

Jorge Amado (b. 1997)

Born in Havana, Cuba, Amado is a composer, violinist, and music educator whose work stands out for its deep exploration of Cuban cultural heritage, fusing Afro-Cuban traditions with the language of contemporary classical music. His output, marked by remarkable aesthetic diversity, combines the rhythmic vitality and sonic imagery of his homeland with refined formal craftsmanship, resulting in a distinctive voice where identity, lyricism, and experimentation coexist. Recognized as one of the most dynamic voices of his generation, Amado has built an international career as a composer, performer, and educator.

His musical training began at the **National School of Music (ENA)**, where he graduated with **Highest Honors (Título de Oro)** in 2016. He later earned a **Bachelor's degree in Composition and Violin** from the **University of the Arts of Cuba (ISA)**, once again graduating with **Highest Honors** and receiving the distinction of “**Most Outstanding Graduate**” of his class. He studied composition with **Juan Piñera** and violin with **Carmen Amador**, and further honed his craft through masterclasses with **Eddie Mora**, **Ileana Pérez**, **Martin Rokeach**, and **Boris Alvarado**, among others.

In 2022, Amado moved to the United States to pursue a **Master of Arts in Music Composition (with Distinction)** at **DePaul University** in Chicago, studying with **Dr. Osnat Netzer** and **Dr. Christopher Wendell Jones**. During his time at DePaul, he served as a **Teaching Assistant** in Aural Skills and Music Theory and performed with the contemporary **+20 Ensemble**, directed by **Michael Lewanski**.

As a composer and performer, Amado has been featured at major international festivals and venues, including the **Mozart+ Festival** (Salzburg, 2022), **Young Euro Classic** (Berlin, 2023), **Rheingau Musik Festival** (Germany, 2023), the **Havana Contemporary Music Festival** (2016–2022), **Habana Clásica** (2019), the **Mozart Festival of Havana**, the **Sacred Music Festival**, the **Ruta de Mozart Festival**, **Música Nova**, the **Ear Taxi Festival** (Chicago), the **Virginia Arts Festival**, the **Annapolis Chamber Music Festival**, and the **Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival** (U.S.). In 2019, as part of **Habana Clásica**, he presented a special concert featuring instruments built by the luthiers of the Office of the Historian of Havana, performing exclusively his own works with the **Impulsus String Quartet** under his direction.

His catalog spans solo, chamber, orchestral, and stage works. His compositions have been commissioned and performed by leading artists and ensembles such as the **Orpheus Chamber Orchestra**, **Catalyst Quartet**, **Camerata Romeu**, **Havana Chamber Orchestra**, **Lyceum Orchestra of Havana**, **National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba**, **Niurka González**, **Desirée Ruhstrat**, **Gabriel Cabezas**, the **~Nois Quartet**, **Flannau Duo**, **Quijote Duo**, **Eight Strings & a Whistle Trio**, **Fear No Music Ensemble**, **Chicago Jazz Philharmonic**, the **Heredia Symphony Orchestra** (Costa Rica), the **Alexandria Symphony Orchestra** (U.S.), the **José White String Quartet** (Mexico), and the **Cuban-American Youth Orchestra**, among others.

In July 2023, Amado appeared as both violinist and composer with the **Cuban-American Youth Orchestra**, conducted by **Daiana García**, in a concert held at **Minnesota Orchestra Hall** celebrating the International Day of Music. On that occasion, renowned pianist **Jon**

Kimura Parker premiered his work *Del canto y la rítmica* in its chamber orchestra version. In October of the same year, his *Concertino for Flute, Viola, Cello and Strings* premiered at **Merkin Hall** in New York, featuring **Eight Strings & a Whistle** as soloists and the **United Nations Orchestra** conducted by **Predrag Vasić**.

His music has been heard in prominent concert halls across Europe and the Americas, including the **Konzerthaus Berlin**, the **Großer Saal of the Stiftung Mozarteum** (Salzburg), **Chicago Symphony Center**, the **Auditorium Theatre**, **Concertgebouw Amsterdam**, **Wiener Konzerthaus**, and **Merkin Concert Hall** in New York. Musicians from the **Civic Orchestra of Chicago**, **Houston Symphony Orchestra**, **Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra**, and **Minnesota Orchestra** have also performed his works in chamber and orchestral programs.

Throughout his career, Amado has received numerous distinctions, including **First Prize** at the “**Harold Gramatges**” **Composition Competition** (2015 and 2021), the **Ojalá Symphonic Creation Prize** (2018, chaired by **Leo Brouwer**), **First Prize** at the “**Nuestra América**” **String Quartet Competition** (2019, Mexico), **First Prize** at the **8SW Composition Competition** (U.S., 2018), the **Ibero-American Performance Award** (2020), the **Iberorquestas Young Performer Award** (2020), and **Second Prize** at the **2025 Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival Call for Scores**. His first monographic album, *Ofrenda*, received the **Cubadisco Award (2022)** in two categories.

In 2023, Amado was **nominated for a Jeff Award** for his original music for *Measure for Measure* by **William Shakespeare**, presented at the **Chicago Shakespeare Theater** under the direction of **Henry Godínez**, in collaboration with trumpeter and composer **Orbert Davis**.

Amado's creative activity also extends to audiovisual media. He has composed original scores for short films, documentaries, videodance projects, and feature films, most notably *El mundo de Nelsito*, directed by acclaimed Cuban filmmaker **Fernando Pérez**. His discography includes six national and two international albums, featuring him as composer, performer, or both. These include *...And nothing remains the same...* by **Eight Strings & a Whistle** (Ravello Records) and *Nuestra América 2019–2020* by the **José White String Quartet**, which features his *String Quartet No. 6 “Carnavalesco”*. He was also commissioned to compose a work for Belgian accordionist **Didier Laloy** for a recording project produced in Belgium.

He has shared the stage with distinguished artists such as **Orbert Davis**, **Jon Kimura Parker**, **Niurka González**, **Nicole Mitchell**, **Dal Niente Ensemble**, **Tomeka Reid**, **Augusto Blanca**, and **Anolán González**, and has collaborated as arranger with the embassies of **Poland**, **Portugal**, **Italy**, and **Norway** in concerts held in Havana.

Amado's music has been performed in **Cuba**, the **United States**, the **Netherlands**, **Germany**, **Austria**, **Italy**, **Costa Rica**, **France**, **Chile**, **Brazil**, **Mexico**, and **Spain**, consolidating his presence in the international contemporary music scene. His catalog encompasses solo, chamber, vocal, electroacoustic, and orchestral works, including his *Violin Concerto No. 1 “Equinoccio”*, winner of the **Ojalá Symphonic Creation Prize (2018)**, which he premiered as soloist with the **Lyceum Orchestra of Havana** under the direction of **José Antonio Méndez**.

Alongside his artistic career, Amado has developed a strong academic and critical profile. He has taught **Musical Analysis** and **Music History** at the ENA, worked as a **music engraver** for **Leo Brouwer's publishing house Ediciones Espiral Eterna**, and published essays and articles on musical creation and aesthetics in Cuban cultural journals such as **La Jiribilla** and **Toda la Danza**.

He is a member of the **Cuban Music Copyright Agency (ACDAM)** and the **Spanish Society of Authors and Publishers (SGAE)**.

Currently based in **Chicago**, Amado serves as a **Teaching Artist** and **Assistant to the Artistic Director** of the **Chicago Jazz Philharmonic**, while maintaining an active private studio in violin, viola, and composition. He has also served as a violin instructor at the **Merit School of Music** and at the **Jazz Academy** of the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic.

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