

Schola Cantorum de Venezuela

Founding Director: Alberto Grau

Music Director: María Guinand

The Schola Cantorum de Venezuela was born as Schola Cantorum de Caracas in 1967, founded and conducted since the beginning by Maestro Alberto Grau. During its 53 years of life the choir has won the Guido D'Arezzo Competition and has toured extensively in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Oceania, participating in the World Choral Symposium, Europa and America Cantat Festivals, ACDA National Conventions, etc. Its wide and varied repertoire includes works by composers from around the world from the Renaissance until the XXIst century, ranging across the entire spectrum from 'a cappella' to choral symphonic works.

A very large collection of secular and sacred compositions has been premiered and performed by the SCV, with special emphasis in the diffusion of Venezuelan and other Latin American composers. The SCV has recorded more than 20 albums that provide a clear path as a specialized ensemble that has been identified with a very particular performing style. The SCV has performed under important conductors around the world such as Claudio Abbado, Helmuth Rilling, Sir Simon Rattle, Gustavo Dudamel, Krzysztof Penderecki amongst many others.

This Choir's versatility for performing new and challenging repertoire has allowed them to be chosen for premiering many contemporary works from reputed and famous composers. In the year 2000, the SCV premiered "La Pasión según San Marcos" from Osvaldo Golijov, commissioned by Helmuth Rilling as a homage to J.S Bach's 250th death anniversary, at the Europäische Musikfest in the Liederhalle, Stuttgart, this successful composition was nominated for the Grammy Award in 2004 and won the Echo Prize in 2011. It was presented by the Schola Cantorum in prestigious halls such as Boston Symphony Hall, Lincoln Center (NY), Disney Hall (Los Angeles), Barbican Center (London), Sydney Opera House (Sydney) amongst many others. In 2006, the Schola Cantorum premiered in Vienna the opera "A flowering Tree" by John Adams at the New Crowned Hope Festival celebrating Mozart's 250th birth anniversary.

The Schola Cantorum created in 1974 a Foundation to promote choral singing and musical training for choral conductors in Venezuela and Latin America. This is why its 'motto' today is '*We are more than a choir. We are a school of choral singing*'. Since the beginnings in 1975 of the Venezuelan Program of Music for Social Action known as 'El Sistema', the SCV was fully involved with this multi-award program, becoming its pioneer choir and performing in almost every choral symphonic work presented by El Sistema, including touring with some of its orchestras to many countries in Europe and America.

Actually, the choir is under the direction of Maestra María Guinand and Luimar Arismendi as Associate Director.