

Louis Franz Aguirre (Cuba, 1968)

Louis Aguirre's music has been labelled as "Music from hell" and "Not for the faint of heart". He has achieved international recognition and is played worldwide, receiving numerous awards and commissions. His output, with more than 150 works, includes: 4 operas, orchestral, solo and chamber music, choral-electronic-didactic and vocal music. The impact of Aguirre's music has given him the privilege of getting performed worldwide, and to be the recipient of several prizes and commissions. Aguirre is having between 40 to 50 concerts, yearly, where his music is included.

Louis Aguirre is a strongly individual composer with an unusual spiritual background in Afro-Cuban religion. One of the foremost contemporary Cuban composers of today, widely performed and commissioned internationally, the music of Louis Aguirre strikes one with a tremendous blow. It has the power of an exorcism, brutal and impenetrable, and requires the utmost from performers and their instruments. His music is a strange marriage of modernism with the mysteries of the Afro-Cuban Santería religion. Extreme sonorities, irascible micro-tonal melodic designs, frantic sound blocks, complex micro-rhythmic relationships and a wide range of unconventional timbral effects, are some of the components that articulate the exuberant language of Aguirre's work. (Dr. Iván César Morales Flores Professor of music at University of Oviedo, Spain)

Born in Camagüey, Cuba, in 1968, Louis Aguirre was the chief conductor and artistic director of the Camagüey Symphony Orchestra, from 1995 - 2002, as well as guest conductor at the National Symphony Orchestra and the Santiago de Cuba Symphony Orchestra. He also was a professor of Camagüey's Music Conservatory and artistic director and chairman of the International Festival of Contemporary Music (1996-2002) in Camagüey. Aguirre studied composition with Harold Gramatges and Roberto Valera at the Havana's University of Arts, and violin and conducting.

From 2002-04 he was enrolled at the Amsterdam Conservatory, studying the composition postgraduate program: "Contemporary music through non-Western Techniques" under the guidance of composer R. Reina and Jos Zwaanenburg. This program is based on South Indian Classical music, (Karnatic music). From 2004-05 he was enrolled at the Århus Royal Conservatory in Denmark, taking a Diplom- exam (Master) in composition under the guidance of composers Karl Aage Rasmussen and Rolf Wallin. In 2007 Aguirre ended with the highest mark his Soloist Class (3er cycle) in Composition at the Århus Royal Conservatory, under the guidance of professors Karl Aage Rasmussen and Hans Abrahamsen.

Louis Aguirre works as a full-time composer since he moved to Europe in 2001, where he has received numerous commissions and awards. Aguirre has written works for prestigious performers and ensembles such as: Ere Lievonen, Enric Monfort, Henriette Jensen, Adam Øravad, Carlos Gálvez, Juanjo Guillem, Pilar Fontalba, Mikkel Andersen, Barbara Lüneburg, Karolina Leedo, Peter Bogaert, B.C. Manjunath, Sonja Lena Schmidt, Axyz Ensemble, Arbós Trío, Snow Mask Ensemble, Kimbala Percussion Group, DuoMetric, Verso Duo, Havana Symphony Orchestra, Santiago Symphony Orchestra, Camagüey Symphony Orchestra, Arditti String Quartet, TANA String Quartet, Athelas Sinfonietta Copenhagen, Melisma Saxophone Quartet, Residencias Ensemble, Black Pencil Ensemble, Mimitabu Ensemble, Neopercusión Ensemble, Colectivo Neo, White Dwarf String Quartet, Symphony Orchestra of Balearic Islands, JONDE Orchestra, Spain, etc....and his music has been performed at many festivals and venues in whole Europe, China, Russia, Serbia, Greenland, Australia, Turkey, Canada, the USA and South and Latin America, such as: the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt; Nordic Music Days, Finland; Granada Festival Internacional de Música y Danza, Spain; Liubliana Festival, Slovenia; Summartónar, Faroe Islands; "Südseite nachts", Stuttgart, Germany; Festival Saint-Denis, Paris, France; Dijon Opera, France; Amsterdam Gaudeamus Week, Netherlands; Klang Festival, Copenhagen, Denmark; GuFeng International Percussion Festival, Hainan, China; XIX Festival de Música Contemporánea de Córdoba, Spain; DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, Leighton Concert Hall, Indiana, USA; RE:FLUX 11. Music and sound art festival. Salle Bernard-Leblanc, Centre Culturel Aberdeen, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada; Ultraschal Festival, Berlin, Germany; Mozarteum University, Salzburg; Moscow Philharmonic, Moscow, Russia; Helsinki Music Centre, Camerata Hall, Finland; Bulgarian National Radio Concert Studio; Caddebostan Culture Center, Istanbul, Turkey, Wien Modern, ...

Louis Aguirre lives in Denmark since 2004, and is a member of the Danish Composers' Society. Also a member of the Snow Mask Composers' Group and the artistic director of the Snow Mask Ensemble: <http://www.snowmaskensemble.dk/medlemmer.htm>

His scores are edited by the Da Vinci Edition, Bergmann Edition, Babel Scores and his own "Igbodú Edition".

