

Luis Ramirez

Composer | Pianist | Conductor

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1. BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Aguascalientes, Mexico, Luis Ramirez is a Mexican-Canadian composer with a penchant for rhythmically colorful textures and visually arresting soundscapes that often incorporate elements of Mexican folklore and a cinematic approach to musical story-telling. He is currently pursuing a doctorate with Randolph Peters at York University.

Luis has received praise for his "great talent and imaginative, unique voice" (Jocelyn Morlock) and his works have been performed by some of the top orchestras in North America, including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. His chamber music has received premieres across the world, with performances at the *Casalmaggiore Festival* in Italy, *AugustFest* in Manitoba, *Festival Cervantino* in Mexico, and *the Class Axe Workshops* across Canada.

His work *Chido* earned him the CMC Prairie Region Emerging Composer Competition, and in 2019 *Chido* was awarded the first prize of the Sir Ernest MacMillan Awards of the SOCAN Foundation. Other prestigious awards include the OAC Music Creation Projects Grant and the Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Award. He was the first recipient of the Jacques Israelievitch Scholarship at York University, established to honor the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's longest-tenured concertmaster.

Luis has received commissions from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Trio Kalysta, and GroundSwell, to name a few. In 2020, he was chosen as a composer fellow for the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, and he was recently commissioned for a second time by the TSO as part of their 2022/23 NextGen Composers program.

Luis grew up in a time in Mexico when there was virtually no support for the arts and a career in music was inconceivable. Despite the challenging environment, his curiosity-driven mind and relentless ambition have been crucial ingredients in his musical and personal development. In 2012 he received a full scholarship to study at Brandon University in Manitoba where he earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance and Master of Music degree in 2016 studying with Alexander Tselyakov. He subsequently obtained a Master of Music degree in Composition with Dr. Patrick Carrabré at Brandon University the following year.

An eclectic musician, Luis has toured the Canadian Prairies as a classical pianist, taught composition at York University, conducted the Brandon Community Orchestra, presented his academic research at conferences around the world, and performed at bars with his tango quintet.

2. PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

a. Academic Qualifications

Present	Doctor in Philosophy (Composition). York University - Toronto, ON Advisor: Randolph Peters
2017	Master of Music (Composition). Brandon University - Brandon, MB Instructor: Patrick Carrabré

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- 2016 Master of Music (Piano Performance). Brandon University - Brandon, MB
Instructor: Alexander Tselyakov
- 2014 Bachelor of Music (Piano Performance). Brandon University - Brandon, MB
Instructor: Alexander Tselyakov

b. Professional Development

- 2023 Board Member of GroundSwell, a new music organization in Winnipeg, MB
- 2023 JUNO Awards Judge for the *Classical Composition of the Year* Category
- 2022 Member of the Jury for the Associate Composer Application of the Ontario Region at the *Canadian Music Centre*
- 2021 Member of the Jury for the Manitoba Arts Council *Create (Music)* program
- 2021, 2022 Commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Toronto, ON
- 2020 Selected as winner of the HPO Composer Fellowship Program. Hamilton, ON
- 2019 Duo526 Summer Intensive Sonata Seminar. Brandon, MB
- 2018 CMC Class Axe Guitar Workshop. Toronto, ON
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Composers Institute. Winnipeg, MB
- 2017 Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Composers Institute. Winnipeg, MB
- 2016 Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival. St. John's, NL
International Keyboard Institute and Festival. New York, US
Centric Music Festival. Lethbridge, AB
- 2015 Centric Music Festival. Lethbridge, AB
- 2014 Casalmaggiore International Chamber Music Festival. Casalmaggiore, Italy
World Piano Conference for Teachers Association. Novi Sad, Serbia
Centric Music Festival. Lethbridge, AB

3. AWARDS

a. Grants and Scholarships

- 2020 **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)**
Winner of the Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship
- Ontario Arts Council**
Recipient of the Music Creation Projects Grant with Amarras Tango Quintet
- 2019 **SOCAN Foundation**
Travel Assistant Grant
- 2018 **York University Graduate Studies**
Jacques Israelievitch Scholarship in Interdisciplinary Arts
The Susan Crocker and John Hunkin Graduate Scholarship in the Fine Arts
York University Graduate Scholarship
York University Graduate Development Fund
- 2015 **Brandon University Graduate Studies**
President's International Music Scholarship
- 2013 **Brandon University Undergraduate Studies**
Brandon University International Undergraduate Student Scholarships
- 2012 President's International Music Scholarship
National Endowment for the Arts and Culture (FONCA), Mexico
Bursary for Studies in A Foreign Country

