

## **Maria Fernanda Castillo**

Flutist, musicologist and entrepreneur Maria Fernanda Castillo has been offering intentional and meaningful performances that can contribute to the search for balance in the music world. **Assistant Professor of Flute at the University of Tennessee- Knoxville**, and **co-founder of the Latin American Music Initiative**, Maria has found approaches to teaching, research, and performances that not only highlight the importance of standard works in the flute canon but also help the inclusion, awareness and accessibility of works by underrepresented composers.

**Hailed by the New York Times** as a flutist who performs with “...**virtuoso panache**,” Maria debuted in New York City with the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas in 2008, under Alondra de la Parra. Additionally, in 2009 she had her professional debut as a soloist in Venezuela with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra under Mtro. Carlos Riazuelo. She has also performed as a soloist with the Caracas Municipal Symphony under Mtros. Rodolfo Saglimbeni and her husband, Régulo Stabilito. Her latest collaboration include the performance of *Shadow of Sirius* for flute and wind ensemble by Joel Puckett with the University of Tennessee Wind Ensemble conducted by John Zastoupil.

Co-founder of the **Latin American Music Initiative (LAMI)** with her husband, orchestra conductor Régulo Stabilito, they are committed to advocating for raising awareness of Latin American repertoire. LAMI has allowed them to reach a large community by performing, recording, lecturing and editing Latin American works. Her work with LAMI has allowed her to be part of the 2020-2021 **Mellon Public Engagement in the Humanities Fellow**. As a musicologist, Maria has created an online flute catalogue with 143 flute works by Venezuelan composers, helping the repertoire be known and accessible for performers all over the world and develop a new approach to flute etude study by contextualizing etudes based on their historical context. In Addition, she is part of a group of 9 Latin American female flutists to create the largest catalogue of flute works by Latin American composers (<https://flautalatioamerica.com/>). Maria also maintains an active service life within University of Tennessee-Knoxville and other flute organizations, such as serving as **coordinator of the NFA Young Artist Competition** (2023-2026), as exhibitor's coordinator for the Mid-South Flute Association and as judge for national and regional auditions/competitions. Lastly, Maria believes in the importance of developing a strong and supporting community which led her to found and direct the **Vol's Flute Fest**, a 2-day festival that takes place at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville every Fall.

As an orchestral musician, Maria frequently performs with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra. She has served as principal flute in orchestras in Venezuela, México and the United States. She was the **Associate Principal of the Caracas Municipal Symphony Orchestra**, and has performed with the Venezuelan Symphony, the Venezuela National Philharmonic, the Miami City Ballet, the New World Symphony, the Sphinx Symphony, the Mazatlán Sinfonietta, the "Sinaloa de las Artes" Symphony, the Louisiana Philharmonic, the Baton Rouge Symphony, the Acadiana Symphony and the Lake Charles Symphony.

**A native of Caracas, Venezuela**, Maria began her flute studies at the age of nine with Venezuelan flutist Luis Julio Toro. She holds a Bachelors, Specialist and Doctorate of Music degrees from the University of Michigan as a student of Amy Porter; a Masters of Music from the University of Miami under Christine Nield-Capotee; and a Masters in Latin American Musicology from the Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Maria currently resides in Knoxville Tennessee, where she divides her time between her work as an educator, performer and activist; and practicing Ashtanga Yoga or playing golf.