

# Spring Program

2024/25 Season



Houston Youth Symphony

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## History

With more than 75 years of history, Houston Youth Symphony (HYS) is the recipient of national acclaim, including the 2024 American Prize Honored Artist for sustained excellence. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Dr. Michael Webster, this season 415 musicians between the ages of 7 and 19 come from across the greater Houston area to perform in one of five HYS orchestras. In addition to the core orchestra program, HYS offers advanced musicians a chamber music training program and an annual concerto competition.

In the community, HYS provides free private music lessons for talented youth through the Melody Program. In January 2015, HYS launched the Coda Music Program, an after-school effort modeled after El Sistema that brings graduated, intensive string instruction to four elementary schools in Houston's Near Northside neighborhood and four elementary schools in Fort Bend. The program uses classical music and group instruction to build community and social transformation.

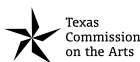
To learn more about HYS programs, concerts, and opportunities to support the work of Houston Youth Symphony, please visit [HoustonYouthSymphony.org](https://HoustonYouthSymphony.org).

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## A Note from the Executive Director

Houston Youth Symphony's 2024/25 season has been a year of tremendous achievements and milestones.

This January, HYS held its first concerto competition open to any HYS musician. 61 musicians competed in two divisions for a chance to win cash prizes and performance opportunities. Our distinguished panel of judges awarded 16 honorable mentions; four division winners who will perform in the Winner's Concert on May 10; and one overall winner, Emily Nickl, who performs the Ibert Flute Concerto this evening with the Symphony.

The HYS Coda Music Program celebrates its 10th year of providing free group string instruction to elementary school students in HISD and FBISD schools. Since 2015, the Coda Music Program has reached more than 1,000 student musicians and provided 2,600+ hours of instruction.

The HYS Melody Program began in 2005 to provide free private lessons to young musicians who otherwise would not have the financial means to access one-on-one lessons. In 20 years, the Melody Program has given 9,000+ hours of instruction to 340 individuals from 31 different schools.

And finally, this year we are graduating a record number 83 seniors! As these musicians embark on the next phase of their lives, we hope that HYS has made a lasting impact on them not only as musicians but also as exceptional people who will become our future leaders. They will always be part of the HYS family.

Sincerely,



Amy Chung

## *We wish to thank our generous supporters.*

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## 2024/25 Season Spring Concert I

May 4, 2025, 2:30 p.m.  
Moore's Opera House  
University of Houston's  
Moore's School of Music

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### Debut String Orchestra

Jackson Guillén, Conductor

*Radiant Joy* (2023)

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

*Water Reflections* (2016)

Yukiko Nishimura (b. 1967)

Themes from *Carmen* (1875)

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)  
arr. Carrie Lane Gruselle

*Alma Llanera* (1914)

Pedro Elías Gutiérrez (1870–1954)  
arr. Mauricio Oliveros

Pause

---

### String Orchestra

Angela Peugnet, Conductor

Largo and Presto from Sonata in D  
(1731)

Joseph Boismortier (1689–1755)  
arr. Robert D. McCashin

*Milonga del Angel* (1989)

Ástor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)  
arr. Jim Palmer

*Elementa* (2022)

Soon Hee Newbold (b. 1974)

I. Flights of Fancy

II. Terra

III. Fire and Ice

Pause

---

### Sinfonia

Brad Smith, Conductor

*Lincoln Portrait* (1942)

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

Timothy Jones, Narrator

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*Photography and video recording strictly prohibited.*

*Please silence all phones and electronic devices*

*A ten-minute pause takes place between each orchestra.*

*Lincoln Portrait, written by Aaron Copland, is presented under license  
from Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.*

## ***Lincoln Portrait Text***

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history."

That is what he said,

That is what Abraham Lincoln said:

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We—even we here—hold the power and bear the responsibility." [Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1862]

He was born in Kentucky, raised in Indiana, and lived in Illinois.

And this is what he said:

This is what Abe Lincoln said:

He said: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country." [Annual Message to Congress, December 1, 1862]

When standing erect he was six feet four inches tall.

And this is what he said:

He said: "It is the eternal struggle between two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. . . .

It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread—and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle!" [Lincoln-Douglas debates, 15 October 1858]

Lincoln was a quiet man.

Abe Lincoln was a quiet and a melancholy man.

But when he spoke of democracy,

This is what he said:

He said: "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is not democracy."

Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of these United States, is everlasting in the memory of his countrymen.

For on the battleground at Gettysburg, this is what he said:

He said: ". . . that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion: that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

# Spring Concert I

## Program Notes

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### Debut String Orchestra

#### ***Radiant Joy***

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

We open our final concert of the season with this uplifting and exciting work by Brian Balmages. Commissioned by the Sartartia Middle School Honors Orchestra from here in Sugar Land, *Radiant Joy* reflects the composer's abilities to blend beautiful melodies with elements of fiddle music. The rhythmic drive and bright harmonies create a balance between expressiveness and energy that allows the listener and the performer to stay engaged in a constant sense of celebration.

#### ***Water Reflections***

Yukiko Nishimura (b. 1967)

With the intention of capturing the gentle and sometimes chaotic movement of water, Japanese composer Yukiko Nishimura includes atmospheric and colorful melodies and harmonies in the first section of this work, creating a sense of serenity and calmness in the listener. The second section suddenly changes to a faster tempo,

reinforcing the sense of water moving (flowing) and shimmering in the light. The first section returns to bring the piece to a close with the same atmospheric and reflective quality as the beginning.

#### **Themes from *Carmen***

George Bizet (1838–1875),  
arr. Carrie Lane Gruselle

French composer George Bizet's opera, *Carmen*, is now one of the most frequently performed operas around the world. Unfortunately, Bizet's death shortly after the Opera's premiere in 1875 prevented the composer from enjoying the success of the work after mixed initial reviews and low enthusiasm from the public in Paris. The opera is set in Spain, specifically in Seville in the early 19th century. Hence, the work is filled with Spanish-influenced melodies and harmonies that blend excitement with dramatic intensity. This arrangement by Carrie Lane Gruselle includes some of the most famous arias and sections of the opera such as the dramatic "Prelude," the festive "Aragonaise," the famous "Habañera," and the "Dance Boheme."

***Alma Llanera***

José María Lacalle García (1859–1937)  
arr. Longfield

A staple of Venezuelan folk music, *Alma Llanera* is considered by the Venezuelan people to be their second national anthem. Written in the style of *Joropo*—a musical genre originating from and rooted in the plains of Venezuela and Colombia and usually played in 3/4 or 6/8 meter—this world-famous song celebrates a sense of identity and joy. The music was composed by Pedro Gutierrez, and the lyrics were written by Rafael Bolívar Coronado, reflecting the beautiful landscape of the llanos (plains) in Venezuela, and the pride its people take in their surroundings. This song has been arranged and performed by artists, groups, and orchestras around the world. This arrangement by local violinist, educator, and arranger Mauricio Oliveros, successfully blends aspects of classical and popular harmonies while maintaining the characteristics of the Joropo and its enthusiastic, celebratory atmosphere.

*Notes by Jackson Guillén*

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**String Orchestra****Largo and Presto from Sonata in D**

Joseph Boismortier (1689–1755)  
arr. Robert D. McCashin

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier was a prolific and successful French composer of the Baroque era. His music was popular enough that he became rich without the aid of patrons. He was able in 1724 to secure an engraver's royal privilege, so he began to publish his own music. He was not highly regarded by other composers of the time since he wrote mostly for amateur musicians and the instruments they played. He wrote more than 300 instrumental sonatas and concertos as well as a great number of vocal pieces. Amongst these is the very first French solo concerto for any instrument, a concerto for cello, viol, or bassoon (1729). He greatly expanded the repertoire for the transverse flute, even writing a flute instruction method (now lost). The Largo and Presto were drawn from his Sonata in D Major, one work from his collection of Six Sonatas, Op. 34. This piece is a great example of the grandiose and energetic spirit of the Baroque era.

### ***Milonga del Angel***

Ástor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)

arr. Jim Palmer

Argentinian composer Ástor Piazzolla revolutionized the traditional Argentine tango into the “nuevo tango” style that incorporates elements of jazz and classical music. The influence of other 20th century composers such as Stravinsky and Bartók can be heard in the dissonances and powerful harmonic motion of this sweeping tango. While similar to the serious, dramatic Argentine tango, the *milonga* is normally more relaxed and rustic in style. The original *Milonga del Ángel* (*Dance of the Angel*) is the second part of a cycle of Angel works by Piazzolla created in 1965 for a stage play *Tango del Angel*, in which an angel heals the spirits of the residents of a shabby Buenos Aires neighborhood. The melody is first played in the viola’s resonant and rich timbre to set the mood for this lyric dance.

