

# Gabriela Ortiz

## 2024 Bio

### Short bio (342 words):

Born to a musical family, Gabriela Ortiz has always felt she didn't choose music—music chose her. Her parents were founding members of the group Los Folkloristas, a renowned music ensemble dedicated to performing Latin American folk music. Growing up in the cosmopolitan thriving metropolis of Mexico City, Ortiz's music education was multifaceted. While playing charango and guitar with her parents' group, she was also learning classical piano. Ortiz began her composition studies under the mentorship of renowned Mexican composers Mario Lavista, Julio Estrada, Federico Ibarra, and Daniel Catán. Later, she continued her studies in Europe, earning a doctorate in composition and electronic music from London's City University under the guidance of Simon Emmerson.

Ortiz's music incorporates seemingly disparate musical worlds, from traditional and popular idioms to avant-garde techniques and multimedia works. This is, perhaps, the most salient characteristic of her oeuvre: an ingenious merging of distinct sonic worlds. While Ortiz continues to draw inspiration from Mexican subjects, she is interested in composing music that speaks to international audiences.

From massive works for orchestra and chorus such as *Yanga* (2019), concertos as *Fractalis* (2022), politically charged operas as *Only the Truth* (2008), magical chamber works as *Altar de muertos* (1997), and intimate solo pieces as *Canto a Hanna* (2005), Ortiz's music reveals a sophisticated compositional technique and a meticulous attention to rhythm and timbre. Her work has been performed by prestigious orchestras and ensembles such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, New York Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra.

In 2022, Ortiz received the Bellas Artes Gold Medal, the highest distinction granted by the National Institute of Fine Arts. Other major awards include the National Prize for Arts and Literature, Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, Fulbright-García Robles Fellowship, and two Latin GRAMMY nominations. She is a member of the prestigious Academy of the Arts and has been admitted to El Colegio Nacional, Mexico's foremost circle of intellectuals.

Ortiz currently teaches composition at Mexico's National Autonomous University. Her music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

*Biography written with contribution from Ana Alonso Minutti*

### **Long bio (516 words):**

Born to a musical family, Gabriela Ortiz has always felt she didn't choose music—music chose her. Her parents were founding members of the group Los Folkloristas, a renowned music ensemble dedicated to performing Latin American folk music. Growing up in the cosmopolitan Mexico City, Ortiz's music education was multifaceted. While playing charango and guitar with her parents' group, she was also learning classical piano. Ortiz began her composition studies under the mentorship of renowned Mexican composers Mario Lavista, Julio Estrada, Federico Ibarra, and Daniel Catán. Later, she continued her studies in Europe, earning a doctorate in composition and electronic music from London's City University under the guidance of Simon Emmerson.

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Gustavo Dudamel, a longtime champion of Ortiz's music, stated: "Gabriela is one of the most talented composers in the world—not only in Mexico, not only in our continent—in the world. Her ability to bring colors, to bring rhythm and harmonies that connect with you is something beautiful, something unique." Under Dudamel's direction, the Los Angeles Philharmonic commissioned and

premiered seven works by Ortiz in recent years, including her ballet *Revolución diamantina*, the violin concerto *Altar de Cuerda*, and *Kauyumari* for orchestra. Dudamel introduced the piece *Téenek* (“one of the most brilliant I have ever directed”) to German audiences in 2023, performed by the Berliner Philharmoniker.

Ortiz’s music has been commissioned and performed by the New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic Orchestra, National Orchestra of Bretagne, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra; Esa Pekka Salonen, Louis Langrée, and Carlos Miguel Prieto, among others. She has also collaborated with practically every orchestra, conductor, soloist, and ensemble in Mexico.

Her scores for dance, film, and theater—including the operas *Only the Truth*, *Ana and her Shadow*, and *Firefly*—frequently explore complex contemporary themes, like environmental concerns, racism, sexism, and globalization. She has written music for *Errant Manoeuvres*, performed by the Emma Diamond Dance Company at the Merce Cunningham Studio in New York; as well as the music scores for award-winning film *Frontierland* (produced and directed by Rubén Ortiz and Jessie Lerner) and *Por la Libre* (produced by Alta Vista films and directed by Juan Carlos de Llaca).

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Ortiz currently teaches at Mexico’s National Autonomous University and travels regularly to give courses and masterclasses at institutions throughout the Americas and Europe. Her music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

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