

# Spring Program

2025/26 Season



Houston Youth Symphony

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\* Houston Youth Symphony alum

## History

With nearly 80 years of history, Houston Youth Symphony (HYS) is the recipient of national acclaim, including the 2025 Mark of Excellence Award and The American Prize “Honored Artist Award for Sustained Excellence” for an unprecedented two consecutive years—2024 and 2025. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Dr. Michael Webster, this season 425 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 musicians an opportunity to participate in a chamber music training program and an annual concerto competition.

In the community, HYS reaches 275 musicians through two programs: the Melody Program and the Coda Music Program. The Melody Program provides free private music lessons for talented youth. In January 2015, HYS launched the Coda Music Program, an after-school program 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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## The Betty Utter Community Impact Award Honoring Vicki Manning, HYS Volunteer and Alumni Parent

Vicki Manning is a CPA during the week and our MVV (Most Valuable Volunteer) on Sundays. Three of her sons are alums of HYS and her fourth son is a rehearsal intern, seen most Sundays in the Winston Band Complex. Vicki has been volunteering for seven years and is most visible spearheading the snack bar each Sunday. If you haven't seen her helping musicians buy Sour Punch Straws and Dr. Pepper, then you've probably seen her at rehearsal helping musicians to their rehearsal rooms or answering parents' questions. She's even here to help on concert days, even though we don't have snack bar. This is because it's what Vicki does. She is a helper. She naturally wants to pitch in, help out, and take charge if needed, because she knows that what HYS does is vital and can change lives.



### **About the Betty Utter Award**

*Celebrating Local Change Makers in Youth Orchestras*

Betty Utter, co-founder of the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra and founder of the League of American Orchestra's Youth Orchestra Division (YOD), was a tireless advocate for young musicians. She believed youth orchestras could be engines of transformation—not only for students, but for their entire communities. Known for her energy, determination, and grassroots leadership, Betty worked behind the scenes to launch, sustain, and champion youth orchestras nationwide.

To honor Betty's legacy in the YOD's 50th anniversary year, the League invites youth orchestras to celebrate their own "Betty Utter" — a local changemaker who has made an extraordinary impact on their community. HYS selected Vicki Manning to honor with this award as our local changemaker.

## A Note from the Executive Director

This time of year is always a moment of reflection for me as I look at where we started the season and how far our musicians have come over the past 9 months. You will hear that growth today in each of the five orchestras. This is most evident in the “togetherness” of their playing as an ensemble but also seen in the relationships they have formed with their fellow musicians.

I reflect on the togetherness of the people of HYS that allows us to provide exceptional music education. Today, the Betty Utter Community Impact Award will be presented to Vicki Manning, one individual who has tirelessly supported HYS for seven years through her work as a volunteer. Alongside her are the HYS Board of Directors, donors, the artistic team, the administrative team, teaching artists, parent volunteers, and the families who support the young musicians you see on stage.

I also reflect on the seniors who are moving on to new experiences in the future. In the excitement of the new, I hope that they will remember HYS as a place of exceptional music-making and togetherness with their friends. (And of course we welcome them back for our annual Alumni Concert each December!)

I end this season with joy in my heart, knowing that HYS is a place for togetherness, musical fulfillment, and personal growth.

Sincerely,



Amy Chung

P.S. Stay tuned as we celebrate 80 years next season. You won't want to miss it!

*We wish to thank our  
generous supporters.*

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This listing reflects contributions  
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## 2025/26 Season Spring Concert I

May 3, 2026, 2:30 p.m.  
Stude Concert Hall, Rice University  
Shepherd School of Music

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### Debut String Orchestra

Jackson Guillén, Conductor

*Jambo* (2013)

Paul Basler (b. 1963)  
arr. Kirk Moss

*The Old Boatman* (1993)

Florence Price (1887–1953)  
arr. Dana Paul Perna

*Brook Green Suite* (1933)

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

- I. Prelude
- II. Air
- III. Dance

“America” from *West Side Story* (1957)

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)  
arr. Stephen Bulla

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Pause

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### String Orchestra

Angela Peugnet, Conductor

*Isacco Overture* (1782)

Marianna von Martines (1744–1812)  
arr. Zachary May

*Dance Suite* (1605/1961)

John Dowland (1563 – 1626)  
arr. Peter Warlock

- I. ‘Lachrimae’ Pavan
- II. Mr. George Whitehead His Almand
- III. The Earl of Essex’ Galliard
- IV. Mrs. White’s Nothing
- V. The King of Denmark’s Pavan

*Windrunner* (2026)

Sarah Platt

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Pause

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## 2025/26 Season Spring Concert I cont.

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### **Sinfonia with Houston Boychoir**

**Matthew Porter, Conductor**

#### *Postcards from Alaska (2025)*

Bill Klemm (b. 1968)

- I. Fanfare for the Last Frontier
- II. Winter Sunrise
- III. Snowfall
- IV. Moose Gallup
- V. Northern Lights
- VI. Deep Freeze
- VII. Raven Dance
- VIII. Fat Bear
- X. Lords of the Fjords

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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.

*Dance Suite*, written by John Dowland and arranged by Peter Warlock,  
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## Spring Concert I Program Notes

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### Debut String Orchestra

#### **Jambo**

Paul Basler (b. 1963), arr. Kirk Moss

Inspired by African drumming and dance rhythms, *Jambo* is an uplifting and engaging concert piece arranged for string orchestra and percussion. “Jambo,” a Swahili word meaning “greeting,” is a celebratory work based on musical traditions from East Africa, full of energy and cultural homage.

The piece is primarily driven by syncopated rhythms, supported by percussion instruments including the Djembe, a rope-tuned drum from West Africa topped with a goatskin head. Although the structure of the piece emphasizes the interlocking of traditional rhythms, the audience can also enjoy short, catchy melodic lines passed between sections of the orchestra.

#### ***The Old Boatman*** (1933)

Florence Price (1887–1953),  
arr. Dana Paul Perna

Recognized as the first African American female composer to

have a symphony performed by a major U.S. orchestra, Florence Beatrice Price, a native of Little Rock, Arkansas, blended classical European traditions with African American spirituals and folk melodies, creating a unique and expressive style. This is evident in today’s selection, *The Old Boatman*. Originally conceived for piano, *The Old Boatman* is an expressive and reflective work that depicts a solitary boatman navigating calm waters. Evoking lullaby-like sentiments, the melodies are simple and steady, giving a sense of a gently rocking boat on a river.

#### ***Brook Green Suite***

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

Mainly known for his orchestral composition *The Planets*, Gustav Holst was not only a prominent English composer but also a dedicated educator. Composed in 1933, the *Brook Green Suite* was intended to be performed by a student string ensemble at a school in Brook Green, demonstrating his ability to write music for young performers that possesses both character and emotional depth.

The suite is structured in three movements: Prelude, Air, and Dance, each movement demonstrating Holst’s facility for crafting

memorable melodies and blending elegant phrasing with harmonies and rhythms that are technically accessible. Because of its educational value and musical richness, the *Brook Green Suite* remains one of the most celebrated and frequently performed works for string orchestra today.