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b. Honours

- 2022 **Morelia Orchestral Composition Competition**
First Prize winner of the first iteration of this competition in Mexico
- 2022 **Toronto Symphony Orchestra**
Selected as a NextGen Composer with a new commission by the TSO. Toronto, ON
- 2021 **Canadian University Music Society (MUSCAN) Annual Conference**
Winner of the George Proctor Prize for original research
- 2019 **SOCAN Foundation**
1st prize of the Sir Ernest MacMillan Award for *Chido*, for symphony orchestra
- 2018 **Canadian Music Centre Prairie Region Emerging Composers Competition**
Winner and premiere of *Chido* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
- 2017 **Brandon University Graduate Studies**
Brandon University Gold Medal in the Master of Music (Composition) for Highest GPA
- 2013 **Third International Composition Competition *Nuestra América***
First Mention award; premiere and recording of string quartet *¿Viva?* by the José White String Quartet
Inducted into President's Honour Society

4. LIST OF WORKS

a. Large Ensemble

- 06/2023 - [New Work, for symphony orchestra](#) (5')
Commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, selected as a NextGen Composer for their 2022-23 season. Toronto, ON.
- 04/2022 - [Mi Piñata, for symphony orchestra](#) (3')
Commissioned and performed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Gustavo Gimeno, as part of their "Celebration Preludes" for their 100th season. Toronto, ON.
- 06/2021 - [Koatl, for small orchestra](#) (8')
Commissioned by the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, performed with the HPO and Gary Kulesha as part of the Composer Fellowship sponsored by the RBC Emerging Artists Project. Hamilton, ON.
- 04/2018 - [The Threshold of Sleep, for symphony orchestra](#) (7')
Premiered by the Brandon Community Orchestra, Brandon, MB.
- 01/2018 - [Chido, for symphony orchestra](#) (5')
Premiered by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra during Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra New Music Festival 2018, as winner of the CMC Prairie Region Emerging Composer Competition. Performed by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra in 2022.

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08/2017 - [Symphonic Speedrun, for concert band](#) (8'30")

Premiered by the Brandon University Symphonic Band, Brandon, MB.

b. Chamber

11/2022 *PROMPT*, for two saxophones and audio (6')

Commissioned by GroundSwell, premiered by Duo d'Entre Deux. Winnipeg, MB.

10/2019- *Immigration Suite*, for violin, violoncello, bandoneon, piano, and bass

04-2022 - [Sola](#) (4') - [Infierno](#) (4') - [Espera](#) (4') - [Choque](#) (4') - [Asilo](#) (4') - [Astenia](#) (4')

- [Malicia](#) (4') - [Insidia](#) (4') - [Éxodo](#) (4') - [Zozobra](#) (4')

Commissioned by Amarras Tango as recipient of the Music Creation Projects Grant by the Ontario Arts Council. Toronto, ON.

08/2019 - [Azure, for viola and piano](#) (21')

Commissioned by David Wilson for AugustFest 2019. Premiered by Greg Hay and Donna Laube, Brandon, MB.

04/2017 - *Reflections of the Internet*, Final Composition Recital

1. [The Internet, for soprano and piano](#) (3'40")

2. [Adagio detestabile, for piano and video](#) (5'10")

3. [Infoxication, for piano and phone](#) (4'20")

4. [My first Vlog, for basset horn and audio](#) (6'35")

5. [Coquette, for cello and piano](#) (7'20")

6. [Amigos, for violin, cello, and piano](#) (10')

7. [kthxbye, for soprano and piano](#) (4')

Premiered by Jaimie Rose, Catherine Seeley, Alexandra Harrington, Alanna Hunter, Josías Sánchez, and Luis Ramirez. Brandon, MB.

02/2017 - [The endling, for two cellos, soprano sax, melodica, piano, and audio](#) (6'30")

Premiered by the Brandon University New Music Ensemble during the Winnipeg New Music Festival.

08/2014 - *Three Paraprosdokians*, for clarinet, violin, cello, piano

1. [Jamais Vu](#) (3'20) 2. [Sock](#) (9') 3. [Colorshift](#) (8')

Commissioned by David Wilson for AugustFest, Brandon, MB. Premiered by Gillian Carrabré, Ariel Carrabré, Chris Byman, and Luis Ramirez.

08/2013 - [¿Viva?, for string quartet](#) (10'11")

Premiered by the José White String Quartet as winner in the Third International Composition Competition *Nuestra América*.

Recorded in 2017 and distributed in their album *Nuestra América 2013-2014*.