### ***Elementa***

Soon Hee Newbold (b. 1974)

This stunning three-movement work is inspired by the train-born city of Russell, Kentucky along the south bank of the Ohio River. This work portrays the elements of air, earth, fire, and water. The opening

movement, *Flights of Fancy*, symbolizes the element of air along with a train ride through the landscape of Russell. As we ride the train, listen for the train’s whistle (harmonics) and the popping of the engine’s burning coal (pizzicato). Watch the city pass by before we soar overhead, seeing the town from a bird’s eye view. The second movement, *Terra*, resembles an Appalachian lullaby and represents the element of Earth. The listener is settled between the flowing Ohio river on one side and the Appalachian forests on the other. The final movement, *Fire and Ice*, is a tour de force which captures the elements of fire and water meeting to create steam, and the resulting kinetic energy is a symbol of a still-thriving small town.

*Notes by Angela Peugnet*

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## **Sinfonia**

### ***Lincoln Portrait***

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

Following the attack at Pearl Harbor in 1941, the conductor Andre Kostelanetz decided to commission three American composers to write pieces that would present a “musical portrait gallery of great Americans.” Jerome Kern chose

Mark Twain; Virgil Thomson chose New York City's Mayor Fiorello La Guardia; journalist Dorothy Thompson and Aaron Copland chose Walt Whitman. Kostelanetz asked Copland if he might choose a statesman instead of a second literary figure; so Copland turned to Abraham Lincoln. Copland viewed this as an opportunity to bring music forth out of a national emergency rather than contributing a large, serious work to his oeuvre. To his surprise, *Lincoln Portrait* and *Fanfare for the Common Man* (written only one year later), became two of his more enduring works.

The work is composed in a slow-fast-slow ABA form, with the narration coming in the second A section. The opening is very sparse and serious, evoking some sense of the mysterious and melancholy nature of Lincoln, but also combined with a more lyrical and simple statement of the folk tune "Springfield Mountain," a moment many listeners find poignant and moving, and very "American." The middle Allegro section seems to take us through a musical picture of Lincoln's journey in life, again starting with simplicity and moving towards the grandeur of military snare drums and brass fanfares, perhaps depicting a musical

"battlefield" before transitioning to the somber opening music, where the text of the work lies.

Copland chose Lincoln's own words, tied together with only a small amount of his own narrative to give little bits of information about his height, hometown, and things of this nature. The quotes are a collection of speeches and writings that spoke clearly to the national crisis of that moment, as well as containing themes of remembrance for the fallen, a defense of democratic ideas, and finally a call to action in a spirit of democracy and moral clarity, largely in regard to the country's fraught history of slavery; these words serve as the core of the message.

The composer wrote: "I hoped to suggest something of the mysterious sense of fatality that surrounds Lincoln's personality. The challenge was to compose something simple, yet interesting enough to fit Lincoln." Since its premiere, *Lincoln Portrait* has been performed in countless settings, on special occasions of remembrance or national grief, and with narrators ranging from Coretta Scott King to Henry Fonda, to James Earl Jones, and many others.

*Notes by Brad Smith*



## ***Timothy Jones, Narrator***



Timothy Jones, Doctorate of Musical Arts University of Michigan, is an American Bass-Baritone who enjoys a reputation as a charismatic presence on operatic and concert stages throughout the United States, Europe and South America in addition to being a Professor of Voice at the University of Houston Moores School of Music. The Boston Globe hailed his voice as “stentorian and honeyed” and the Chicago Tribune called his “complete connection with the text extraordinary.” His eagerly anticipated performances combine intelligent musicianship, commanding vocal technique and a unique ability to connect with audiences. A distinguished concert performer, Mr. Jones has soloed with the Cleveland Orchestra singing Handel’s Messiah and Bach’s St. Matthew Passion. He has also performed with Boston Baroque, Baltimore Symphony, St.

Petersburg Chamber Orchestra, Austin Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Houston Symphony, New Mexico Symphony, New Haven Symphony, Portland Symphony, Saginaw Symphony, and San Antonio Symphony, Utah Symphony, Wichita Symphony Orchestra and the Virginia Symphony. Dr. Jones is widely celebrated as an enthusiastic champion of new and contemporary music. His tour de force performance of Eight Songs for a Mad King by Peter Maxwell Davies was called “an amazing feat, making unnatural demands seem natural ... bizarre behavior coalesced into a sympathetic portrayal” (The Salt Lake Tribune). His annual appearances with Kevin Noe and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble are a highpoint of the season. The Salt Lake Tribune raved over his performance of Argento’s A Waterbird Talk, stating “Jones was a marvelous singing actor.... His wry enjoyment was contagious.” His performance of Pulitzer Prize Winning Composer Kevin Puts’ Einstein on Mercer Street is featured on PNME’s recent recording “Against the Emptiness”. Other recordings include “Drunken Moon” and “The World of Ruth Crawford Seeger”.

## Debut String Orchestra Musicians

### Violin I

Yuxuan Li  
*concertmaster*  
Celeste Molina  
*assistant concertmaster*  
Navaneeth Sreenivasan  
Lorenzo Rubio  
Daniel Q. Lu  
Joanna Wu  
Sidhi Suresh  
Lonny Sui  
Connor Chang  
Bala Keha  
Nana Barning  
Emma Koo  
Brighu Tejas Gautam  
Carolina Laronga  
Ning Yang  
Henry McLeod

### Violin II

Emma Dang  
*principal*  
Nicolas Ocampo  
*assistant principal*  
Annabelle Li  
Vrishni Krishnan  
Catalina Bonnet  
Mercedes Lundberg  
Alexis J. Lu  
Enya Zhao  
Yeva Cherry  
Joshua Lee  
Kiran Tran  
Shalin Tran

### Viola

Connor Chen  
*principal*  
María López  
*assistant principal*  
Ariana Correa  
Lillian G. Diaz  
Tahani Meraz  
D'ionee Harris  
Chloe Lam  
Muhammad Asmir Khan  
Ellie Josephine  
Avellaneda  
Emma Burgess  
Madison Ramsborg

### Cello

Joshua Smith  
*principal*  
Cedric Wijatno  
*assistant principal*  
Clara Hong  
Citlalli Cruz  
Naomi Berth  
Andrew Chen  
Ava Zhou  
Elijah Trejo  
Diana Cabrera  
Timothy Lee  
Eshaan Shenava  
Lena Frances Wills

### Bass

Laura Rinehart  
*principal*  
Christian J. Chen  
*assistant principal*  
Eduardo Caleb Arriaga

### Harp

Titus Lu

### Orchestra Liaison

Guadalupe Cantu

## String Orchestra Musicians

### Violin I

Benjamin Suljic  
*concertmaster*  
Edison Barton  
*assistant concertmaster*  
Joseph Mani  
Enora Trahan  
Noelle Hsuan  
Gregory Zheng  
Arianna Sackett  
Claire Shim  
Andrew Huang  
Bennett McLeod  
Sohan Kamsala  
Eleni Christina Diehl  
Joseph Hu  
Luke Trahan

### Violin II

Alice Zhang  
*principal*  
Theia Doescher  
*assistant principal*  
Mia Cha  
Luna Choe  
Kelly Su  
Ava D'Souza  
Ethan Wu  
Caroline Maxian  
Eathon Yao  
Andres Sanchez  
Julia Hayoon Vuu  
Elena Liu  
Jasmine Zhang  
Amina Crawford  
Gavin Yu  
Vishakha Rao

### Viola

Armahn Virani  
*principal*  
Tishe Odejide  
*assistant principal*  
Po Yan Ho  
Pablo Alejandro Varela  
Lillian Sissons  
Celeste Peugnet  
Neil Shaw  
Gabriella Capetillo

### Cello

Gavin Liu  
*principal*  
Brayden Li  
*assistant principal*  
Arhaan F. Baig  
Neev Vanam  
Audrey Meeks  
Danna Sun  
Benjamin Le  
Tiffany Chen  
Kathleen Zhang  
Kayla Heng  
Michael Liang  
Evalynn Lu  
Lucien Guo

### Bass

Bria Soleil Linehan  
*principal*  
Aiden Wang  
*assistant principal*  
Kristine Yi  
Kwaku Barning  
Audrey Wood