### **“America” from *West Side Story***

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990),  
arr. Stephen Bulla

Premiered on Broadway in 1957 and inspired by Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, *West Side Story*—composed by Leonard Bernstein with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Arthur Laurents—has become an iconic musical of the 20th century. The plot highlights the rivalry between two culturally distinct street gangs: the Jets and the Sharks.

We close our concert tonight with an arrangement of “America”, one of the musical’s most well-known numbers, celebrated for its energetic and dynamic character, evident in its syncopated rhythms and vibrant percussion. The song presents the contrasting perspectives of Puerto Rican immigrants in 1950s New York, expressing both the excitement and frustration that accompany life in a new country.

*Notes by Jackson Guillén*

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## String Orchestra

### ***Isacco Overture***

Marianna von Martines (1744–1812),  
arr. Zachary May

An accomplished and prominent Viennese composer, harpsichordist, vocalist, and event/concert organizer, Marianna von Martines received early training from her neighbor Pietro Metastasio as well as a young Franz Joseph Haydn (who at the time was an unknown composer renting a room from her family). A part of the Vienna 10—a group of composers—Martines gained royal approval for her compositions in 1761 and performed many times for Empress Maria Theresa. Martines was also a teacher, founding a singing school that trained many young women to be first-rate vocalists. Marianna Martines and Metastasio remained close, and when he passed in 1782, Martines received a massive inheritance from him that allowed her to compose music full-time without relying on a spouse for support. Marianna Martines broke the proverbial glass ceiling of her era as the first woman to receive the title of Accademia Filarmonica Onorata in 1773 (Honorary Member of the Accademia Filharmonica Bologna). After her admission, a stream of

women entered the Accademia in the following years.

Martines's oratorio, *Isacco Figura del Redduttore's*, begins with this allegro. Premiered in 1782 by the *Tonkünstler-Societät* in Vienna, it is one of her largest-scale works. It features a buoyant interplay of the violin sections, compelling harmonic development in the low strings, and bowings characteristic of the classical era.

### **Dance Suite**

John Dowland (1563–1623),  
arr. Peter Warlock

John Dowland was an English Renaissance composer, lutenist, and singer. Most of his music was written for his own instrument. This suite, though, was set for lute and five viols (or violins) and published in his *Lachrimae* or *seaven teares figured in seaven passionate pavans, with divers other pavans, galliards and allemands* (1604). These compositions are dedicated to real people of the time of varying social rank, including a pirate (though that galliard is not included in this arrangement). Dowland was heavily influenced by popular consort songs and dance music of the day. Dowland's music has continued to inspire even modern singer-songwriters, including Sting,

who released an album (*Songs from the Labyrinth*) featuring Dowland's songs and recitations of a 1593 letter written by Dowland.

The *Lachrimae Pavan* is one of the most recognizable tunes of John Dowland. In due course Dowland, himself, produced a vocal arrangement of it, *Flow my tears*, that appeared in his *Second Booke of Songs or Ayres* (1600) to a set of now-anonymous lyrics. The first verse, in modern English, reads:

Flow, my tears, fall from your  
springs!  
Exiled forever, let me mourn;  
Where night's black bird her sad  
infamy sings,  
There let me live forlorn.

Peter Warlock (1894–1930) is the pseudonym for Philip Arnold Heseltine, a British composer and music critic. Heseltine began composing seriously around 1915 under the clear musical influence of his close friend Frederick Delius (another British composer). Shortly, Heseltine began to develop interests in folksong and Elizabethan music. Further compositional influences can be traced to an influential meeting with Bernard van Dieren (Dutch composer), a passion for Celtic culture and language, and his personal discovery of Bartok in 1921. These influences give Heseltine

a pure harmonic texture with clear and vigorous part-writing, characteristics that are mirrored in the music of John Dowland.

### **Windrunner**

Sarah Platt

Sarah Platt is a violinist, composer, and teacher based in Denver, Colorado. In her compositions, she combines minimalist textures and neoromantic thematic material to create “an impressionist and programmatic style inspired by works of fantasy.” The composer writes: “*Windrunner* uses complex accent patterns to evoke the essence of magical flight, soaring melodies in the upper strings inspire our valiant heroes, and satisfying *sforzandos* represent the clashing blows of good versus evil.”

*Notes by Angela Peugnet*

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## Sinfonia

### **Postcards from Alaska**

Bill Klemm (b. 1968)

The HYS Sinfonia Orchestra is delighted to present *Postcards from Alaska*, a recent composition by Alaskan composer Bill Klemm. I’m obliged to share a special thanks to Dr. Webster for introducing us to this remarkable piece and its composer. Engaging with music by a living composer offers our students a uniquely meaningful artistic experience that deepens understanding of the creative process while strengthening the connection between performer and creator.

Mr. Klemm left his position at Rice University to reside full-time in Alaska, where he draws inspiration from its striking landscapes and spirit. His music captures a vivid sense of place and reflection, and we are honored to share it with you. We invite you to enjoy the entirety of the composer’s insightful program notes by scanning the QR code below.



From the composer's notes:

I. *Fanfare for the Last Frontier*:

Experiencing the absolute enormity of Alaska's scale and beauty.

II. *Winter Sunrise*: The anticipation of the sun peeking up over the Chugach Mountains after a long twilight-like sunrise, illuminating the landscape with a kaleidoscope of color.

III. *Snowfall*: Gazing into the snowfall, you can see various layers going this way and that, represented by the counterpoint in the voices.

IV. *Moose Gallup*: You cannot truly appreciate their size until you are near one—which is where you do not want to be. To see a cow and calf trot is at once humorous and ominous.

V. *Northern Lights*: On a clear cold winter night, the ground is covered with glistening snow that refracts the dancing aurora's green light. Behind the glowing curtains of light is the sparkle of a billion stars in the seemingly eternal night sky.

VI. *Deep Freeze*: The literal sub-zero stillness of winter and the metaphorical stillness in grief.

This movement, composed a few months after my father's passing, is an elegy without words.

VII. *Raven Dance*: A single raven perched nearby began to make alien-like noises. After a short while, those calls grew as more ravens joined... It was quite musical. At some point, a juvenile bald eagle entered the scene. Its territorial warble is heard in the flutes and xylophone.

VIII. *Fat Bear*: I characterized the bear with the loping, waddling solo in the contrabassoon, and their terrible claws clacking on the rocks as the strings use the wood of their bows.

X. *Lords of the Fjords*: The sight of the impossibly enormous humpback whales lunging from the surface of the water. Just as quickly as they appeared, with a flash of their enormous flukes, they will disappear again into the deep.

*Notes by Matthew Porter and Bill Klemm*



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## Houston Boychoir



Founded in 1962, Houston Boychoir is recognized as one of America's premier choirs for boys. Its members, ages 8 to 18, come from diverse backgrounds and demographics. Upon graduating, alumni continue to play active roles as mentors, making Houston Boychoir a lifelong community.

Houston Boychoir's mission is "to build men of character through music," harnessing the transformative power of music to inspire personal growth and development. In pursuit of this mission, boys are immersed in a rich variety of experiences, including seasonal concerts, concert tours, collaborations, camps, workshops, service initiatives, and more. The organization also believes in taking the boys out into the world, with audiences in Europe, Asia, Africa, and just recently—South America!