In 2015 Aguirre was awarded with the prestigious 3 Years Grant by the Danish State Arts Council.

In 2013, Karrusel, a short film with Aguirre's music and directed by the Russian film maker Marya Yaborska, was selected finalist at the Cannes Film Festival

Among his latest projects was the premiere on February 24th of his newest opera "The Way the Dead Love" as part of "Århus European Capital of Culture 2017".

In 2016 his music got performances at the Ultraschal Festival, Berlin; GuFeng International Percussion Festival, Hainan, China; XIX Festival de Música Contemporánea de Córdoba, Spain; Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris; Ramsey Concert Hall, University of Georgia; DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. Leighton Concert Hall at The Fischhoff Chamber Competition, Indiana; University of Notre Dame, USA; Festival de Música Actual (EMA), Berlín Café, Madrid; Gudon Guoying International Percussion Festival, Beijing, China; The 6th ShenYang International Percussion Festival. The Chamber Hall of SYCM, Shenyang, China; RE:FLUX 11. Music and sound art festival. Salle Bernard- Leblanc, Centree Culturel Aberdeen, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada; Istanbul Woodwind Festival, Caddebostan Culture Center, Istanbul, Turkey; Forum für Neue Musik der Christianskirche, Hamburg; Australian Percussion Gathering 2016, (presented by Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University); 6 European Clarinet Festival 2016. Sala della Muta- Palazzo Ducale. Camerino (Macerata), Italy; SUSÅ Festival,DK; and several more concerts in Spain and Denmark.

In the year 2017, his music has been played by the National Youth Orchestra of Spain (JONDE) at the National Auditorium in Madrid and Ávila's Auditorium; at the XVII Festival Internacional de Música Contemporánea, Santiago de Chile; at the Nonclassical-The Victoria, London; in Latvia's Ventspils Music School; at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA by Da Camera Young Artist; in Greenland by Mikkel Andersen; at the Muzej Narodnog Pozorišta, Belgrade; at the National Center of Contemporary Arts in Nizhni Nóvgorod, Russia; at the European meeting of contemporary percussion Agora Actual percussió, Alicante, Spain; at the Studio2 @ Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin; at the China International Percussion Festival. 2017 PAS, Shanghai. And several concerts in Denmark, including Brand NewTuesdays at the LiteraturHaus, Copenhagen; and premieres in Aalborg by the well known oboist Pilar Fontalba and by the Duo Diagonal: Anka Zatlava, harpsichord; Adam Ørvad, Accordeon, in concerts organised by Ny Musik. Forthcoming performances of his music during the rest of 2017 will take place in: Denmark, Canada, Portugal, UK, China, USA, and Spain. Among other relevant performances in 2017, on last February 24th, Aguirre premiered his 4th opera "THE WAY THE DEAD LOVE" at the Godsbanen in Århus, as part of the Århus European Capital of Culture 2017. Furthermore, his new opera received 3 more performances: on February 25 at the Odin Teatret, Holstebro, and on September 8th and 9th in Teaterøen, Copenhagen, all with Ensemble Lydenskab, the singer Laura Bowler (GB), and dansers Ichi Go (J/D) og Tizo All (BR/D).

Other premieres took place in Denmark during the OpenDays Festival 2017 by clarinetist Anna Klett, and Black Pencil Ensemble (Holland) as well as in a project organised by Ny Musik and the Rebild Culture School at the Buderup Ødekirke, Støvring, where a new work "La soledad sonora" for the saxophonist Henriette Jensen and 7 students of the Culture School, was conducted by Morten Friis. On December 1st, the Russian pianist Maria Eshpai premiered his new piece "Bagatelas con máscaras" at the new Vendsyssel Teater in Hjørring, DK.

Louis Aguirre has been the recipient of several prizes and grants such as:

1988- National Cuban Prize, UNEAC (Cuban Composers and Artist's Society) for his "Concierto para Trío Clásico"

1989- First Prize for "Canto de Otoño" at the Havana's University Composition Contest "Jornadas Martianas"

1991- The UNEAC First Prize in chamber music for "Visiones".

1991- First Honorable Mention UNEAC in symphonic music for "Diálogos con el Cuervo".

1993- The UNEAC First Prize in solo pieces for "Alegoría I"

1993- The UNEAC First Prize in Choir music for "Exaudi Nos, Deus"

1994- First Prize of the Cuban's National Center of Art and music Schools for "Alegoría I"

1994- First Mention of the Cuban's National Center of Art and Music Schools for "Sombras- Espacio Infinito".

1994- The UNEAC First Prize in chamber music for "Fractales"

1994- The UNEAC First Mention in vocal music for "Tres Poemas de Pedro Salinas".

1998- Grant for composers by the Brothers Saiz Association. Havana. Cuba.