### Orchestra Liaison

Diana Liang

## Sinfonia Musicians

### Violin I

Maggie Huang  
*concertmaster*

Emily Choi  
*assistant concertmaster*

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David McGrew

Yejin Lee

Faith Maxian

Elizabeth Thomas

Celeste L. Smith

Ailin Feng

Joey Zhu

Jinoo Kim

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Joana Kong  
*assistant principal*

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Emma Lee

Grace Hao

Ava Jean Achivida

Dylan Chan

Devon Chan

Oliver Mateusz Tume

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Olivia Kanick

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Sewon Cho

Kayla Le

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*principal*

Arya Prasad  
*assistant principal*

Serena Xu

Alex Starnes

Mahee Rao Agrahar

Mason McMurrey

Melody McMurrey

Andrea Correa

Victor Banos

Isaac Lu

### Cello

Evangeline Yang  
*principal*

Ethan Dendinger  
*assistant principal*

Tanush Vatnani

Mikaela Wood

Joanne Bach

Varsha R. Chandupatla

Joshua Wang

Marcus Lee

Evan Ung

Mark Doan

Sean Chu

### Bass

Joel Mathew  
*principal*

Sahiti Venigalla  
*assistant principal*

Shadrack Akinkunmi

Adrian Curry

Brynn Peugnet

Priya Chandrasekhar

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Nazir Neri

Sarah Porter

### Bassoon

Michael Breckenridge

Shyam Jayant

Evan Schlorholtz ‡

### Horn

Jmichael Aguilar ‡

Martin Cetto

Emmeline James

Kishan Patel

Shiven Patel

Liam Powers

## Trumpet

Lucas Fang  
Heather Macleod  
Aneesh Pannala ‡  
Daniel Rivas-Velasco

## Harp

Titus Liu

## Timpani

Juno Bitancor

## Orchestra Liaison

Nikki Achivida

*String musicians are listed in chair order. Wind and Percussion musicians are listed alphabetically.*

‡ Principal

## Trombone

Deo Aurel ‡  
Eli Claflin  
Luke Ehmke

## Percussion

Joshua A. Colomine  
Puentes  
Ivan Shen  
Kevin Wang

## Bass Trombone

Cooper Gounah

## Tuba


Nile Harvey ‡  
Corbin O'Bannion

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# Houston Youth Symphony Audience Survey

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To assist HYS in reporting requirements for various federal, state and city grants, please take a few minutes to complete this brief survey.



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## 2024/25 Season Spring Concert II

May 4, 2025, 7:00 p.m.  
Moore's Opera House  
University of Houston's  
Moore's School of Music

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### Philharmonia

Matthew Porter, Guest Conductor

*Light Cavalry Overture* (1886)

Franz von Suppé (1819–1895)

Symphony No. 2 (1901–1902)

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

III. Vivacissimo

IV. Finale

Pause

---

### Symphony

Michael Webster, Conductor

*Concerto pour Flûte et Orchestre*  
(1932)

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

III. Allegro Scherzando

Emily Nickl, flute

2025 HYS Concerto Competition Overall Winner

*Symphonic Dances from*  
*West Side Story* (1960)

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)  
arr. Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal

Prologue

Somewhere

Scherzo

Mambo

Cha-Cha

Meeting Scene

Cool Fugue

Rumble

Finale

*Overture to Candide* (1957)

Leonard Bernstein

---

*Photography and video recording strictly prohibited.*

*Please silence all phones and electronic devices.*

*A ten-minute pause takes place between each orchestra.*

*Concerto pour Flûte et Orchestre, written by Jacques Ibert, used by permission of G. Schirmer, Inc.*

*Symphonic Dances from "West Side Story" and Overture to "Candide", written by Leonard Bernstein, are presented under license from Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.*

## ***Spring Concert II***

### ***Program Notes***

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#### **Philharmonia**

##### ***Light Cavalry Overture***

Franz von Suppé (1819–1895)

The well-loved and iconic overture to the operetta *Leichte Kavallerie* (*Light Cavalry*) was first performed in 1866 in Vienna, Austria. The operetta's story, with themes outlined in the overture, follows Vilma, a beautiful orphan raised by the village, who becomes the object of desire for many men, stirring jealousy among their wives. Despite the gossip, Vilma loves Hermann, but his guardian, Mayor Bums, refuses to approve their marriage, hoping to win Vilma for himself. Disheartened, Hermann considers joining the Hungarian Hussars (light cavalry), led by Sergeant Janos, who soon notices the village's hypocrisy.

To expose the town's deviousness, Janos devises a clever scheme, tricking the deceitful men and their jealous wives. In an unexpected twist, Janos discovers that Vilma is his long-lost daughter. Outraged by her mistreatment, he forces Bums to approve her marriage to Hermann. With justice restored, the Hussars

depart triumphantly, having brought harmony back to the village.

While the operetta itself has faded into obscurity, the overture remains a beloved concert piece and has been widely featured in cartoons and films. Most notably, it was showcased in the 1942 Disney cartoon *Symphony Hour*, where Mickey Mouse conducts the work, securing its place in popular culture. In modern times, the *Light Cavalry Overture* is a staple in the orchestral pops repertoire.

##### **Symphony No. 2**

Jean Sibelius (1865 – 1957)

The third movement of Sibelius's Symphony No. 2, Scherzo, opens with one of the most frenetic and intense tempos of the late Romantic era. The machine-gun-like figure in the strings weaves its way through the orchestra, while the winds overlay a leaping melodic line above the fray. The slower trio section that follows introduces a simple, lyrical melody played by the solo oboe, accompanied by clarinets and horns. After this lyrical retreat, a furious trumpet fanfare propels the listener back into the return of the opening theme in its original form. The trio section reappears toward the end, providing an elegant transition into the majestic opening

of the final movement, which firmly establishes us in the key of D major.

If you listen closely to the opening of the fourth movement, *Allegro Moderato*, you can hear echoes of Beethoven's fate theme in the trombones, accented by a quirky ostinato in the double bass and tuba. This curious juxtaposition gradually builds toward a powerful resolution that is meant to symbolize victory and affirmation. Sibelius skillfully weaves together the themes of struggle and hope, culminating in a jubilant ending that leaves a decidedly optimistic impression on the audience. While some musicologists interpret the work as a reflection of Finland's struggles for independence from Russia, it is more widely regarded as a personal reflection of the composer's own growth and evolution.

"My second symphony is a confession of the soul."

— Jean Sibelius

*Notes by Matthew Porter*

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## Symphony

### ***Concerto pour Flûte et Orchestre***

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

In 1920, the critic Henri Collet coined the term "Les Six" to describe Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, and Germaine Tailleferre, all born between 1888 and 1892.

Jacques Ibert was not included!

Although history has deemed him to be more important than Auric, Durey, and Tailleferre, his relatively conservative style kept him out of Les Six.

Ibert's music tends to be cheerful, colorful, and virtuosic. It is tonal, but with its own unique twists and surprises. He was prolific, especially with music for the theater: seven operas and twenty-one movie scores! He tended to gravitate toward the woodwinds in his twenty-three chamber works and is best known for his vibrant orchestral scores, such as *Escales* and *Divertissement*.

*The Concerto for Flute and Orchestra* was written in 1932 for the famous French flutist and pedagogue Marcel Moyse, receiving its premiere at the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire in 1934. The third movement is typical Ibert – virtuosic,

ebullient, highly rhythmic. It is not without its thoughtful moments, however. The typical ABA form offers a stark contrast between the two theme groups, the A theme bursting out like a racehorse from the starting gate, the B theme meandering lazily like a summer day on the Riviera.

### ***Symphonic Dances from West Side Story and Overture to Candide***

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

In the early 1950s, Leonard Bernstein was working on two mammoth projects simultaneously. They could not have had more dramatically different receptions! When *Candide* opened in 1956, it was a box office disaster, lasting only two months and 73 performances. On the other hand, *West Side Story* was an instant hit – the September 26, 1957 premiere was followed by 732 performances.

Even for a groundbreaking work of art, *West Side Story* had an unusually long and convoluted gestation period. The seed was planted in 1949 by the famous choreographer Jerome Robbins, whose original concept of updating Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and setting it in New York City was religious: a Catholic boy and a Jewish girl in what was dubbed East

Side Story. He invited playwright Arthur Laurents and composer Leonard Bernstein to collaborate. Because Bernstein was so busy writing *Candide*, the project dragged on and Stephen Sondheim was invited to share the workload by writing lyrics.