Houston Boychoir extends sincere gratitude to Houston Youth Symphony for this opportunity to make music together.

### **Chamber Choir Choristers**

Austin Hunt, *Artistic Director*

Newton Allanbrook	Joshua Menahem
Xavier Anderson	Kainan Moy
Thomas Comstock	Kornelius Moy
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Owen McClanahan	Mario Trevino

## Debut String Orchestra Musicians

### Violin I

Joanna Wu  
*concertmaster*

Ciara Park  
*assistant  
concertmaster*

Julie Cao

Joyce Cao

Lorenzo Rubio

Steven Ren

Sophia Xu

Shreya Sendos

Mariam Sheikh

Isabella Sáenz

Catalina Bonnet

Ryan Yu

Nana Barning

Terry Lam

Joseph Samm

### Violin II

Sabrina Judd  
*principal*

Myra Yasin  
*assistant principal*

Angela I. Salazar  
Gonzalez

Luis Valencia

Vrishni Krishnan

Ramanathan Palaniappan

Amina Adamu

Eva Brionez

Katherine Ren

Allison Yang

Kenza Wang-Sol

Iris Yan

Lily Zhao

Olivia Zhang

Brighu Tejas Gautam

### Viola

Chloe Barrientes  
*principal*

John Paul Snow  
*assistant principal*

Zoha Sanwarwala

Caleb Chen

Nidhi Keshav

Autumn Welch

Lena Sophie Beddar

Lillian G. Diaz

Maiya Jackson

Chloe Lam

### Cello

Naomi Berth  
*principal*

Tallis Peugnet  
*assistant principal*

Harvey Lerette

Claire Cha

Julian Fernandez

Jihwan Kim

Oliver Briggles

Ava Zhou

Coraline Zhang

Daniel Hajoon Vuu

Elle Shi

Elias Mollett

### Bass

Isak Franklin  
*principal*

Bruce Manning\*

### Orchestra Liaison

Tatiana Judd

\* *Houston Youth  
Symphony alum*

## String Orchestra Musicians

### Violin I

Rianna Shezbie  
*concertmaster*

Olivia Jang  
*assistant  
concertmaster*

Julia Biral

Celeste Molina

Jeremy Nguyen

Jiale Lu

Roy Wang

Carolina Laronga

Julia Hayoon Vuu

David Haoze Zuo

Daniel Q. Lu

Noele Chung

Eason Wang

Lonny Sui

Ava D'Souza

Vishakha Rao

### Violin II

Enya Zhao  
*principal*

Katherine Wei  
*assistant principal*

Yuxuan Li

Mason Duan

Alice Song

Mercedes Lundberg

Jonathan Yang

Emma Dang

Angelina Chen

Henry McLeod

Emma Koo

Gavin Yu

Aadi Dhagat

Anish Senthil

Jasmine Zhang

Elena Liu

### Viola

Annabelle Li  
*principal*

Derek Wong  
*assistant principal*

Zhi-Yuan "Ian" Tan

Daniel Ramirez

Georgia Parzen

Haile Huffman

Norah Lin

Neil Shaw

Celeste Peugnet

Ariana Correa

Muhammad Asmir Khan

### Cello

Keziah Kim  
*principal*

Aurian Rahimi  
*assistant principal*

Kyle Hechanova

Kayla Heng

Mia Li

Clara Hong

Michael Liang

Andrew Chen

Samuel de Llano

Cedric Wijatno

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Evalynn Lu

### Bass

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Brooks Holdaway  
*assistant principal*

Eduardo Caleb Arriaga

Annika Reddy Pasham

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Melanie McLeod

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Benjamin Suljic  
*assistant  
concertmaster*

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Theia Doescher

Christina Zhou

Ethan Wu

Rosabella Chu

Yu-Shan Sun

Ava Jean Achivida

Arnav Muralidhar

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Claire Shim

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Eden Rotberg  
*assistant principal*

Luna Choe

Andres Sanchez

Gregory Zheng

Rice Areepitak

Cian-Rong "Jenna" Peng

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*principal*

Connor Chen  
*assistant principal*

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Grace Chen

Maria Lopez

Sofia Sanchez

Ria Abraham

Ore Akinyemiju

Elaine Aiko Ayala

Gabriela Capetillo

### Cello

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*principal*

Jonah Holliday  
*assistant principal*

Tanush Vatnani

Danna Sun

Benjamin Le

Matthew Chen

Zoe Gates

Tiffany Chen

Gavin Liu

Neev Vanam

Brayden Li

Kathleen Zhang

Olivia González

### Bass

Kristine Yi  
*principal*

Aiden Wang  
*assistant principal*

Kyle Sanchez

Priya Chandrasekhar

Samuela Alejandra Ashu

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Abesira Daniel †

Alex Sun

Sagan Yechuri

Hannah Zhang

### Piccolo

Sagan Yechuri

### Alto Flute

Alex Sun

### Oboe

Daniel Bell †

Lucas Bonnin

Samuel Frederick

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### English Horn

Lucas Bonnin

Samuel Frederick

### Clarinet

Hagan Frey †

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Alexander Qiu

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Yichen Wang

**Bassoon**

Shyameli Maia Pannala ‡  
 Holly Swart  
 Easton Woodcock

**Contrabassoon**

Rachel Varghese

**Horn**

Zakary Dooly ‡  
 Norah Dufilho  
 Emmeline James  
 Sahithi Kommuri  
 Shiven Patel  
 Rubina Rahman

**Trumpet**

Christian Bollmann ‡  
 Maksym Jakubas  
 Beth Lee  
 Jacob Rodriguez

**Trombone**

Jason Garcia  
 Jesus Mayen Zapata  
 Samuel Stegall ‡

**Bass Trombone**

Jeremiah Rodriguez

**Tuba**

Charlotte Lawson  
 Dhyane Moorthy ‡

**Harp**

Wally Snow

**Celesta**

Jacob Temple

**Timpani**

Zach Smith

**Percussion**

Austin Billasch  
 Diego Esparza  
 Ivan Shen  
 Eric Wang  
 Kevin Wang

**Orchestra Liaison**

Nikki Achivida

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

‡ Principal Klemm

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# Houston Youth Symphony Audience Survey

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**Step 1** Scan this QR code with your phone's camera

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*Thank you for your time!*

## 2025/26 Season Spring Concert II

May 3, 2026, 7 p.m.  
Stude Concert Hall, Rice University  
Shepherd School of Music

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### Philharmonia

Brad Smith, Conductor

*The Cowboys Overture* (1972)

John Williams (b. 1932)

*Les Préludes*, Symphonic Poem No. 3  
(1854)

Franz Liszt (1811–1886)

Pause

---

### Symphony

Michael Webster, Conductor

Overture to *Colas Breugnon* (1938)

Dmitry Kabalevsky (1904–1987)

Violin Concerto (1904/05)  
I. Allegro moderato

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Vanae Schunk, *violin*

*2026 Concerto Competition Overall Winner*

*The Young Person's Guide to the  
Orchestra* (1945)

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Alecia Lawyer, *narrator*

---

Photography and video recording strictly prohibited.

