



Photo credit: Roland Lim

Gonzalo Farias, conductor

Chilean-born orchestral conductor and award-winning pianist Gonzalo Farias has been recently appointed as the Associate Conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony. In an ever-changing world, Gonzalo's main ambition is to establish music-making as a way of rethinking our place in society by cultivating respect, authenticity, and cooperation among all people in our community.

While serving as the Assistant Conductor of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra under JoAnn Falletta's leadership, The Virginia Gazette noted that "with a lyrical, almost Zen-like quality, the amiable Farias established him as a focused, musical artist who knows what he wants and how to get it - with grace and style and substance." Farias was also the recipient of the prestigious Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Conducting Fellowship for two seasons. Mentored by Marin Alsop, he assisted conductors Robert Spano, Bernard Labadie, Markus Stenz, Christoph König, Johannes Debus, and Lahav Shani, among many others.

Farias has worked closely with Jaap Van Zweden and Johannes Schlaefli at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival in Switzerland as well as with Neeme and Paavo Järvi at the Pärnu Music Festival. In the United States, he was the recipient of the prestigious Bruno Walter Memorial

Conducting Scholarship twice at the Cabrillo Music Festival and named Emergent Conductor by Victor Yampolsky at the Peninsula Music Festival. He also attended the Pierre Monteux Festival where he received the Bernard Osher Scholar Prize.

Out of 566 applicants from 78 countries, Gonzalo was chosen as one of the 24 finalists of the prestigious 2018 Malko Conducting Competition with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. Hailed by the Gramophone magazine critics, "Mr. Farias offered one of the most fluent, honest, open hearted and pointed performances."

Farias was born in Santiago de Chile, where he began his piano studies at age five. He continued at the New England Conservatory as a full-scholarship student of Wha-Kyung Byun and Russell Sherman. His final Doctoral thesis "Logical Predictions and Cybernetics" focused on second-order cybernetics as a way to help understand how complex systems organize, coordinate, and interconnect with one another. He has won first prize at the Claudio Arrau International Piano Competition and prizes at the Maria Canals and Luis Sigall Piano Competitions. As a conductor, he attended the University of Illinois working with Donald Schleicher, the Peabody Conservatory with Marin Alsop, worked privately with the late Otto-Werner Mueller, and studied under the guidance of Larry Rachleff for several years.