By the time the creative team was fully in place, years had passed, and racially motivated gang warfare had become a nightmare in New York and other big cities. So, the Puerto Rican Sharks and the white Jets replaced the Catholics and the Jews, and *West Side Story* came to fruition in 1957. Despite its success on Broadway, it lost out to *The Music Man* in the Tony Awards and was perhaps too intense, too tragic, and even too new to gain widest acceptance. It was not until the wildly successful movie version won 10 Oscars in 1961 that *West Side Story* became a household word. Bernstein's facile blending of jazz and classical elements makes *West Side Story* unique. Jazz rhythms, "swing," and "cool," juxtapose intricate counterpoint including canons and a fugue.

When it came time to extract a suite of symphonic music from the show, Bernstein's ever-hectic schedule caused him to engage the help of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal

to adapt what was originally written for a small theater orchestra to full symphonic proportions, and to help make decisions about the selection and order of the musical numbers. As a result, such hits as “Tonight, Tonight,” “America,” and “Something’s Coming” didn’t make it into the *Symphonic Dances*. “Maria” appears only peripherally, its signature upward tritone being part of the famous three-note opening motto and its melodic outline forming the basis of the “Cha Cha.” Nevertheless, an effective sequence of contrasting numbers gives the *Symphonic Dances* unity, variety and the ambiance of the plot even though the numbers are not in chronological sequence.

The signature motto reappears at crucial moments and acts as glue for the whole set of dances. The most elaborate and sophisticated orchestral forces were made available to the orchestrators, including piano, celesta, harp, saxophone and a huge battery of percussion instruments. The percussion section included instruments closely associated with jazz and Latin music: trap set, vibraphone, bongos, timbales, pitched drums, conga drum, cowbells, guiro (scraper) and maracas. Sid Ramin recalls, “We were in ecstasy!” The orchestration

is in turn brilliant, edgy, frightening, capricious, tender, and, as in the show, a wise decision was made to have the *Symphonic Dances* end tragically.

*Candide* was an operetta with libretto by Lillian Hellman based on Voltaire’s famous (some would say infamous!) novella. The reason *West Side Story* was successful was that all the revisions came before the premiere. On the other hand, *Candide* had to be revised several times by Bernstein and others before finally reaching broad acceptance.

The “Chelsea version” abandoned Hellman’s libretto, opting for a new one-act book by Hugh Wheeler and omitting half of the original musical numbers. Although it ran for nearly two years and 740 performances, Bernstein was not satisfied. His 1988 “final revised version” was in fact not final, with new productions appearing often, as recently as 2024. There was one fixture through it all – the short, brisk overture. Performed by Bernstein conducting the New York Philharmonic on January 26, 1957, it was an instant success, quickly becoming arguably his most popular work and possibly the most-often performed piece of American music. Brash and romantic themes alternate until a canonic

coda brings the ebullient work to its conclusion with a wink and a stomp.

Overtures usually open programs, but I chose to end with the *Candide* overture to send everyone home happy after the tragic ending of *West Side Story* and the culmination of an exciting and successful 2024–2025 HYS season. We wish the seniors fulfillment and success in the new chapter of their lives.

*Notes by Michael Webster*





## ***Emily Nickl, Flute***

**Senior Division, Non-Strings Winner and Overall Winner**



Emily Nickl is a flutist from League City, Texas. She has been playing the flute for eight years and is currently a senior attending Clear Creek High School. Emily is heavily involved in her high school music program serving in leadership positions progressively for the majority of high school. She has most recently attended the Music for All National Concert Band Festival with her band program in Indianapolis. She is also a private lesson instructor for the Clear Creek Independent School District.

Emily has been recognized on the state level, being named an All-State Musician by the Texas Music Educators Association for the past three years. In 2025, Emily performed as principal flute with the Philharmonic Orchestra as an All-State Musician. She has also been a member of the Texas Future Music Educators for the past three years. Emily has held the position of Principal Flute of the Plano Symphony Summer Orchestral Institute since 2023.

Emily has attended Interlochen Center for the Arts–Summer Music Intensive for two years in a row and is a recognized soloist. She performed as a soloist with the Clear Lake Symphony in 2024 as the Senior Wind Division winner of their concerto competition.

Emily will be pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Flute Performance at Carnegie Mellon University in the Fall of 2025.

# ***Guest Conductor Biography***

**Matthew Porter,**  
*Philharmonia Guest Conductor*



Matthew Porter is a highly accomplished and passionate music educator, currently serving as Director of Orchestras at Tompkins High School in Katy, Texas. With a deep commitment to nurturing talent and fostering a love for orchestral music, Mr. Porter has made a lasting impact on his students and the broader music education community.

A native of Abilene, Texas, Mr. Porter studied bass and cello under the mentorship of Madelyn Mitchell, Carolyn Rhoads, and Wanda Cooper. He earned his cum laude degree in Music Education from Texas Tech University, with a focus on orchestral conducting. Mr. Porter began his career in Katy ISD, first at Beck Junior High and Memorial Parkway Junior High, before moving to Beckendorff Junior High in 2007. Under his leadership, the orchestra program was

transformed from 58 to over 250 students, earning finalist positions in the Texas Honor Orchestra competition for eight consecutive years, and garnering invitations to perform at the Midwest Clinic (2011) and the TMEA Convention (2012).

In 2013, Mr. Porter was appointed to open Tompkins High School, where he has built one of the district's most successful orchestra programs. The Tompkins orchestras have earned multiple TMEA Honor Orchestra titles, a testament to Mr. Porter's dedication to excellence, collaborative teamwork and artistic growth.

Mr. Porter is a founding director of the Katy Youth Orchestra and the Katy ISD Junior High Summer Orchestra Camp, which he co-founded with his wife, Bryanna. A respected clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor, he also regularly shares his expertise at music festivals and events.

Among numerous accolades, Mr. Porter received the Houston Symphony's 2014 Spec's Award for Excellence in Music Education. Through his unwavering commitment to musical excellence, Matthew Porter continues to inspire, mentor, and empower young musicians, shaping their artistic journeys and fostering a lifelong appreciation for the beauty and power of orchestral music.

## Philharmonia Musicians

### Violin I

Renee Qiu  
*concertmaster*  
Samuel Castro  
*assistant concertmaster*  
Saanvi Doddaballapur  
Maya Ikegami  
Sheryl Sun  
Piet Hein Athmer  
Olivia Koo  
Katherine Guo  
Ashley Liu  
Iliana Trahan  
Michelle Li  
Joseph Olufemi Davis  
Vivian Stone  
Claira Yang  
Isabella Lawrence  
David Cui

### Violin II

Evelyn Kao  
*principal*  
Sophie Xu  
*assistant principal*  
Josie Pink  
Ethan Suh  
Max Bosen Xiao  
Natalie Min  
Julia Xu  
Maple MacGloin  
Sophia Franco  
Ana Cristina Franco  
S. Emily Liu  
Vu Le

Jennesy Morones  
Carissa Kuo  
Mason Matthews +

### Viola

Jade Nicole Phan  
*principal*  
Evan Lee  
*assistant principal*  
Riley Chang  
Isabelle Xue  
Rohan Battula  
Ella Ngu  
Aidan Huynh  
Nathan Daniel Moreno

### Cello

Andy Wu  
*principal*  
Rithik Ullas  
*assistant principal*  
Joshua Segraves  
James Aidan Tabanao  
Shaopan Gao  
Seungheon Sunny Seok  
Caleb Lewis  
Brady Hoang  
Samuel Koh  
Andhra Yalamanchili  
Keen Zhou  
Rush Matthews +

### Bass

Ryder J. McBride  
*principal*  
Bhagat Kundoor  
*assistant principal*  
Zoey Hernandez  
Ray Robison  
Abraham Melesio Zepeta  
Alexander Dean

### Flute

Jaira Bandela  
Renee Darling ‡ ^  
Casandra Davies  
Misato Kiowa

### Piccolo

Casandra Davies ‡

### Oboe

Nathan M. Gonzalez  
Zen Smith  
Hannah Stevens ‡ ^

### Clarinet

Yicheng He  
Rexford Pan  
Julie Pao  
Haobo Shi ‡ ^

### Bassoon

Daniel Alvarez ^  
Klaus Lemke ‡  
Krish Varun

**Horn**

Jonathan Castillo ^  
 Joshua Grush  
 Niyah Johnson  
 Athri Karunamurthy  
 Eton Rosales ‡