Please silence all phones and electronic devices.

A ten-minute pause takes place between each orchestra.

*The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, written by Benjamin Britten,  
used by permission of Boosey & Hawkes Inc

## Spring Concert II

### Program Notes

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## Philharmonia

### **The Cowboys Overture**

John Williams (b. 1932)

*The Cowboys* was a film directed by the very talented Mark Rydel and featured John Wayne, probably Hollywood's quintessential cowboy. The movie required a vigorous musical score to accompany virtuoso horseback riding and calf roping, and when my friend Andre Previn heard fragments of the score, he suggested that a concert overture lay hidden within the film's music. While composing this piece, I noted once again how music has the power to grant us access to the intangible, healing our wounds and binding us to what can only be expressed through sound.

Several years slipped by, and each time I saw the indefatigable Previn he would ask, "Have you made an overture of *Cowboys* yet?" He kept this up until 1980, when I finally worked out the piece and played it at a Boston Pops concert. Both the orchestra and the audience seemed to enjoy the music to such an extent that it has been part of

our repertoire ever since.

*Note by composer John Williams*

### **Les Préludes, Symphonic Poem No. 3**

Franz Liszt (1811–1886)

Franz Liszt's *Les Préludes* (Symphonic Poem No. 3), composed in the late 1840s, stands as one of the first and most enduring examples of the symphonic poem. Rather than using a traditional multi-movement form, the work unfolds as a single structure shaped by literary inspiration. Its title and philosophical inspiration come from Alphonse de Lamartine's *Méditations poétiques*, which reflects on life as a series of preludes to an ultimate, unknown conclusion.

The piece opens with a brief, enigmatic introduction before the principal theme emerges. Liszt develops much of the work through thematic transformation, a technique in which a single motif is continually altered in harmony, rhythm, orchestration, or character. This approach provides both cohesion and narrative flexibility, allowing the music to move fluidly through contrasting expressive states without losing structural unity. Several distinct sections can be heard. A lyrical, pastoral passage, which is often interpreted

to represent love or repose, features transparent orchestration and lush string writing. Turbulent episodes use expanded brass and percussion to heighten dramatic intensity, and numerous harmonic shifts and changes in texture help articulate these contrasts, guiding the listener through a loosely episodic but also carefully integrated form. Prominent solos appear throughout the work, notably oboe, English horn, clarinet, and French horn.

While *Les Préludes* does not prescribe a specific narrative, its synthesis of poetic ideas and musical process invites listeners to interpret its progression as an abstract reflection on human experience. This is an approach that remains central to the symphonic poem as a genre and continues to feel powerful for audiences today.

*Note by Brad Smith*

---

## Symphony

In our first two concerts this season, HYS Symphony featured Spanish and French music. Tonight's program spreads to the outer reaches of Europe with music from Russia, Finland, and Britain.

**Dmitri Kabalevsky** (1904–1987) was born four years before Shostakovich. Whereas Shostakovich had a life-long struggle expressing his musical ideas under the shadow of Stalinism, Kabalevsky towed the party line and became a Communist in 1940, two years after having written his satirical opera, *Colas Breugnon*. The libretto was supplied by the French writer, Romain Rolland (1866–1944), a vegetarian pacifist who had a complicated relationship with Stalin. The plot of *Colas Breugnon* was “politically correct,” unlike Shostakovich’s *Lady MacBeth of the Mtnensk District*, which was famously black-listed by Stalin. *Colas Breugnon* tells the story of a 16th century sculptor whose statues are burned by a villainous duke during the bubonic plague. Colas extracts his revenge by creating a sculpture of the duke riding backwards on a donkey.

Kabalevsky extracted a four-movement suite, of which the overture

is by far the most popular, known for its speed, vivacity, and imaginative orchestration, especially in the percussion section. Underneath the gaiety is a very sophisticated use of musical materials: an introductory theme that reappears twice in other guises; very fast syncopated accents; a large A-B-A structure with a broad B theme accompanied by the scampering notes that permeate the whole movement; an unexpected new theme in clarinets and oboes during the coda; and subtle use of sophisticated compositional devices such as augmentation and diminution (themes appearing twice or even four times slower and faster).

The history of Finland is dominated by rule from its neighbors to the south, Sweden (12th–18th centuries) and the east, Russia (1809–1917). Surprisingly, **Jean Sibelius** (1865–1957) grew up in a Swedish-speaking family but was a prime motivator and eventual national hero in Finland’s achieving independence in 1917. His 1899 work *Finlandia* became a Finnish anthem during that struggle.

His Symphony No 3, Op. 52 (1904–1907) was more concise than the first two, but the Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 47 (1904–1905) was closer in concept to the lengthier and overtly romantic first two symphonies. At c. 34 minutes, the concerto

has symphonic proportions with an orchestral accompaniment that is far more prominent than in most concertos. The solo part is notoriously difficult, even after Sibelius responded to the disastrous premiere with a “simplified” revision, premiered in Berlin on October 19, 1905, with none other than Richard Strauss on the podium.

The first movement has a unique form. Instead of the usual two themes, development, and recurrence of the two themes, there are three distinct themes, each gaining speed over the previous. The three themes recur after an extended violin cadenza that acts as both the development section and the keystone, holding the two halves together. After the cadenza, the first theme returns in an almost unrecognizable guise, but the subsequent themes are nearer to their original statements, bringing the movement to a fierce conclusion. The famous musicologist Donald Tovey wrote that he had “not met a more original, a more masterly, and a more exhilarating work than the Sibelius violin concerto.” I agree.

In creating *The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*, Op 34 in 1945 for a British educational documentary, **Benjamin Britten** (1913–1976) made an astonishing sequence

of good decisions. The first was his choice of using the tried-and-true format of Theme, Variations, and Fugue to highlight the instruments of the orchestra. The second was his choice of a theme by his countryman, Henry Purcell (1649-1595), in a nod to British musical history. The work opens with the theme expressed for full orchestra, woodwinds, brass, strings, percussion, and full orchestra again.

Consisting of triads and scales, the D-minor theme gave Britten the option of motivic variation, rather than the more typical variations on a chordal progression. The freedom of mixing and matching the motifs allowed Britten to express the unique personality of each instrument.

Variations A-M feature flighty flutes, soulful oboes, agile clarinets, capricious bassoons (Shall we march or sing?), virtuosic violins, sentimental violas, thoughtful cellos, unpredictable double basses, noble harps, heroic horns, dashing trumpets, regal low brass, perky percussion.

Among his other wise decisions:

- 1) Writing each theme and instrumental variation in a key well-suited to the instruments
- 2) Alternating fast, medium, and slow tempos in the variations
- 3) Crafting a fugue theme that meanders through as many as

five keys during seven measures and using it to introduce the instruments in the same order as the variations

- 4) Fugal entrances often arriving earlier than expected
- 5) Arriving in D major for a triumphant conclusion with the brass restating Purcell's theme broadly and majestically above the scampering fugue theme.

