



T: (212) 969-1797 | info@uiatalent.com
850 7th Ave., Suite 1003
New York, NY 10019

NYC DCWP License N° 2082447

www.uiatalent.com

DARWIN AQUINO **CONDUCTOR/COMPOSER**

Known for his charismatic energy, his strong artistic convictions, and musical versatility, Dominican composer, conductor, and violinist Darwin Aquino is making an impact worldwide leading acclaimed performances of new works, symphonic music, opera, ballet, and chamber music, with a particular focus on the Latin American and Caribbean repertoire.

In the Dominican Republic, he served for more than fifteen years as the Artistic & Music Director of *El Sistema*, the Director of the National Conservatory of Music, and the Composer-in-Residence and Violinist for the Dominican National Symphony Orchestra, where he inspired a new generation of musicians with his dynamic leadership and advocacy efforts. Darwin refers to his creative life in this way: *"My music emerges from the heart of Caribbean rhythms and chants. We are a creative mixture of cultures – an explosion of sounds, colors, and imagination. It has always been my universe, my poetic vision of the world."*



He is currently in his fifth season as Artistic & Music Director of the St. Louis Philharmonic Orchestra, where he has worked extensively to amplify the recognition of the ensemble as one of the most noted performing arts organizations in the Midwest, and his eighth season as Conductor-in-Residence with the Washington University Symphony Orchestra. Recent engagements include conducting debuts with Opera Southwest (Boccherini's ***Doña Clementina*** / U.S. premiere), the National Symphony Orchestra of Panama, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO), and the Interlochen Center for the Arts.

As a composer, Darwin was commissioned by the Dialogues V Festival for the world premiere of his piece ***Vom Imaginatio Folkloricus 3.5***, performed by the Lux Nova Duo and Sinfonietta Vivazza, at Berlin's Philharmonie Kammermusiksaal, Hamburg's Resonanzraum, and Madrid's Nuevo Teatro Alcalá. From the premiere of his orchestral piece ***Espacio Ritual*** with the Orchestre Philharmonique Radio France at La Maison in Paris, the *Musique au Jour le Jour* reviewed: "Aquino has very well listened to the French composers, Boulez or Varese, developing in this piece a deeply personal language and an inventive mastery for writing to the orchestra."

Recently, Darwin was selected as the new Head of Music for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he has also served as Conductor for the New Works Collective since its inception in 2023, leading its first nine world premieres to great success and earning a reputation as a champion of new music.

Recent seasons have seen Darwin as a guest conductor for the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Mainz and the Saarländisches Staatsorchester in Germany, where he led special New Year's Day concerts and sold-out performances of Latin American symphonic music, including his own orchestral works ***YOaminicana*** and ***Congofonía***. Other recent notable engagements include the Florida Grand Opera (Cimarosa's ***Il Matrimonio Segreto*** with his own Spanish translation), Missouri Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Opera (***Porgy and Bess***), Ashland Symphony Orchestra (world premiere of his orchestral piece ***Lunga Pandemia***), Saint Louis Ballet, Caribbean Lyric Festival, National Symphony Orchestra of Costa



Rica, Chicago Summer Opera, Filarmónica Boca del Rio in Mexico, Orchestra of the Americas, Chamber Project Saint Louis, Missouri Festival for the Arts, and the Chamber Music Society.

Darwin was the first Latin American conductor to be appointed Music Director for the Gateway Festival Orchestra (2019-2024), Winter Opera St. Louis (2016-2019), and Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (2017-2022). Of his performance of ***Norma*** with Winter Opera, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* remarked, "Conductor Darwin Aquino had the orchestra sounding great from the first measures of the overture and maintained a good balance between stage and pit. He has a fine feel for the nuances of the bel canto style and knows to breathe with the singers."

As an advocate for music education, Darwin has worked with numerous universities' orchestras, ensembles, and opera programs. Highlights include a full concert of new Latin American music with the Illinois Modern Ensemble at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; *L'Etoile* with Florida International University; ***The Medium***, ***Chichester Psalms***, and Leanna Kirchoff's ***The Clever Artifice of Harriet and Margaret*** (National Opera Association winner) with UMSL, and performances of ***Carmina Burana***, Haydn's ***Te Deum***, and Vaughan Williams's ***Sea Symphony*** with the Washington University Symphony Orchestra and Choirs.

He has assisted conductors such as Leonard Slatkin, Patrick Summers, George Manahan, Gemma New, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Gzregorz Nowak, Benjamin Zander, Daniela Candillari, Ramon Tebar, Rory McDonald, and many others. Darwin served as Assistant Conductor for the Orchestra of the Americas, Palm Beach Symphony Orchestra, and FIU Symphony Orchestra, as well as Cover Conductor for both the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and the St. Louis Youth Symphony Orchestra. In opera, he has worked as Assistant Conductor for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Florida Grand Opera, and Opera Naples.

Current as of September 18, 2025