04/2013 - [Balaboo, for piano four hands](#) (4'40")

Premiered by Jesse Plessis and Luis Ramirez, Brandon, MB. Performed during Casalmaggiore Festival with Madeline Hildebrand and Luis Ramirez.

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c. Solo

- 06/2022 - [Doomsurfer, for piano and audio](#) (15')
Commissioned by GroundSwell, 6th Mini-Curation as part of its 30th Anniversary Season in 2021-22. Video and performance by Luis Ramirez, Toronto, ON.
- 04/2019 - [Singularity, for guitar and audio](#) (6'40")
Commissioned by the CMC Class Axe 2019. Premiered by Daniel Ramjattan in Toronto, by An-Laurence Higgins in Montréal, and by Craig Visser in Ottawa.
- 05/2018 - [My First Vlog, arranged for violoncello and video](#) (6'35")
Premiered by Alanna Hunter, Brandon, MB.
- 07/2014 - [First Steps, for piano](#) (4'40")
Premiered by Luis Ramirez during the Casalmaggiore Festival in Italy.

5. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

a. Composer

- April 2023 **Performance** of *Koatl* with the Brandon University Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leanne Zacharias. Brandon, MB
- March 2023 **Performance** of *Immigration Suite*, arranged for the Brandon Chamber Players. Brandon, MB
- Dec 2022 **US Premiere** of *Mi Piñata* by the San Francisco Symphony conducted by Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser. San Francisco, US
- Dec 2022 **Performance** of *Singularity* with Daniel Ramjattan. Ottawa, ON
- Dec 2022 **Performance** of *Infocination*, with Katya Khatsko. Toronto, ON
- Nov 2022 **Premiere** of *PROMPT* with Duo d'Entre Deux, commissioned by GroundSwell. Winnipeg, MB
- Nov 2022 **Performance** of *Nanotrek no. 1*, with Strong Harbour String Quartet. St. Johns, NL
- Sep 2022 **Performance** of *Mi Piñata* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustavo Gimeno. Toronto, ON
- July 2022 **Premiere** of *Doomsurfer* with Luis Ramirez, commissioned by GroundSwell. Toronto, ON
- June 2022 **Premiere** of *Koatl* with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gary Kulesha. Hamilton, ON
- May 2022 **Premiere** of *Immigration Suite* with Luis Ramirez Quintet. Toronto, ON
- April 2022 **Premiere** of *Mi Piñata* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustavo Gimeno. Toronto, ON
- October 2020 **Premiere** of *Nanotrek no. 1*, with Strong Harbour String Quartet. St. Johns, NL
- August 2019 **Premiere** of *Azure* for viola and piano, commissioned by David Wilson for the AugustFest, Brandon, MB
- April 2019 **Premiere** of *Singularity* for guitar and audio as participant of the CMC Class Axe 2019. Toronto, Ottawa, ON. Montreal, QC. Vancouver, BC
- Summer 2018 **Music producer and music director** for the Bell MTS five short documentaries, *In the Archives*, directed by Tom Mitchell

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- January 2018 **Premiere** of *Chido* as winner of the CMC Prairie Region Emerging Composer Competition, with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Mickelthwate, during the Winnipeg New Music Festival. Winnipeg, MB
- 2017 **Premieres** of *The Internet*, *Adagio detestabile*, *Infoxication*, *My First Vlog*, *Coquette*, *Amigos*, and *kthxbye* during final graduation recital, Brandon, MB
Recording of *¿Viva?* in the Album *Nuestra América 2013-2014* by string quartet "Cuarteto José White" as winner in the composition competition *Nuestra América*
- 2014-2016 **Guest artist/Composer** for the Centric Festival in Lethbridge, AB. Eight concerts performing as a soloist, in chamber music, and as composer
- 2014 **Premiere** of *Three Paraprosdokians*, for clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, commissioned by David Wilson for the AugustFest, Brandon, MB
Premiere of *First Steps*, in Casalmaggiore, Italy, during the Contemporary International Music Exchange (CIME) at the Casalmaggiore Festival

b. Performer

- 2023 **Performer** with the Brandon Chamber Players, presenting the premiere of the clarinet arrangement of his *Immigration Suite*, Brandon, MB
- 2019-22 **Member** of professional Tango Quintet *Amarras*, Toronto, ON
- 2016 **Piano solo recitals** in Brandon, Winnipeg, Gimli, Saskatoon, and Rosetown as winner of MRMTA's Young Artists Tour Competition
Performer during the Virtuosi Concert Series in Winnipeg, as part of their Young Artists Program
- 2014 **Soloist** with the Brandon University Orchestra as winner of the Brandon University Concerto Competition. Brandon, MB
Performer in several recitals during the International Casalmaggiore Music Festival. Casalmaggiore, Italy
Lecturer/Performer on Prokofiev's music, as member of the World Piano Teacher's Association during the World Piano Conference. Novi Sad, Serbia
- 2013 **Performer** of Mexican contemporary music for piano in recital collaborating with the Center for Research and Musical Studies (CIEM) in Mexico. Brandon, MB
- 2012 **Soloist** with the Autonomous University of Aguascalientes Orchestra as winner of the concerto competition. Aguascalientes, Mexico