*The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* is more than a primer for children. It is a masterpiece of form and orchestration, often performed with the original narration omitted. This evening, we are fortunate to have HYS board member and founder of ROCO, Alecia Lawyer, give the narration her personal touch.

*Notes by Michael Webster*

## *Concerto Competition, Overall Winner* **Vanae Schunk, Violin**



Vanae began studying the violin at age six and has been playing for ten years. She currently serves as concertmaster of the Chamber Strings varsity orchestra at Clements High School and placed 19th in this season's TMEA All-State auditions, earning a position in the Texas All-State Orchestra first violin section. She also studies chamber music at Opus 1 Chamber Music School in Houston.

Over the past year, Vanae has appeared twice as a concerto soloist. She performed the first movement of the Barber Violin Concerto at Virtuosi of Houston's 26th Concerto Concert and again with the Energy Corridor of Houston Orchestra (ECHO) after winning its Youth Concerto Competition. Last summer, she was selected to participate in the Texas Music Festival Orchestral Institute at the University of Houston, where she was a finalist in the Cynthia Woods Mitchell / Ima Hogg Young Artist Competition. This season, she represents the Houston Youth Symphony's Symphony Orchestra as the overall winner of its Concerto Competition.

Vanae studies violin with Richard Lin, a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School. In addition to her musical studies, she is a member of the Clements High School Choir and enjoys drawing and reading in her spare time.

**Alecia Lawyer,**  
*Narrator*



Appointed the inaugural 2025 Texas State Classical Musician, Juilliard and SMU graduate Alecia Lawyer calls her work “Wildcatting in the Arts,” boldly drilling new wells of possibility in classical music. As Founder, Artistic Director, and Principal Oboist of ROCO—Houston’s innovative 40-piece professional ensemble now in its 21st season with musicians from all over the globe—she pioneers new ways for music to be created and experienced such as through livestreaming since 2013 free to the world and a Pay-What-You-Wish ticketing model. Alecia champions accessibility, reimagines concert spaces, and engages multi-generational audiences through genre-blending programs.

An advocate for all voices, she has commissioned and premiered over 155 works from living composers of all backgrounds and strategically integrates technology to deepen audience connection. Hailed as “The Johnny Appleseed of arts nonprofits” by the Houston Chronicle, she was named one of Musical America’s Top 30 Influencers and among Houston’s 50 Most Influential Women.

Beyond ROCO, Alecia serves on multiple arts boards, including HYS, and advises festivals worldwide. An F. Lorée artist and international performer, she inspires creativity through performance, leadership, and coaching—and enjoys Harley adventures with her husband Larry and their two sons.

## Philharmonia Musicians

### Violin I

Charlie Rogan  
*concertmaster*

Maya Ikegami  
*assistant concertmaster*

Vedanth Hariharan

Maple MacGloin

Ana Cristina Franco

Hephzibah Hernandez

Arthur Sasha Tan

Claira Yang

Max Bosen Xiao

S. Emily Liu

Sophia Franco

Julia Xu

Emily Choi

Jenessy Morones

Michelle Li

David Cui

### Violin II

Kelly Kim  
*principal*

Joseph Mani  
*assistant principal*

Yejin Lee

Zoey Houlton

Ailin Feng

Dylan Chan

Devon Chan

Mayu Fujiwara

Robin Gao

Maggie Searfoorce

Nathan Zhenzun Wang

David McGrew  
Celeste L. Smith  
Ela Tatakera  
Nathan Min  
Reinaldo Morales

### Viola

Arya Prasad  
*principal*

Carson Kirkley  
*assistant principal*

Joana Kong

Tishe Odejide

Henry Zhao

Jade Nicole Phan

Evan Lee

Raymond Ortiz Rivera

Alex Starnes

Ethan Helms

Madeleine Ulanday

Fernando Ramos

### Cello

Evangeline Yang  
*principal*

Varsha R. Chandupatla  
*assistant principal*

Claire Ahn

Joshua Smith

Brianna Orloske

Borhan Mostafizi

Marcus Lee

Joshua Wang

Keen Zhou

Andhra Krishna  
Yalamanchili

Evan Ung

Joanne Bach

### Bass

Rayan Rahimi  
*principal*  
Bria Soleil Linehan  
*assistant principal*  
Lincoln Kennedy  
Joel Mathew

### Flute

Daniela Guzman  
Jun Han  
Elise Hui  
Matthew Riggan ‡ ^

### Piccolo

Jun Han ‡  
Elise Hui ^

### Oboe

Vivian Gibson ^  
Eda Gürmen  
Rushil Makker  
Hannah Stevens ‡

### Clarinet

Daniel Duan ‡  
Eric Gibson  
Hariharan Jayant  
Haobo Shi ^

### E-Flat Clarinet

Daniel Duan

### Bassoon

Lucas D. Colca  
Shyam Jayant ^  
Liam MacDonald  
Ella Stevens ‡

**Horn**

Jmichael Aguilar ^  
Martin Cetto ‡  
Lily Edwards  
Niyah Johnson  
Joseph McCreight  
Zachary Pair  
Kishan A. Patel  
Liam Powers

**Trumpet**

Jacob Cook ^  
Danny Ly  
Rudy Peak  
Nolan Vaughn ‡

**Trombone**

Jinoo Kim  
John Okonji  
Luna Vazquez ^  
Dylan Wagner ‡

**Bass Trombone**

Shlomo Koremblum

**Tuba**

Corbin O'Bannion ‡  
Aidan Sadai ^

**Harp**

Titus Lu

**Piano and Celesta**

Jacob Temple

**Timpani**

George Hamilton ‡  
Tyler Law ^

**Percussion**

Joshua Colomine  
Puentes  
George Hamilton  
Tyler Law  
Brekken Ler  
Ivan Shen

