



Melissa Melendez A native of Venezuela, Ms. Melendez started her musical career in '*El Sistema*', and in the prestigious *Emil Friedman School* in Caracas. She holds a Bachelor degree from "Louisiana State University", a Master degree from "The Cleveland Institute of Music", and an Artist Diploma from "Duquesne University." Among her major teachers are: Jerzy Kosmala, Stanley Konopka, Randolph Kelly, and Hong-Mei Xiao. She has also participated in Masterclasses with acclaimed international violinists such as Kim Kashkashian, Paul Neubauer and Jeffrey Irvine. Ms. Melendez has been a guest soloist with the Virtuosi de Caracas, The Kingsville Symphony Orchestra, The Balcones Symphony, the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Orchestra, and the Corpus Christi Symphony. Ms. Melendez was a member of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra where she played for three seasons, and a winner of the President's Concert Competition 2004 held at the University of Arizona while obtaining her Doctoral degree in 2006. In 2012, she played in Carnegie Hall as guest artist of Draganov and Friends; and on April of the same year, Ms. Melendez premiered *Gonzalo Castellanos-Yumar Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* with the Carabobo Symphony in Venezuela. Currently, she holds the position of Principal Violist of the Kingsville Symphony Orchestra, Principal Violist of the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Principal Violist of the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra. She is also the Director of the Suzuki Program in the Schools at the Early Childhood Development Center located in the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, and assistant director of the Corpus Christi Area Youth Orchestra. Ms. Melendez resides in Corpus Christi with her husband Jose Gerardo Flores, and their three children Marcel, Marco and Mariel.