c. Conductor

- 2019 **Conductor** of the York University Wind Symphony during the final concert of the semester. Toronto, ON
- 2018 **Conductor** of the Brandon Community Orchestra during the final concert of the season, including two world premieres in the program. Brandon, MB
- 2015 **Conductor** of the Brandon University New Music Ensemble during the Brandon New Music Festival. Brandon, MB

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6. PUBLICATIONS

a. Articles

Ramirez, Luis. "The Online Composer-Audience Collaboration." In *Innovation in Music: Future Opportunities*, edited by Russ Hepworth-Sawyer, Justin Paterson, and Rob Toulson. London, UK: Routledge & CRC Press, January 2021. <https://www.routledge.com/Innovation-in-Music-Future-Opportunities/Hepworth-Sawyer-Paterson-Toulson/p/book/9780367363352>.

Ramirez, Luis. "Internet Culture and Music | Research Connection." Brandon University, 2018. <https://www.brandonu.ca/research-connection/rc-article/internet-culture-and-music/>.

Ramirez, Luis. "Thank You, Internet." Institute for Research in Music and Community (blog), 2018. <https://irmc.ca/2018/01/25/thank-you-internet/>.

b. Recordings

Luis Ramirez, "Singularity," January 2022, in Daniel Ramjattan's "Inspirations: New Music for Solo Guitar" album. <https://danielramjattan.bandcamp.com/album/inspirations-new-music-for-solo-guitar>

c. Published Scores

Feb 2023	<i>Prompt</i> , for two saxophones and audio. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
Feb 2023	<i>Azure</i> , for viola and piano. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
Dec 2022	<i>Koatl</i> , for symphony orchestra. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
July 2022	<i>Singularity</i> , for guitar and electronics. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
June 2022	<i>Mi Piñata</i> , for symphony orchestra. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Sola</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Infierno</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Espera</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Choque</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Asilo</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Malicia</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Insidia</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Éxodo</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Astenia</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
May 2022	<i>Zozobra</i> , for tango quintet. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
April 2022	<i>Infoxication</i> , for piano solo. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.
Feb 2022	<i>Chido</i> , for symphony orchestra. Published by the Canadian Music Centre.

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7. WORK EXPERIENCE

Positions

- 2022-Present Graduate Teaching Assistant**
Keyboard Skills tutor for second-year *Theory II* course at York University
- 2021-2022 Graduate Teaching Assistant**
Course Director of first-year course *Composition Studio I*
- 2020-2021 Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant**
Technical support for online *Orchestra*, *Wind Symphony*, and *Digital Music I*
- 2019-2020 Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant**
Assistant conductor for York University's Wind Ensemble and Wind Symphony
- 2018-2019 Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant**
Grading and teaching tutorials for *Workshop in Musicianship I* | Technical support for *Intro to Scoring for Films, Games, and Motion Media; Composing for Film*
- 2018-Present Freelance Pianist**
Performing around different venues as a soloist or chamber musician with tango quintet. Toronto, ON
- 2018-2019 Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant**
Grading and teaching tutorials for *Workshop in Musicianship I* | Technical support for *Intro to Scoring for Films, Games, and Motion Media; Composing for Film*. York University, Toronto, ON
- 2017-Present Freelance Composer and Copyist**
Working on several commissioned pieces and as a copyist for private clients
- 2017-2018 Orchestra Conductor**
Director and board member of the Brandon Community Orchestra. Brandon, MB
- 2014-2018 Music Director**
Choir conductor and pianist for Redeemer Lutheran Church. Brandon, MB
- 2012-2018 Collaborative Pianist**
Eckhardt-Gramatté Conservatory Chorale (2014-18), Suzuki Talent Education Program (2014-17), Brandon University music students (2012-18), Western Manitoba Youth Choir (2015-17), Steppin' Time Dance School (2015-18)
- 2016-2018 Research Assistant**
Web maintenance, development of research profiles, and general assistance to the director of the Institute for Research in Music and Community. Brandon, MB
- 2012-2017 Backstage Assistant and Equipment Manager**
Recording manager, lighting operator, facilities inspector, and technical support for Brandon University. Brandon, MB