**Orchestra Liaison**

Carissa Helms

*String musicians are listed in chair order.*

*Wind and Percussion musicians are listed alphabetically.*

‡ Principal Liszt

^ Principal Williams



## Symphony Musicians

### Violin I

Arjun R. Chandupatla  
*concertmaster*

Vanae Schunk  
*assistant  
concertmaster*

Kalea Schunk

McKenna Petersen

Benjamin Zhou

Kevin Hu

Henry Xu

Nelly Gonzalez Marin

Efran Zhao

Ava Zhang

Amanda Li

Sadie McLeod

Maureen Min

Claire Loggenberg

Arna Green

Daniel Rewa

### Violin II

Samuel Castro  
*principal*

Khanh Le  
*assistant principal*

Ethan Suh

Sheryl Sun

Evelyn Kao

Olivia Koo

Renee Qiu

Saanvi Doddaballapur

Vivian Stone

Michelle Li

Eric Liu

Josie Pink

Theodore Vu

Piet Hein Athmer

Yuchan Chung

### Viola

Julian Lee  
*principal*

Tobias Wheatley  
*assistant principal*

Tanav Raghavan

Aaron Daniel Bradberry

Christian Angelo

Consuelo

Drayden Johnson

Han La

Ella Ngu

Aden Loo

Aaron Nguyen

Aidan Huynh

Anthony To

### Cello

Lucy Ebben  
*principal*

Kendall Porter  
*assistant principal*

Shaopan Gao

Andy Wu

Saril Gupta

Joshua Segraves

Connor Torres

Jinlin Li

Jacob Chin

Abraham Kim

Seungheon Sunny Seok

Samantha Cui

### Bass

Gavin LaPointe  
*principal*

Abraham Melesio Zepeta  
*assistant principal*

Oliver Tran

Zoey Hernandez

Ryder J. McBride

Rudra Singh

César Garibay II

Madeleine Ray

### Flute

Harmony Chao \*

Yixuan (Vanessa) Chen

Caroline A. Chow ^

Misato Koiwa ‡

Isaac Serrano

### Piccolo

Caroline A. Chow

### Oboe

Caden Cromer

Mason Hsingyu Kuo ^

Devin Saljuud \*

Yiming Zhu ‡

### Clarinet

Daniel Bain

Alex Duran ‡

Yicheng He

Rexford Pan ^

Ares Zhou \*

**Bassoon**

Yash Ayar \*  
Michael W. Ng ‡  
Evan Schlorholtz  
Krish Varun ^

**Horn**

Cash Bussey  
Jonathan Castillo  
Ben Dixon  
Joshua Grush  
Connor Powers  
Eton Rosales ‡  
George Stevens ^  
Nathan Zavala \*

**Trumpet**

Cade Brown  
Shloak Mehta  
Diego Palacios ^  
Evan Salas \*  
Trevor A. Seeley ‡

**Trombone**

Lizamarie Lagaac  
Anino ‡  
Will Cranston  
Matthew Frederick ^  
James Santos \*

**Bass Trombone**

Kevin Aguilar

**Tuba**

Austin Falck ‡  
Alan Zhang \*

**Harp**

Eva Laxmi Das Rami  
Shannon Yang

**Timpani**

Noah Baskin ‡  
Tysei Noro \*  
Edwin Wang ^

**Percussion**

Josh Manuel Lagaac  
Anino  
Noah Baskin  
Brendan Floco  
Annie Newton  
Tysei Noro  
Michael Sanders  
Edwin Wang  
Eric Wang  
Ty Williams

**Orchestra Liaison**

Chi Nguyen

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

‡ *Principal Kabalevsky*

^ *Principal Sibelius*

\* *Principal Britten*

## Chamber Music Program and Concerto Competition Winners Recital

May 9, 2026, 4:00 p.m.  
Dudley Recital Hall  
Moore School of Music  
University of Houston

### Chamber Music Program

Whitney Bullock, *String Coach*  
Zelda Gray, *Violin Coach*  
Russell Haehl, *Brass Coach*  
Ella Sharpe, *Bass Coach*  
Michael Craig, *Chamber Music  
Program Manager*

Serenade, Op. 12 (1921)  
III. Vivo

Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)

Renee Qiu, Arthur Sasha Tan, *violins*  
Carson Kirkley, *viola*

Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85 (1919)  
I. Adagio–Moderato

Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Brianna Orloske, *cello*  
Ming Yang, *piano*

*All in a Day's Work* (1994)  
I. Kick Start  
III. Rush Hour

Tony Osborne (1947–2019)

*Kuebiko* (2026)

Lincoln Kennedy (b. 2010)

Adrian Curry, Lincoln Kennedy, Rayan Rahimi, Kristine Yi, *basses*

String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 13 (1827)  
I. Adagio

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Benjamin Suljic, Kelly Su, *violins*  
Aidan Hyunh, *viola*  
Gavin Liu, *cello*

Concertino in D Major, Op. 107 (1902)

Cécile Chaminade (1857–1944)

Luna Choe, *flute*  
John Markert, *piano*

Kleine Musik für 3 Violinen (1941)

Walter Giesecking (1895–1956)

I. Moderato

II. Andante

III. Molto vivace

Grace Hao, Kelly Kim, Lotus MacGloin, *violins*

Basse–Dance (1926)

Peter Warlock (1894–1930)

arr. David Wampler

Scherzo (1966)

John Cheetham (1939–2024)

Contrapunctus I,  
from *The Art of Fugue* (1742–50)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

arr. Robert King

Evan Salas, Shloak Mehta, *trumpets*

Martin Cetto, *horn*

Jason Garcia, *trombone*

Aidan Sadai, *tuba*

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35  
(1945)

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957)

I. Moderato nobile

Kalea Schunk, *violin*

Richard Schunk, *piano*



## *Junior Division, Non-Strings Winner*

### **Luna Choe, Flute**

Luna Choe is an eighth grade student at Friendswood Junior High and has been playing the flute for two years. She has won first prize in several competitions, including the 2026 Clear Lake Symphony Youth Concerto Competition, 2026 Houston Flute Club Young Artists Competition, 2025 and 2026 Denise Jennings Solo Competition on piccolo and flute, and has earned first-place rankings in 2024 and 2025 for TMEA Region 17 Band. This summer, she plans on attending the Brevard Flute Seminar. Luna also plays the violin and has been a member of the Houston Youth Symphony as a violinist for the past two seasons. She has studied flute with Izumi Miyahara, Kathryn Ladner, and Norma Williams.



## *Junior Division, Strings Co-Winner*

### **Brianna Orloske, Cello**

Brianna Orloske started her piano lessons at the age of three with her mother, Dr. Rachel Orloske, and began cello lessons at the age of five under the guidance of Houston Symphony cellist, Maki Kubota. Brianna has won first prize in both the International Music Competition London “Grand Prize Virtuoso” and US International Open Music Competition California in 2022. She held the associate principal cello chairs in the HYS String and Philharmonia Orchestras during the 2023 and 2025 seasons. Brianna has also been awarded first prize at the Charleston International Music Competition in 2024, and second prize American Virtuoso International Music Competition at Carnegie Hall that same year. Also in 2024, Brianna earned a position within the Symphony Orchestra of TMEA Region 23. In Brianna’s free time, she enjoys playing video games, watching anime, and spending time with her younger sister.



## *Junior Division, Strings Co-Winner*

### **Kalea Schunk, Violin**

Kalea began studying the violin at age three and started competing at five in Taipei, Taiwan, where she frequently won first prizes. She earned second place in the 15th Academy of Taiwan Strings Violin Competition (Junior Division) and performed at the National Concert Hall in Taipei.



At nine, Kalea joined the Virtuosi of Houston chamber orchestra as its youngest member and later won the orchestra's concerto competition, appearing as soloist with the ensemble. She also won the Philadelphia International Music Festival Concerto Competition and participated in the Music@Menlo Smith Family Young Performers Program.

Kalea studies with Richard Lin and enjoys piano, drawing, and reading.