**Trumpet**

Jacob Cook  
 Kai Mahone  
 Diego Palacios  
 Trevor A. Seeley ‡ ^

**Trombone**

Liza Anino  
 Matthew Frederick ‡ ^  
 Kyle Freeman  
 Ian Ng

**Bass Trombone**

Daniel Lopez

**Tuba**

Austin Falck ‡ ^  
 Jordan Smith

**Timpani**

Edwin Wang ‡  
 Ivan Shen ^

**Percussion**

Juno Bitancor  
 Joshua A. Colomine  
 Puentes  
 Kevin Wang

**Orchestra Liaison**

Annie Sun

*String musicians are listed in chair order. Wind and Percussion musicians are listed alphabetically.*

‡ Principal von Suppé  
 ^ Principal Sibelius  
 + Musician not playing this concert



## Symphony Musicians

### Violin I

Christina Yum  
*concertmaster*  
Benjamin Zhou  
*assistant concertmaster*  
Maureen Min  
Joyce Tan  
Efran Zhao  
Coby Vu  
Henry Xu  
Jeesoo Kim  
Amanda Li  
Ava Zhang  
Arjun R. Chandupatla  
Sadie McLeod  
Tony Luong  
Sofia Concha Pinto  
Claire Loggenberg  
Maille Craig

### Violin II

Nicole Lee  
*principal*  
McKenna Petersen  
*assistant principal*  
Lawrence Feng  
Khanh Le  
Theodore Vu  
Chase Lu  
Kevin Hu  
Tiffany Liu  
Brennan Valdovinos  
Grace Maxian  
Elizabeth Yang  
Daniel Rewa  
Yuchan Chung

Madeleine Marie  
Melancon  
Huanran Yu

### Viola

Brian Rhee  
*principal*  
Cynthia Kong  
*assistant principal*  
Jordan Palmer  
Lilya Aljarrah  
Drayden Johnson  
Tobias Wheatley  
Jaiden Suh  
Vanessa Solache  
Oghenemarho Akpenyi

### Cello

Kendall Porter  
*principal*  
Andrew Yang  
*assistant principal*  
Lucy Ebben  
Alvin Zhou  
Samantha Cui  
Jacob Jang  
Nathan Russ  
Reagan Panjaitan  
Felix Shen  
James Liu  
Abraham Kim  
Jinlin Li

### Bass

Matthew Baumer  
*principal*  
Dezhou Gao  
*assistant principal*  
Kevin Chen  
Gavin LaPointe  
Madeleine Ray  
Joyce Liang  
Josiah Baiza

### Flute

Harmony Chao  
Rosemary Chen ‡  
Caroline Chow \*  
Emily Nickl ^

### Piccolo

Yixuan (Vanessa) Chen^\*

### Oboe

Malcom Belcher ‡  
Caden Cromer \*  
Devin Saljuud ^  
Evan L. Work  
Mina Zhu

### English Horn

Mina Zhu ^

### Clarinet

Daniel Bain  
Callie Meng  
Oscar Tamez \*  
Bo Wen ^  
Ares Zhou ‡

**E-flat Clarinet**

Callie Meng ^ \*

**Bass Clarinet**

Ares Zhou ^ \*

**Alto Saxophone**

Aiden Williamson

**Bassoon**

Isaac Linerode

Pierce Manning ‡

Avika Nimmagadda

Kate Wischmann \*

Leah Wu ^

**Contrabassoon**

Isaac Linerode ^

**Horn**

Jackson Ingram \*

Connor Powers ^

Andrew Ryan

Madalyn Shoemate

George Stevens

Claire Womack

Nathan Zavala ‡

Frank Zhang

**Trumpet**

Leo Arrabi ‡

Mauricio Garcia

Oliver Lampson ^

Evan Salas \*

Samuel Sheffield

**Trombone**

Jorge Gallardo \*

Liam Mahone ^

Joseph Steber

Alejandro Torres

**Bass Trombone**

Marc Lu

**Tuba**

Tim Cranston \*

Alan Zhang ^

**Harp**

Shangqing Li

Eva Rami

**Piano**

Steven Harris

**Timpani**Josh Manuel Lagaac  
Anino \*

Annie Newton ^

Eric Wang ‡

**Percussion**

Josh Manuel Lagaac Anino

Noah Baskin

Annie Newton

Eric Wang

Ty Williams

**Orchestra Liaison**

Chi Nguyen

*String musicians are listed  
in chair order.**Wind and Percussion  
musicians are listed  
alphabetically.*‡ *Principal Ibert*^ *Principal Bernstein,  
Symphonic Dances  
from West Side Story*\* *Principal Bernstein,  
Overture to Candide*





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# Chamber Music Program and Concerto Competition Recital

May 10, 2025, 4:00 p.m.

University of Houston,  
Dudley Recital Hall

## Chamber Music Program

Carmen Borregales, *Woodwind Coach*  
Whitney Bullock, *String Coach*  
Zelda Gray, *String Coach*  
Natali Linares, *String Coach*  
César Fránquiz, *Chamber Music  
Program Manager*

Capriccio No. 2 for 3 Violins, Op. 5

Friedrich Hermann (1828–1907)

I. *Allegro*

Jennesy Morones, *violin I*  
Maya Ikegami, *violin II*  
Maple MacGloin, *violin III*

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

I. *Allegro non troppo*

Senior Division, Strings Co-Winner  
Arjun Chandupatla, *violin*  
Charlie Tauber, *piano*

Concert-Trio for Clarinet, Horn  
and Bassoon

Bernhard Henrik Crussell (1775–1838)

I. *Poco adagio – Allegro moderato*

II. *Andantino*

Hariharan Jayant, *clarinet*  
Shyam Jayant, *bassoon*  
Martin Cetto, *horn*

Serenade for Two Violins and Viola,  
Op. 12

Zoltan Kodály (1882–1967)

I. *Allegramente – Sostenuto, ma non troppo*

Theodore Vu, *violin I*  
Vu Le, *violin II*  
Jordan Palmer, *viola*

*Variations on a Rococo Theme*, Op. 33

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Junior Division, Strings Winner  
Alvin Zhou, *cello*  
Beilin Han, *piano*

**Heroes & Villains for Double Bass Trio**      Simón García (b. 1977)**I. Energico****Trio Poem Basso II**

Teppo Hauta-aho (1941–2021)

**I. Largo sostenuto****II. Allegro moderato**Josiah Baiza, *bass I*Adrian Curry, *bass II*Priya Chandrasekhar, *bass III***Quintet No. 2 in G minor, Op. 56**

Franz Danzi (1763–1826)

**I. Allegretto****II. Andante****IV. Allegretto**Rosemary Chen, *flute*Nathan Gonzalez, *oboe*Haobo Shi, *clarinet*Isaac Linerode, *bassoon*Niyah Johnson, *horn***Concerto in One Movement**

Alexander Lebedev (b. 1938)

Junior Divison, Non-Strings Winner

Corbin O'Bannion, *tuba*Judy Master, *piano***Serenade in D major for Violin,  
Viola and Cello, Op. 8**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

**I. Marcia. Allegro****II. Menuetto. Allegretto – Trio**Stasiya Tan, *violin*Aidan Huynh, *viola*Marcus Lee, *cello***Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35**

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

**I. Allegro moderato**

Senior Division, Strings Co-Winner

Efran Zhao, *violin*Ming Yang, *piano*

## ***Arjun Chandupatla, Violin***

### **Senior Division, Strings Co-Winner**

Arjun Chandupatla (17), a junior at Tompkins High School, has been playing violin for over six years. A dedicated musician, Arjun has performed in the TMEA All-State Symphony Orchestra for three years. Arjun was the concertmaster of the 2024 Region 23 Symphony Orchestra, an honorable mention at the 2023 Clear Lake Symphony Youth Concerto Competition, a winner of the 2023 and 2024 Katy Young Artist Competition, and a finalist at the 2021 Houston International Music Competition. Arjun is an accomplished pianist and an avid chamber musician, with his string quartet named as State Champion at the 2025 UIL Chamber Music Competition. Outside of music, Arjun enjoys birdwatching, making origami, and riding his bike.



## ***Corbin O'Bannion, Tuba***

### **Junior Division, Non-Strings Winner**

Corbin O'Bannion is 13 years old and an 8th grader at Barbers Hill Middle School North in Mont Belvieu, TX. He began learning to play the tuba in the 6th grade and had an instant connection with the instrument. Accomplishments include, two-year TMEA All-Region Band member, 1st chair in Honors Band, and 1st division awards on Class 1 solos. Desiring a future in music, he spends his time investing in music camps, intensives and masterclasses, and attending concerts. Corbin's musical education is guided by Amy King and he has also studied with Denzel Richard, Jerome Stover, and Justin Benavidez.



