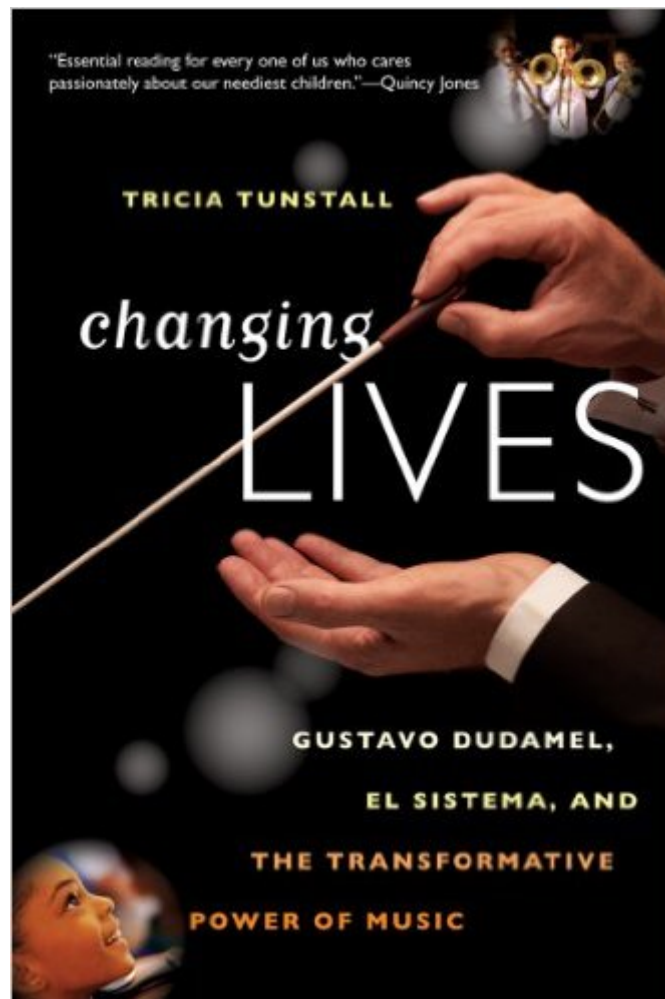


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# Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, And The Transformative Power Of Music



## Synopsis

Reminds us of how arts education can change lives. • Gary Stager, Huffington Post In this vivid story • (Economist), Tricia Tunstall chronicles the origins and growth of Venezuela's acclaimed El Sistema national music education program • (Reed Johnson, Los Angeles Times) and illustrates its overarching goal: to rescue children from the depredations of poverty through music. What began in Venezuela has extended to Los Angeles, New York City, and Baltimore, illustrating that El Sistema is not just a program, it's a movement. Combining firsthand interviews with compelling stories, Changing Lives reveals that arts education can indeed effect positive social change in the United States and around the world. 16 pages of illustrations

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an informative and inspiring journey through the development of El Sistema in Venezuela and the power that learning to play music with others has to motivate young people to become creative and caring members of society. Gustavo Dudamel, the charismatic conductor with focused love of young people, has completely changed the environment of classical music not only in Los Angeles but all over the world. Don't miss this positive development in the world. It's a great antidote to network news of today!

I am retired, and I am also a volunteer violin teacher in an El Sistema like after school program in Chicago's inner city. While the US and not Venezuela, this book was nicely done, and helped me to

understand how all this came to be.

The story narrated in this book is breathtaking. How one man, Juan Antonio Abreu, and his dream of El Sistema, transformed Venezuela from a country whose professional orchestra employed no Venezuelans to a country where EVERY child has the right to study music with gifted teachers for as many years as they wish, to have an instrument to play, and the opportunity to play in musical groups of all sizes and talent. Now the country has several world-class orchestras of young people and even school children who are invited all over the world to play for sophisticated musical audiences and then treated to enthusiastic standing ovations and patrons shouting approval! These young musicians are proficient not only in all genres of European music, they are also proficient in Latin American music, both popular and classical. To hear and see (via YouTube) more than 200 talented young musicians all playing together enthusiastically and extremely articulately for a gifted conductor, Gustavo Dudamel, who is himself a product of El Sistema, is a grand testament to Abreu's dream and Venezuela's support for this transformative program.

This book is a great read and the message it carries is so authentic. I live in a small mountain town and we are doing similar things here, trying to capture "at risk" youth around music. I told a friend about this book--he is a retired Methodist minister--and he said it was the best book he has ever read! Kudos to Tunstall for her fine research and writing.

This book should be required reading for music teachers everywhere, and for those folks in positions of power in the educational system who pass judgement on funding for music and other arts programs.

After reading Changing Lives, I began to learn about El Sistema here in Cleveland. I discovered three locations and have visited one of them - at the Rainey Institute. My chapter of Delta Omicron, International Music Fraternity, will be supporting this wonderful project with our donations. I have purchased two more copies of the book so that everyone in the chapter can read about El Sistema.

It is a well written story about El Sistema from its beginnings in Venezuela to the American development. As I am working in this system in Mexico I know the impact it has on youngsters and in their families. The book has helped us to understand El Sistema better and try it as it is. Results are astonishing. Required reading for people in the Education field, from planners and directors

to front line teachers.

I really loved learning about El Sistema and this amazing movement in Venezuela. I had never heard of any of this before. The one thing that was hard is that it's written like a really long newspaper article. And it's often quite redundant. It could be a much shorter book and still say the same thing. All the same, the content was eye-opening and inspiring. I truly hope to see this idea take off worldwide.

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