## **Concerto Competition Winners**

### **Junior Division Winners**

Brianna Orloske and Kalea Schunk, string co-winners

Luna Choe, non-string winner

Edison Barton, honorable mention

Sabrina Judd, honorable mention

McKenna Petersen, honorable mention

### **Senior Division Winners**

Vanae Schunk, String Winner and Overall Winner

Connor Powers, Non-String Winner

William Cranston, Honorable Mention

Gavin LaPointe, Honorable Mention

Kendall Porter, Honorable Mention

Haobo Shi, Honorable Mention



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346-236-6650

## Melody Program Spring Recital

Sunday, May 10, 2026

2:30 PM

Charles P. Rhinehart Auditorium

Texas Southern University

3100 Cleburne St.

Houston, TX 77004

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Featuring students from the Melody Plus and Melody in Schools Programs  
with Jonathan Forbes, piano

See insert for detailed program information

### Melody Program Teaching Artists

Matthew Daily\*

Mairéad Flory

Luis Gutiérrez Fonseca

Ruth Garcia

Tony Luong\*

Luis Ramirez

Emma Reynolds

Ryan Rongone

Jacob Speakman\*

Mario Zelaya

*\*HYS Alum*

Performance venue graciously provided by  
the Department of Music at Texas Southern University.

Melody in Schools is supported by  
the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion.



## Congratulations, Seniors!

Jmichael Aguilar	The University of Texas at Austin
Kevin Aguilar	University of Houston*
Elaine Aiko Ayala^	The University of Texas at San Antonio
Yash Ayar	Emory University
Joanne Bach	The University of Texas at Austin
Daniel Bain	Undecided*
Noah Baskin	University of Houston*
Lucas Bonnin	Northwestern University+
Cade Brown	University of Houston*
Cash Bussey	Texas A&M University
Samuel Castro^	Undecided*
Arjun R. Chandupatla^	Brown University+
Harmony Chao	The University of Texas at Austin
Yixuan (Vanessa) Chen^	Vanderbilt University*
Caroline A. Chow	University of Houston
Will Cranston	Cleveland Institute of Music*
Caden Cromer	The University of Texas at Austin*
Saanvi Doddaballapur^	Rice University
Zakary Dooly	Undecided*
Alex Duran	The Juilliard School*
Lucy Ebben	Carnegie Mellon University
Austin Falck	Undecided*
Ana Cristina Franco^	The University of Texas at Dallas
Hagan Frey	Indiana University*
Zoe Gates	Baylor University
Eric Gibson	University of North Texas*
Saril Gupta	The University of Texas at Austin*
Vedanth Hariharan	The University of Texas at Austin
Zoey Hernandez^	Undecided+
Aidan Huynh	The University of Texas at Austin
Maiya Jackson	University of Houston*

Niyah Johnson	Texas State University*
Abraham Kim	University of Michigan*
Carson Kirkley	Gap year*
Shlomo Koremblum	University of Houston+
Amanda Li	Cornell University
Aden Loo	Texas A&M University
Rushil Makker	Undecided
Joseph McCreight	Undecided*
Sadie McLeod^	Oberlin Conservatory*
Shloak Mehta	University of Colorado at Boulder*
Maureen Min^	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Reinaldo Morales	The University of Texas at Austin
Jenessy Morones^	Northwestern University+
Borhan Mostafizi	The University of Texas at Austin
Michael W. Ng	University of Toronto+
Aaron Nguyen	The University of Texas at Austin
Tysei Noro	The University of Texas at Austin+
Zachary Pair	Texas A&M University
Daniel Pate	Texas A&M University
Rudy Peak	Undecided+
Celeste Peugnet	Antioch College
Josie Pink	Undecided
Kendall Porter	Undecided*
Connor Powers^	Rice University*
Tanav Raghavan	The University of Texas at Austin+
Eva Laxmi Das Rami^	Rice University
Madeleine Ray	New York University
Jacob Rodriguez	University of Houston*
Jeremiah Rodriguez	University of Houston*
Eton Rosales	University of Houston
Vyvyanna Salazar	University of North Texas*
Devin Saljuud	Northwestern University*
Andres Sanchez	Sam Houston State University*



James Santos	University of Houston*
Trevor A. Seeley	University of Houston*
Celeste L. Smith^	University of Chicago
George Stevens	University of North Texas+
Hannah Stevens	Texas Woman's University+
Arthur Sasha Tan	Gap year
Connor Torres	The University of Texas at Austin*
Oliver Tran	The Juilliard School*
Krish Varun	Columbia University
Luna Vazquez	Undecided
Theodore Vu	University of North Texas*
Dylan Wagner	Louisiana State University*
Tobias Wheatley	University of Houston*
Ty Williams	Indiana University*
Andy Wu	Georgetown University+
Henry Xu	University of Pennsylvania
Nathan Zavala	Undecided*
Abraham Melesio Zepeta	Harvard University
Alan Zhang	Stanford University+
Efran Zhao^	Rice University
Ares Zhou	Indiana University*
Yiming Zhu	Northwestern University*

*\*Music Major*

*+Music Minor*

*^ Member of Houston Youth Symphony for 5 or more years*

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

### *All-State*

Josh Anino	Jun Han	Evan Salas
Yash Ayar	Elise Hui	Devin Saljuud
Noah Baskin	Maya Ikegami	Michael Sanders
Cash Bussey	Abraham Kim	Vanae Schunk
Arjun Chandupatla	Gavin LaPointe	Isaac Serrano
Lucas Colca	Elizabeth Lee	Celeste Smith
Will Cranston	Julian Lee	Zachary Smith
Caden Cromer	Amanda Li	Connor Torres
David Cui	Michelle Li	Andy Wu
Samantha Cui	Eric Liu	Henry Xu
Benjamin Dixon	Rushil Makker	Julia Xu
Saanvi Doddaballapur	Ryder McBride	Claira Yang
Zakary Dooly	Maureen Min	Evangeline Yang
Norah Dufilho	Tysei Noro	Nathan Zavala
Samuel Frederick	Daniel Pate	Alan Zhang
Hagan Frey	Alexander Qiu	Ava Zhang
Shaopan Gao	Tanav Raghavan	Efran Zhao
Cesar Garibay	Matthew Riggan	Benjamin Zhou
Nelly Gonzalez	Eton Rosales	
Arna Green	Aidan Sadai	

### *Area*

Claire Ahn	Mayu Fujiwara	Mason Kuo
Piet Hein Athmer	Jason Garcia	Tyler Law
Daniel Bell	Vivian Gibson	Yejin Lee
Lucas Bonnin	Joshua Grush	Siyin Emily Liu
Aaron Bradberry	Hari Jayant	Joseph Mani
Jacob Chin	Shyam Jayant	Shloak Mehta
Caroline Chow	Yusei Kawabata	Dhyane Moorthy
Abesira Daniel	Misato Koiwa	Annie Newton
Lily Edwards	Joana Kong	Aaron Nguyen
Brendan Floco	Shlomo Koremblum	Corbin O'Bannion

John Okonji  
Zachary Pair  
Rudy Peak  
Evan Schlorholtz  
Joshua Segraves

Ella Stevens  
Hannah Stevens  
Danna Sun  
Holly Swart  
Ela Tatakter

Neev Vanam  
Krish Varun  
Nolan Vaughn  
Sagan Yechuri  
Hannah Zhang

## Region

Ava Jean Achivida  
Claire Ahn  
Rice Areepitak  
Elaine Ayala  
Edison Barton  
Austin Billasch  
Varsha Chandupatla  
Harmony Chao  
Vanessa Chen  
Luna Choe  
Emily Choi  
Joon Choi  
Joshua Colomine  
Puentes  
Mason Duan  
Ailin Feng  
Ana Cristina Franco  
Sophia Franco  
Saril Gupta  
Daniela Guzman  
Vedanth Hariharan  
Maia Hernandez  
Zoey Houlton  
Andrew Huang  
Maksym Jakubas  
Olivia Jang  
Niyah Johnson  
Sabrina Judd  
Evelyn Kao  
Keziah Kim  
Sahithi Kommuri