## ***Efran Zhao, Violin***

### **Senior Division, Strings Co-Winner**

Efran, a junior at Glenda Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas, began playing the violin at age five under Mrs. Medea Guldedava. He has frequently performed as concertmaster, including leading the 2023 Honor String Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Efran has placed first every year in his TMEA All-Region auditions and has been selected for TMEA All-State Symphony Orchestra, Violin 1, for three consecutive years. As a soloist, he became the youngest-ever grand prize winner of the AFA Concerto Competition at age 13 and later won first place and Best Romantic Performance Award in the Open Sonority International Instrumental Competition, as well as first place in the Marielle Ogletree Young Artist Concerto Competition. Driven by his passion for music, Efran serves as president of Dawson's National Music Honor Society and brings music to seniors, patients, and community events. He also founded a music program to inspire and support future musicians while enriching his community with his music.



## ***Alvin Zhou, Cello***

### **Junior Division, Strings Winner**

Alvin Zhou, age 13, is a talented cellist and athlete. He began playing cello at age 7 under Mr. Xiao Wong after he was captivated by a recording of Yo-Yo Ma playing the cello. Alvin has won first place in competitions like the American Protégé International Concerto Competition, the Fanny Mendelssohn International Competition, the Elite International Music Competition, and the Gustav Mahler Cello Competition. In addition to music, he has played basketball since age 4 and competes on top AAU teams in Houston. Alvin loves to spend time with his mom and sister and enjoys teaching his sister how to play cello.



## *Congratulations, Seniors!*

Shadrack Akinkunmi	Texas A&M University
Oghenemarho Akpenyi	Texas A&M University
Daniel Alvarez	The University of Texas at Austin*
Leo Arrabi	University of Houston *
Josiah Baiza	Boston Conservatory at Berklee*
Jaira Bandela	Texas A&M University
Victor Banos	Undecided
Matthew Baumer	University of Houston*
Malcolm Belcher	Oberlin Conservatory*
Michael Breckenridge	Berklee College of Music *
Rosemary Chen	Brown University +
Sofia Concha Pinto ^	Florida State University*
Renee Darling	Undecided *
Joseph Olufemi Davis	Howard University
Mark Doan	University of Virginia
Lucas Fang	Harvard University
Matthew Frederick	University of Houston
Kyle Freeman	Oklahoma State University
Jorge Gallardo	Stephen F. Austin State University*
Dezhou Gao ^	The University of Texas at Austin
Mauricio Garcia	Undecided *
Nathan M. Gonzalez	University of Houston
Cooper Gounah	Undecided +
Nile Harvey	University of North Texas *
Jackson Ingram	Undecided *
Jeesoo Kim ^	University of Southern California
Samuel Koh	Texas A&M University

Cynthia Kong	University of Houston
Oliver Lampson ^	University of Houston *
Isabella Lawrence ^	Texas A&M University
Vu Le	Undecided
Klaus Lemke	University of Houston
Caleb Lewis	Baylor University*
Shangqing Li	Texas A&M University
Joyce Liang	Northeastern University
Isaac Linerode	The Royal Conservatory of Music *
James Liu	Texas A&M University
Daniel Lopez	University of Houston*
Marc Lu	Texas A&M University
Tony Luong	University of Houston *
Heather Macleod	University of Houston*
Kai Mahone	University of Rochester *
Liam Mahone	Eastman School of Music and University of Rochester *
Pierce Manning	Manhattan School of Music *
Audrey Meeks	Trinity University
Callie Meng	University of Texas at Austin
Nathan Daniel Moreno ^	Texas Tech University *
Nazir Neri	Undecided
Ian Ng	The University of Texas at Austin
Emily Nickl	Carnegie Mellon University*
Avika Nimmagadda	Manhattan School of Music *
Jordan Palmer	University of North Texas *
Aneesh Pannala	Purdue University
Julie Pao	University of Pennsylvania +
Sarah Porter	The University of Texas at Austin

Brian Rhee ^	The University of Texas at Austin
Daniel Rivas-Velasco	Undecided
Andrew Ryan	The University of Texas at Austin *
Samuel Sheffield	Undecided+
Felix Shen ^	University of Texas at Austin
Madalyn Shoemate	University of Houston *
Jordan Smith	Baylor University*
Zen Smith	Baylor University*
Joseph Steber	Baylor University *
James Aidan Tabanao	The University of Texas at Austin
Oscar Tamez	Northwestern University *
Elizabeth Thomas	Undecided
Alejandro Torres	University of Houston *
Iliana Trahan	Baylor University*
Brennan Valdovinos	The University of Texas at Austin
Coby Vu	Texas A&M University
Bo Wen	Undecided*
Kate Wischmann	Butler University *
Claire Womack	University of Oregon
Mikaela Wood	Texas A&M University +
Evan L. Work	New England Conservatory*
Leah Wu	Yale University
Isabelle Xue	Undecided
Andrew Yang ^	Purdue University
Elizabeth Yang ^	University of Texas at Austin
Christina Yum ^	Harvard University

\* Music Major

+ Music Minor

^ Member of Houston Youth Symphony for 5 or more years



## Kudos



*Congratulations*  
**MCKENNA**  
We're so proud of you!  
Love,  
Mom and Dad

- HYS Symphony, assistant principal second violin
- Region 13 JH Symphony, Concertmaster
- Symphony North of Houston, String Division Winner
- Heifitz Institute

**Congratulations Nathan on your HYS accomplishments. We wish you the best in continuing your music journey and are very proud of you.**

**Class of 2025!**

**Love you always Ama, Apa y Jr.**




**ANNIE,**

WE LOVE YOU AND ARE SO PROUD OF YOUR TALENTS.  
MAY YOUR MUSICAL JOURNEY CONTINUE TO BE FILLED  
WITH JOY AND SUCCESS!



**Kyle Freeman**

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Recipient of the Dr. Max A. Mitchell  
Endowed Scholarship in Music  
Excellence Award

We couldn't be prouder!!  
Go Pokes!!



# Zen Smith

## Class of 2025

We are SO proud of you  
and everything you have  
accomplished. Best of luck  
at Baylor School of Music!

Sic 'em , Bears!

Love,  
Your Fam

*Congratulations Joseph Davis  
On Your Senior Year At HYS!*



*Congratulations on completing 4 years in Houston  
Youth Symphony! We are proud of you and the man  
that you have become!*

*May music continue to vibrate the notes of your soul at  
Howard University next year and may God bless you  
in all you do in the future.*

*Love, Mom and Dad*





## Ava Jean Achivida

*Congratulations on a fantastic year with HYS Sinfonia! You have accomplished so much, and yet still have so many exciting opportunities ahead of you. Continue to follow your passion, and we will support you every step of the way.*

*Love,*

*Memma, Daddy, Evan, Anna Laura, Grandma, Grandpa,  
Nana, Meme, Nina, Auntie Adrienne, & Livi*





CONGRATULATIONS  
MARK ON COMPLETING  
YOUR HYS CAREER. IT  
WAS TRULY YOUR JOY  
AND YOU GOT TO  
FULFIL YOUR DREAM OF  
BEING PART OF AN  
ORCHESTRA. SO PROUD  
OF YOU AND CANNOT  
WAIT FOR THE NEXT  
CHAPTER.

LOVE  
OLIVIA, MOM & DAD

*Brennan, your hard work and  
dedication does not go unnoticed.  
We are so proud of you!!*

*Love you always & forever,  
Mom, Dad and Anita*



**Congratulations Noah,  
on your Junior Year!**

We are so proud of you and  
everything you've accomplished! We  
love you to the moon and back.




## Pierce Manning



Congratulations on your three years with HYS, three years as Langham Creek HS drum major and two-time Texas All-State bassoonist. We are so proud on your acceptance into music school!

*Love You!*

*Dad, Mom, Noel, Bruce & John*



**Sofia,**

**Congratulations on your final  
HYS concert!**

After six incredible years, you've blossomed into a talented musician and an incredible person.

A huge thanks to all HYS staff for their support and dedication.

Best wishes in your college journey. We're so proud of you!