2002- Grant by the Spanish Author Foundation.

2003- Grant by Spanish Author Foundation.

2008- Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark.

2009- Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark

2009- Grant by the Danish Composers' Society

2010- Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark

2010- Special Mention for "FRACTAL 2" (1992) for solo piano at the 19th IBLA World Competition, New York, USA.

2011- Winner (1st prize) of the 2011 Martirano Award, University of Illinois, USA.

2011- Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark.

2011- Winner (3rd prize) of the 9th Italy Percussion Competition, Fermo, Italy.

2011- Honorable Mention at the 11. Kompositionswettbewerb 2011 um den Carl von Ossietzky-Preis der Universität Oldenburg for my percussion duo YALODDE I.

2012- Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark.

2012- Awarded 3rd Prize at the Musica Domani Prize 2012, USA, for ICONOS (1992), for Violin and Piano.

2013- A short film with Aguirre's music, and directed by Russian film maker Maria Yaborska was finalist at the Cannes Film Festival.

2014 - Grant by the Statens Kunstfond of Denmark.

2014 -2016 Composer in residence of Neopercusión & Colectivo Neo, Madrid, Spain.

2015- Awarded the prestigious 3 Years Grant by the Danish State Arts Council.

2017- Winner of the call for scores done by Diaphonia Edizioni & XelmYa+ trio.

2017- Winner of the call for scores done by the Russian String Quartet "Cantando".

2017- Winner of the Chamber Timpanist Initiative's Call for Scores Project.

2018- Winner of the APNM collaboration with Iktus Percussion, NY. USA:

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-Molerio Rosa, Arleti María. 2009. La producción musical del compositor Louis Aguirre Rovira en el presente de la música de cámara académica cubana. Revista Variaciones #1, Universidad Estatal de Cuenca, Ecuador.

-Albertson Dan. April 2010. La Folia, Online Music Review. "Qualche tedeschi, qualche gaijin". (review on CD Verso, "IBEYI").

-Santacecilia María. July 2010. Mundo Clásico: Nadar en ríos metafísicos. Spain.

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- Santana, Ernesto. March 31, 2014. CUBANET: Hasta donde me lleven los dioses. <http://www.cubanet.org/actualidad/actualidad-destacados/hasta-donde-me-lleven-los-dioses/>

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- Madorran-Asenjo, Maricarmen. September 30, 2016. Densidad, exceso, ritos: sincretismo cultural para una teogonía afrocubana. <http://espaciosonoro.tallersonoro.com/2016/09/30/entrevista-a-louis-aguirre-2/>
- Morales Flores, Iván Cesar. January 27, 2017. Louis Aguirre. avant-garde del afro- cubanismo desde la diáspora musical cubana de finales del siglo XX y principios del XXI. <http://espaciosonoro.tallersonoro.com/2017/01/27/louis-aguirre-avant-garde-del-afrocubanismo-desde-la-diaspora-musical-cubana-de-finales-del-siglo-xx-y-principios-del-xxi/>
- Cubaner opsætter opera i Aarhus. Den cubanske komponist Louis Aguirre opsætter opera i Aarhus i anledning af kulturhovedstadsåret <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/kultur/ECE9375123/cubaner-opsaetter-opera-i-aarhus/>
- Méndez, Juan Carlos. The Afro-cuban heritage in contemporary music: Roldán, Caturla, Aguirre. Thesis for the final Exam in Composition at the Murcia Superior Conservatory, Spain. 2017.
- Morales Flores, Iván Cesar. 2018. Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas. Identidades en proceso. Cinco compositores cubanos de la diáspora (1990-2013). Premio de Musicología Casa de las Américas 2016.
 - Morales Flores, Iván César. 2018. Revista Amérique Latine Histoire et Mémoire. Les Cahiers ALHIM, Universidad Paris 8. Des/re-territorialización de prácticas musicales afrocubanas: compositores académicos cubanos de la diáspora de finales del siglo XX y principios del XXI . <https://journals.openedition.org/alhim/5944>
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- Aguirre, Louis. Worldwide Cuban Music. Doce Microludios sobre la nueva modernidad en la música clásica contemporánea. I-IV. <https://worldwidecubanmusic.com/2016/03/23/doce-microludios-sobre-la-nueva-modernidad-en-la-musica-clasica-contemporanea-i/>
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List of recordings:

-Añá (Liturgia de la Transmutación) Nerafilms 2006 - DVD. Enric Monfort, solo percussion; Jos Zwaanenburg, Conductor; Axyz Ensemble.

-IBEYI (Oru). Duo Verso: MATTHIJS KOENE - Panfluit & STEFAN GERRITSEN - Gitaar. VERSO: Karnatic Lab Records: KLR 021 (CD)

-Wind-Span: Contemporary Danish Accordion Music and Classical Works Adam Ørvad. DANACORD. DACOCD718

-Cendres. Voice and electronics: Evelin Ramón. Work: Oru a Olokun. Canada.