion ensemble and electronics, and 'Symphony of Colors', a sensory collage uniting the music students from the Alabama School of Fine Arts.

A staunch advocate for nurturing young talent, Izcaray served as Music Director of the LA-based American Youth Symphony between 2016 - 2024. His commitment to education is

demonstrated through tours and workshops with leading music institutions, including Venezuela's renowned El Sistema, Fundación Batuta in Colombia, Neojiba in Brazil, the London Schools Symphony Orchestra, and the Cambridge University Music Society, where he has taught masterclasses in conducting. He has also conducted the World Youth Symphony Orchestra at the Interlochen Center for the Arts on multiple occasions.

Born into an artistic family in Caracas, Izcaray began his musical journey at the age of three in Venezuela's public youth orchestra system. He continued as a boy chorister, violinist, and cellist at the Emil Friedman Conservatory, and trained under his father in conducting from his teenage years. An accomplished instrumentalist, Izcaray has enjoyed a rewarding career as a concert soloist and chamber musician, previously serving as Principal Cello and Artistic President of the Venezuela Symphony Orchestra before focusing primarily on conducting and composing. Honing his skills with Maestro David Zinman, he became a distinguished fellow at the Aspen Conducting Academy. Izcaray is an alumnus of the Interlochen Arts Academy, New World School of the Arts, and Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, and received top prizes at the 2007 Aspen Music Festival and the 2008 Toscanini International Conducting Competition. He resides in Birmingham, AL and holds dual citizenship in Spain and Venezuela. As a passionate and gifted communicator, he is often engaged as lecturer and guest speaker in academia, as well as the non-profit and private sector.

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