**With all our love,  
Mami, Papi, Max, Paul & Penny**

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## *All-State, Area, and Region Rankings*

### *All-State*

Daniel Alvarez  
Josh Manuel Anino  
Matthew Baumer  
Arjun Chandupatla  
Kevin Chen  
David Cui  
Samantha Cui  
Renee Darling  
Lucy Ebben  
Austin Falck  
Lawrence Feng  
Kyle Freeman  
Mauricio Garcia  
Nathan Gonzalez  
Nile Harvey  
Yicheng He  
Kevin Hu  
Jackson Ingram  
Abraham Kim  
Jeesoo Kim  
Misato Koiwa  
Cynthia Kong  
Carissa Kuo  
Oliver Lampson  
Gavin LaPointe  
Amanda Li  
Tiffany Liu  
Claire Loggenberg  
Pierce Manning  
Callie Meng  
Maureen Min  
Emily Nickl

Avika Nimmagadda  
Jordan Palmer  
Connor Powers  
Brian Rhee  
Andrew Ryan  
Evan Salas  
Devin Saljuud  
Zachary Schiller  
Guanfa (Felix) Shen  
Madalyn Shoemate  
Zen Smith  
George Stevens  
Alejandro Torres  
Evan L. Work  
Andy Wu  
Leah Wu  
Henry Xu  
Julia Xu  
Sophie Xu  
Christina Yum  
Ava Zhang  
Efran Zhao  
Benjamin Zhou

### *Area*

Lilya Aljarrah  
Juno Bitancor  
Jonathan Castillo  
Martin Cetto  
Harmony Chao  
Rosemary Chen  
Yixuan (Vanessa) Chen  
Caroline Chow



Jacob Cook  
Luke Ehmke  
Ana Cristina Franco  
Sophia Franco  
Jorge Gallardo  
Vivian Gibson  
Joshua Grush  
Aidan Huynh  
Drayden Johnson  
Olivia Kanick  
Nicole Lee  
Joyce Liang  
Marc Lu  
Liam Mahone  
Ryder McBride  
Aneesh Pannala  
Julie Pao  
Eton Rosales  
Haobo Shi  
Hannah Stevens  
Tobias Wheatley  
Ty Williams  
Claire Womack  
Evan Work  
Claira Yang  
Nathan Zavala

## *Region*

Ava Jean Achivida  
Joanne Bach  
Victor Banos  
Noah Baskin  
Emma Burgess  
Connor Chen  
Luna Choe  
Emily Choi  
Joshua Colomine Puentes

Maille Craig  
Ailin Feng  
Matthew Frederick  
Shaopan Gao  
Po Yan Ho  
Maya Ikegami  
Evelyn Kao  
Athri Karunamurthy  
Bala Keha  
Benjamin Le  
Khanh Le  
Emma Lee  
Bria Linehan  
Daniel Lu  
Joseph Mani  
Mason Matthews  
Rush Matthews  
Nathan Moreno  
Brynn Peugnet  
Jade Phan  
Josephine Pink  
Liam Powers  
Arianna Sackett  
Claire Shim  
Lillian Sissons  
Celeste Smith  
Evan Ung  
Brennan Valdovinos  
Armahn Virani  
Eric Wang  
Joshua Wang  
Ethan Wu  
Isabelle Xue  
Evangeline Yang  
Alice Zhang  
Jordana Zhao

## Conductor Biographies

**Michael Webster,**  
*Artistic Director and Symphony  
Conductor*



2024 has been an eventful year for Michael Webster and the Houston Youth Symphony. In June, he led HYS in front of an enthusiastic audience of 1,000 at the League of American Orchestras Conference at Jones Hall in Houston. On July 4, HYS and Michael Webster were named Honored Artists of The American Prize, “a category of recognition limited to a very few who have proved to be individuals (or organizations) of ‘sustained excellence’ in their chosen area of artistic endeavor.” On August 4, in Dublin, Ireland, the International Clarinet Association awarded him an Honorary Membership for “Lifetime Achievement in Performing, Teaching, and Professional Service.”

A multifaceted musician, Dr. Webster is known as clarinetist, conductor, composer, arranger, and educator. As Artistic Director of HYS since 1997, he led the Symphony at the inauguration of Houston Mayor Lee Brown, at Carnegie Hall, and at the 2002 National Youth Orchestra Festival in Sarasota, Florida, as one of six orchestras selected from applicants nationwide. Rarely featuring an orchestra, NPR’s national radio show “From the Top” invited HYS to perform live on the radio in 2012.

For fourteen of the last sixteen years (2008–2023), HYS was the national winner of the Foundation for Music Education’s Mark of Excellence. HYS is also the only youth orchestra to be in the top two of The American Prize for eleven years in a row, having garnered eight first and three second prizes, including first place in 2023. Dr. Webster has won first or second place in The American Prize for conducting eight times.

Formerly principal clarinetist with the Rochester Philharmonic and acting principal of the San Francisco Symphony, Dr. Webster has appeared as soloist with many orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra with Aaron

Copland and the Boston Pops with John Williams. Since winning Young Concert Artists international auditions in 1968, his performances have included: the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; the 92nd Street Y; the Tokyo, Cleveland, Muir, Ying, Enso, Dover, Leontóvych, Artaria and Chester String Quartets; Da Camera, Context, and Musiqá in Houston; and the festivals of Marlboro, Santa Fe, Chamber Music West and Northwest, Norfolk, Victoria, Domaine Forget, Sitka, Maui, Steamboat Springs, Park City, Angel Fire, Orcas Island, Bowdoin, and La Musica di Asolo. He has performed and taught all over the United States and in Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, Europe, Japan, China, New Zealand, and Australia. He has collaborated with musicians including Yo-Yo Ma, Lynn Harrell, Joshua Bell, Rudolf Serkin, and many others.

Dr. Webster served as Assistant Conductor of the Asian Youth Orchestra under Yehudi Menuhin, Music Director of the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, and director of the Michigan Youth Symphony Orchestra. Recently retired from his professorship at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, he previously held faculty positions in clarinet and conducting at the

University of Michigan, the New England Conservatory, Boston University, and the Eastman School of Music, where he had earned three degrees as a student of Stanley Hasty.

For many summers he has been clarinet and woodwind coach for the Texas Music Festival at the University of Houston and Orchestra of the Americas, which met in a different country every year until the 2020 pandemic. Countries represented included Mexico, Panama, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Belgium, Estonia, Poland, China, Canada and the U.S. Since 2020, the Orchestra of the Americas has established a strong online presence with OAcademy, where Dr. Webster is the lead clarinet teacher. He has also been a faculty member at the Atlantic Music Festival in Waterville, ME since 2021.

Michael Webster directed chamber music societies in Rochester and Ann Arbor and founded the Webster Trio with his wife, flutist Leone Buyse, in 1988. Webster Trio CDs released by Crystal Records in the U.S. and by the Nami and Camerata labels in Japan feature Webster's trio arrangements, which,

along with his original compositions, are published by Theodore Presser, International Music Company, Schott, and G. Schirmer. Webster also appears on the Arabesque, Beauport, Bridge, Centaur, CRI, and New World labels. Highly regarded as a teacher, he has contributed 85 articles entitled "Teaching Clarinet" to ICA's *The Clarinet* magazine. Michael Webster is a Buffet artist-clinician, playing Buffet clarinets exclusively.

**Michael Isadore**  
*Philharmonia Conductor*



An American Prize-winning conductor, Michael Isadore is the Philharmonia Conductor with the Houston Youth Symphony, Associate Conductor with the Houston Civic Symphony and the Director of Orchestras at Dulles High School. Known for being an energetic conductor with authentic, moving performances, Mr. Isadore has become a prominent voice in the Houston area.

Since work with young musicians plays an important part in his career, Mr. Isadore has developed a detailed rehearsal strategy and creative ways to spark and communicate the most advanced musical concepts. Under his direction, the Dulles High School orchestra has performed several times at The Midwest Clinic, made multiple finalist appearances in the Texas Music Educators Association Honor Orchestra competitions

and consistent “commended” and “National” winners in the Mark of Excellence competition. Mr. Isadore has won the American Prize in Conducting, Performance, and American Music with all three organizations. Locally, Mr. Isadore has been recognized with the Manilow Music Award (for music educators) in person by Barry Manilow and the Spec’s Charitable Foundation Award for Excellence in Music Education, presented by the Houston Symphony.

In addition to being a conductor, Mr. Isadore’s versatile career involves performances as an orchestral and chamber musician, concerto soloist, recitalist, lecturer, and teacher. He holds clarinet positions with the Victoria Symphony, the Symphony of Southeast Texas, and has performed professionally with the Houston Symphony, Corpus Christi Symphony, San Antonio Chamber Orchestra, Victoria Bach Festival and the Houston Gilbert and Sullivan Society. As a soloist, Isadore has performed recitals and concertos around Texas.

When not performing, Mr. Isadore remains active as a clinician, adjudicator, martial arts practitioner, knitter, and badminton player.

