

**María Guinand**, choral and orchestral conductor, university professor, pedagogue and leader of choral projects, is currently Artistic Director of the Schola Cantorum Foundation of Venezuela and the Choir of the Polar Foundation. In her long career, she has been the Associate Professor of the Simón Bolívar University (1976-2018) (Venezuela) in the General Studies and the Master in Music; Coordinator of Choral Symphonic projects of El Sistema (1980-2012) and Director of the Simón Bolívar Conservatory of Music (1993-1996); Artistic Director (2003-2017) of the 'Música para Crecer' program sponsored by the Andean Development Corporation (CAF). She has also been President (e), Vice President and Advisor for Latin America of the International Federation for Choral Music (1996-2008) and member of the International Music Council (UNESCO) (2002-2005).

She won the awards: 'Kulturpreis' (1998), 'Robert Edler Preis für Chormusik' (2000), the 2009 Helmuth Rilling Award, the Life Achievement Award of the International Federation for Choral Music (FIMC 2019) and the Honorary Doctorate of the Metropolitan University, Caracas, Venezuela (2020). With the Cantoría Alberto Grau she won 6 Prizes in the Choral Competitions of Neuchatel and Arezzo (1989) and with the Orfeón Universitario Simón Bolívar Simón Bolívar three gold medals in the Choral Olympics, Linz 2000.

She premiered the Passion according to San Marcos of Oswaldo Golijov, whose recording was nominated for two GRAMMY Awards in 2002 and in 2010. With the new recording for Deutsche Grammophon, she obtained the ECHO Prize 2011 in Germany. In 2006, she prepared the Schola Cantorum for the premiere of John Adams' Opera 'A Flowering Tree' at the New Crowned Hope Festival in Vienna. In recent years, she has directed several concerts at the Liederhalle (Stuttgart), Barbican (London), Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), Sao Paulo Room (Brazil), Teresa Carreño Theater, Simón Bolívar Room and Aula Magna (Caracas), Disney Hall (Los Angeles), Lincoln Center, Alice Tully Hall and Carnegie Hall (New York), among others; and the premiere in Berlin, Stuttgart and Caracas of the work 'AQUA', by Gonzalo and Alberto Grau (2012-2013).

She is frequently invited as Director and Teacher to conduct choral programs and master classes in USA, Canada, Latin America, Europe and Asia and also to be part of international juries. She collaborates with various choral institutions in the world such as FIMC (International Federation for Choral Music); ACDA (American Choral Directors Association); Chorus America; NCCO (National Collegiate Choral Organization) (USA); Europa Cantat; America Cantat; Japan Choral Federation; Chinese Choral Federation; FCEC (Federació Catalana D'Éntitats Corals); A Couer Joie, among others.

She has been invited to lead prestigious choral groups such as the Belgian Radio Choir, World Youth Choir, Gaechinger Kantorei, Youth Choir of the European MusiFest Festivalensemble, Junges Vokalensemble Hannover, Pro-choir Canada, Houston Chamber Choir, Japan National Youth Choir, National Choir of Spain, Choir of the RTVE (Spain), the Symphonic Choir of the OSESP (Brazil), among many others. She is editor of Latin American Choral Music for the publishers Earthsongs (USA) and Carus-Verlag (Germany).

During this year 2020 she is Artist in Residence (Choral Singing) at the Florida International University (FIU, USA). She will direct the Chamber Choir (section of equal voices) of the Palau de la Música Catalana (Barcelona, Spain); the Coral Cantiga at the Grec Festival; Pro-Coro, Canada at the premiere of Alberto Grau's 'O Magnum Mysterium'; Houston Chamber Choir (USA), Choir of the University of Mendoza (Argentina). She will give master classes in Choral Direction at the Chorus America Conference in Florida (USA), at the Palau de la Música together with Simon Halsey, and at the Universities of Natal (Brazil) and Cuyo (Argentina).

She received her musical education and conducting training under the tutelage of Alberto Grau and Helmuth Rilling, and Gregorian Chant and Sacred Music from Luigi Agustoni and Johannes B. Goeschel.