

DR. RAUL MURCIANO, JR.

A Brief Snapshot

My name is Raul Murciano, Jr., staunch optimist and an unabashed lover of life. As I look back, I've worn many hats throughout this journey and have enjoyed the unique challenges and rewards each diverse path has afforded me—from becoming a civil engineer, to being a founding member/performer and musical director of The Miami Sound Machine (yes, with Gloria Estefan), to earning master's and doctoral degrees in music theory and composition, serving over 29 years at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, first as Program Director of Media Writing and Production, then Full Professor of Practice in Composition, and ultimately as Dean of Administration of the entire School, to now having moved to Denver in early 2020 and creating the Colorado Mambo Orchestra in 2021. I can honestly say that, thus far, this has been nothing short of an *amazing* adventure! I have thoroughly enjoyed touring nationally and internationally making music with world-class performers, derived great satisfaction composing and producing over 700 musical ads for radio, television (and even a few movie scores), and as a university professor felt privileged mentoring many currently successful and recognized (Grammy Award-winning) music producers, composers, entertainers, entrepreneurs, and fellow educators.

As I look back on the individuals that have most influenced me, the expected answer that acknowledges parents and family also holds true for me, as does the immediate socio-cultural environment of one's upbringing—in my case, Miami of the 1960s through the 1980s. But unquestionably the most influential individual and inspiring muse today is my remarkable wife, Vivian Murciano. When asked how long we have been married, my answer is invariably the same: "Not long enough..."

And while previous successes, significant accomplishments, and past influences are certainly noteworthy and help others get a sense of "where you're coming from," I have always been much more inspired and motivated by the notion of "what's next?" Once a particular project has been completed (yes, I do finish what I start), I am immediately looking for the next endeavor and ready to wholly immerse myself in it. One of the most recent and significant projects is serving with my wife as co-chairs for the Nathan Yip Foundation's Gala Fundraiser—what a wonderful opportunity to support an important cause and collaborate with some truly amazing individuals! And our theme this year, Chino/Latino, fits beautifully with my passion for supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. Which brings me back to the Colorado Mambo Orchestra... I formed the first prototype of the group in June of 2021 and within three months we debuted with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra as part of the Mexican Cultural Center's *Latin Beats* series in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. And so it was, and so the momentum has grown... With the support of many local advocates and a continually growing fan base, to date we have performed in a series of remarkable venues and festivals including Five Points Jazz Festival, Cuba-Cuba, Caffè Sole, Inga's, The Brown Palace, Dazzle, KUVU Studios, Intercambio, Cultural Caravan, City Park Jazz Festival, and performances with CASA Children's Advocacy Group, Flock Party at Denver Metro Zoo, Marjorie Park at Fiddler's Green, and TWO more performances at Boettcher Hall with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Fasten your seatbelts, The Colorado Mambo Orchestra is now recording its first release and it only gets bigger from there!