## **Brad Smith** *Sinfonia Conductor*



Brad Smith joined the Houston Youth Symphony artistic staff as conductor of the Sinfonia Orchestra in 2015. He is the Director of Orchestral Activities at Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in downtown Houston, where he oversees the String program, Symphony, and String Orchestras, coaches chamber ensembles, and teaches conducting courses. Smith has conducted the all-school musical on multiple occasions and worked with the Dance, Theatre, and Visual Arts departments on collaborative projects. Dr. Smith’s students consistently achieve recognition in national concerto and chamber music competitions and earn seats in the TMEA All-State Orchestras. Each year, HSPVA graduates gain admission to top conservatories and music schools across the country.

Before joining the Kinder HSPVA faculty in 2014, Smith taught for eleven years at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was the Music Director of the Penn Symphony Orchestra, Audio Nexus contemporary ensemble, Penn Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra, and Penn Wind Ensemble. He taught music theory, graduate ear training, and conducting courses, as well as seminars on multiple topics. While teaching at Penn, Dr. Smith also conducted the Delaware County Youth Orchestra (DCYO), a group based along the Mainline area of Greater Philadelphia.

Brad Smith has been teaching instrumental music and conducting ensembles of all ages since 1995. He holds degrees in Music Education and Conducting from Stephen F. Austin State University and The University of Texas at Austin.

## **Angela Peugnet,** *String Orchestra Conductor*



Mrs. Angela Peugnet has served as the head orchestra director at Fort Settlement MS since the fall of 2006. Under her direction, the Fort Settlement Orchestras have been an invited Midwest Clinic Ensemble, honored many times as Commended and National Winners with the Foundation for Music Education, and have been multi-year finalists in the Texas Honor Orchestra Competition.

Mrs. Peugnet holds a Bachelor of Music with Teacher's Certification from the University of Houston with Membership in the Honors College and holds a Master of Music with a conducting specialization from Colorado State University. Previously, she taught in the Spring Branch Independent School District and was on staff with the University of Houston Moores School of Music's Preparatory and Continuing Studies Department as the Suzuki Strings Program Coordinator. Mrs. Peugnet

has worked with some of the profession's most notable teachers including Dr. Laurie Scott, Mr. William Dick, Mr. Andrzej Grabiec, and Maestros Franz Krager, and Wes Kenney.

She is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Orchestra Directors Association, American String Teachers Association, Texas Music Adjudicators Association, Suzuki Association of the Americas, Sigma Alpha Iota, and has served as an orchestra committee member for the state UIL String Orchestra Texas Prescribed Music List. She is honored to be a member of Mu Omicron, a peer-nominated honors society of orchestra directors. She has been an invited conductor and clinician with several Houston Area Region Orchestras. In 2019 she was honored with the Music Educator Award by the Houston Symphony and the Spec's Charitable Foundation.

She and her husband, Forrest Peugnet, are proud parents to three girls. When she is not teaching, she performs with the Houston Civic Orchestra, enjoys playing music with her children, backpacking, hiking, camping, reading, archery, and playing board/video games with family and friends.

## **Jackson Guillén** *Debut String Orchestra Conductor*



Honduran violinist and violist Jackson Guillén is the Director of the El Sistema-inspired Houston Youth Symphony Coda Music Program and Conductor of the HYS Debut String Orchestra. Additionally, Dr. Guillén serves as Professor of Violin and Viola, and orchestra conductor at Lone Star College-Tomball.

Dr. Guillén has performed in venues in the United States, Mexico, Honduras, Colombia, and Chile, and toured several countries of Latin America with the Orchestra of the Americas. He has served as Principal Second Violin of the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra, Lubbock Symphony, and the Symphony of Southeast Texas, and for the past three seasons, he has been invited as guest concertmaster of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, Jackson completed a two-year Young



Artist Fellowship with Da Camera of Houston. He also performs regularly with professional chamber ensembles in the city. In 2016 he co-founded the Terra Nostra Ensemble, recently appointed Ensemble-in-Residence at Houston Baptist University. This ensemble focuses on promoting and performing music by Latin American and Iberian composers. As an arts entrepreneur, Dr. Guillén plays an important role in the yearly organization of the Encuentro Anual de Cuerdas, a string-focused festival that takes place in Honduras. In 2012, he was accepted as a member of the first generation of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas (now Orchestra

of the Americas) Global Leaders Program, participating in missions in Honduras, El Salvador, and Chicago.

Dr. Guillén has performed as a guest artist at the International Music Festival in Medellin, Colombia; the International Music Festival in Naolinco, Mexico; the Victoria-Bach Festival; the Quartz Mountain Music Festival; the Texas Music Festival; and the Masterworks Festival Orchestra, among others. Most recently, he was selected for the Cleveland Institute of Music's Future of Music Faculty Fellowship which addresses underrepresentation in Music School Faculty.





**Boston University  
Tanglewood Institute  
Summer 2025**

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**Two-Week Workshops  
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Flute • Oboe • Clarinet  
Bassoon • Saxophone  
Woodwind Quintet

***Brass & Percussion***

Trumpet • Trombone  
Tuba/Euphonium • Horn  
Percussion

***Strings***

Classical Guitar • Violin  
Viola • Cello • Double Bass  
String Quartet

***Composition***

Electroacoustic Composition  
Composition Fundamentals

---

**Young Artists Programs  
(July 6 - August 17)**

Orchestra • Voice • Piano  
Harp • Wind Ensemble  
Composition



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and Apply!**



## Teaching Artists

### Spring Concert

#### Sectional Coaches

Marcos Altamirano

*Bass*

Nicholas Leh Baker

*Strings*

Laura Callon

*Violin*

Katie Carrington

*Viola*

Raúl Colmenero Martínez

*Violin*

Matthew Daily\*

*Bass*

Heather Davis

*Violin*

Andrés González

*Violin*

Zelda Gray

*Violin*

Benjamin Grube

*Violin*

Russell Haehl\*

*Trumpet*

Edward Harper

*Cello*

Deborah Harvey

*Horn*

Craig Hauschildt

*Percussion*

Naomi Hoffmeyer

*Harp*

David Irish

*Brass*

Jalayne Mitchell

*Cello*

Emily Moscoso\*

*Oboe*

Danny Nguyen\*

*Bassoon*

Alexis Pelton

*Viola*

Ryan Rongone

*Low Brass*

Adam Sadberry

*Flute/Woodwinds*

Maiko Sasaki

*Clarinet*

Peter Savage

*Bass*

Catherine Urban\*

*Violin*

Mayara Velasquez

*Cello*

Robert Walzel, Jr.

*Clarinet*

Karissa Williams

*Violin*

Sergein Yap

*Viola*

### Chamber Music

#### Program Coaches

Carmen Borregales

Whitney Bullock

Zelda Gray

Ruth (Natali) Linares

### Melody Program

#### Teachers

Genesis Aguilar

Matthew Daily\*

Mairéad Flory

Omeed Manshouri

Luis Osorio Betancourt

Luis Ramirez

Rachel Shepard

Catherine Urban\*

Mayara Velasquez

**Coda Music Program**

Jackson Guillén

*Director***Coda Program****Assistant Directors**

Samantha Arizpe

Nora Henschen

**Lead Teachers**

Omar Escobedo

Luis Gutiérrez Fonseca

Ariya Tai

**Assistant Teachers**

Julia Carlson

Moises Chirinos

Larysa Horichenko

Christian Ibañez

Natalie Mann

Luis Osorio Betancourt

Hoang Vu Pham

Angelica Velasquez

**Interns**

Alejandro Castillo\*

Ana Jara\*

Julián Montez

**Coda Volunteer**

Ava D'Souza^

\*Houston Youth

Symphony alum

^ Current HYS musician

**Parent Volunteers**

Guadalupe Cantu

Thanh Chen

Aba Coleman

Elvia Concha

Amber Danley

Kristen Diaz

Anna Feng

Jennifer Jordan

Jamie Kim

Joyce Lao

Diana Liang

Xiuping Liu

Elaine Loggenberg

Cindy Lundberg

Li Ma

Vicki Manning

Jaye Mao

Courtney McGrew

Cindy McMurry

Nick McMurry

Teresa Molina

Silvana Molossi

Lucy Ngu

Chi Nguyen

Danette Quaicoe

Kim Robison

Vinitha Shenava

Zhi Shi

Annie Sun

Lydia Tam

Amy Trahan

Ana Valdovinos

Joan Wijatno

Lei Wu

Sue Wu

Yisha Xiang

Jie Zhang

Tianyu Zou

Wei Zuo



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