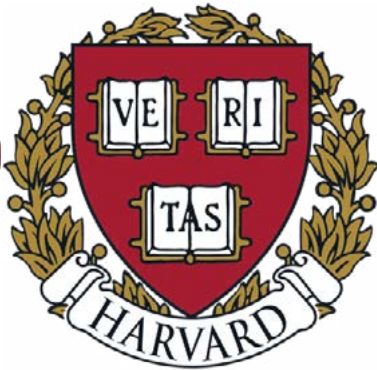
Olivia Koo  
Terry Lam  
Khanh Le  
Emma Lee  
Annabelle Li  
Jinlin Li  
Michelle Li  
Daniel Lu  
Danny Ly  
Nathan Min  
Raymond Ortiz Rivera  
Shyameli Pannala  
Georgia Parzen  
McKenna Petersen  
Jade Phan  
Josie Pink  
Liam Powers  
Daniel Ramirez  
Juan Ramos  
Katherine Ren  
Steven Ren  
Jeremiah Rodriguez  
Eden Rotberg  
Vyvyanna Salazar  
Sofia Sanchez  
Ivan Shen  
Claire Shim  
Rudra Singh  
Vivian Stone  
Ethan Suh  
Sheryl Sun

Ian Tan  
Rachel Varghese  
Luna Vazquez  
Eason Wang  
Joshua Wang  
Roy Wang  
Cedric Wijatno  
Easton Woodcock  
Shannon Yang  
Kristine Yi  
Alice Zhang  
Coraline Zhang  
Kathleen Zhang  
Henry Zhao



*¡Felicidades!*

Tu familia está  
bien orgullosa  
de ti, Abraham.  
¡Mejores deseos  
en tus estudios  
en Harvard!



*Class of 2030*



**CONGRATULATIONS,  
CONCERT MASTER!**



**We are so  
proud of you,  
Charlie!**

*Congratulations*  
MADELEINE



*Dedicated  
to Grandpa*

We are so proud of you - an incredibly talented viola player and creative HYS Social Media Ambassador, inspiring others through music and innovation.

Thank you to the HYS Staff for their support and dedication.

- LOVE  
DAD, MOM, MADISON & JJ



*With all our love and pride — Mom, Dad, and your brother.  
Keep shining and let your music lead the way.*



Ty,

There are no words to adequately express how proud and amazed we are by your talent, drive, and dedication to your craft. You took something we thought would just be a fun elective and life experience and turned it into your future. We know you will succeed, not only because we see your work ethic, but also because you have a true passion for your craft unlike what we've ever seen before. Go forward and make beautiful music for the rest of us to enjoy, our bearded boy!

Forever Your Biggest Fans,

Mom, Dad & Cole



## Annie Newton

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA &  
2026 BUTLER TEXAS YOUNG MASTER



*Congratulations!*  
*We love you and are so proud of you!*  
*- Mom, Dad, and Alex*

## Congratulations Austin

Congratulations on your Senior Year!  
We are so proud of all you've accomplished  
in your music path and life.

Your hard work, dedication, and passion  
truly shows, and inspire us everyday.  
As you step into this next chapter, we hope  
you always believe in yourself the way that  
we believe in you. Your future is so bright,  
and we hope it will be filled with incredible  
opportunities and happiness.

No matter where life takes you, we will  
always be right here, supporting and  
cheering you on.

We love you so much.

Mami y Papi





*We are so proud of you  
Caroline!*

*Love,*

*Mom, Dad, Edgard*



*Connor Powers  
Class of 2026*

Congratulations on your high school graduation from HSPVA and 5 years with the Houston Youth Symphony! We are so proud of you for your many accomplishments, for your hard work and dedication, and mostly for the amazing human you have become. Best luck on your next journey at SSOM.

Let's Go Rice!  
Love, Mom, Dad and Family

## CONGRATULATIONS SAANVI!

Congratulations on your eight-year journey with the Houston Youth Symphony. Your effort, perseverance, and commitment, along with the people you've met and the music you've made together, will stay with you for a lifetime. We are so proud of you and all that you will go on to accomplish as you move on to university.

Luv u,  
Shaivi

and your parents

Saanvi Doddaballapur



**Congratulations, Tysei!!**

**We're so proud of you and  
look forward to your very  
bright future!!!**

❤️ Love ❤️,  
Mom, Dad, Alisa & Sion





### Congratulations, Devin!

Your dedication, passion, and leadership in music has inspired us every step of the way.

We are so proud of your achievements with Houston Youth Symphony and your admission to Northwestern University, where you will pursue a dual degree in Music and Neuroscience.

Keep striving toward your dream of becoming a multi-faceted professional who blends science and music to make a difference in the world.

With love always, **Mom & Dad**

Congratulations to my favorite All-State Percussionist, I love you to the moon and back Noah. It is so hard to believe that it's time for the class of 2026 to graduate, but I'm excited to see all of the things you will do in life. Very proud of you kid!  
Love, Mom



## Conductor Biographies

### Michael Webster

*Artistic Director and Symphony  
Conductor*



As the 2025–26 season begins, Michael Webster and the Houston Youth Symphony have a lot to be thankful for, most recently having been announced as the national winner of the Mark of Excellence from the Foundation for Music Education for the 15th time! Our performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* received glowing comments from the prestigious adjudicator, Larry Livingston. The other competition for youth orchestras, The American Prize, awarded HYS special recognition for an unprecedented two years consecutively in 2024 and 2025 as 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."

2024 also brought national recognition as HYS performed for an enthusiastic audience of 1,000 at the League of American Orchestras Conference at Jones Hall in Houston. As a clarinetist, Michael Webster received an Honorary Membership for "Lifetime Achievement in Performing, Teaching, and Professional Service" from the International Clarinet Association at ClarinetFest 2024 in Dublin, Ireland.

A multifaceted musician, Dr. Webster is known as a 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.

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.

**Brad Smith**  
*Philharmonia 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.

## Matthew Porter

### *Sinfonia 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, he 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.

## 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 Medellín, 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.

## Teaching Artists

### Spring Concert

#### Sectional Coaches

Marcos Altamirano

*bass*

Nicholas Leh Baker

*strings*

Carmen Borregales

*woodwinds*

Whitney Bullock

*viola*

Clint Capshaw

*strings*

Matthew Daily\*

*bass*

Yevgeny Dokshansky

*clarinet*

*woodwinds*

Andrés Gonzalez

*violin*

Benjamin Grube

*violin*

Russell Haehl\*

*trumpet*

Katherine Hart

*oboe*

Deborah Harvey

*horn*

Craig Hauschildt

*percussion*

Naomi Hoffmeyer

*harp*

David Irish

*brass*

Kana Kimura

*violin*

Nicholas Lindell

*viola*

Emily Moscoso\*

*oboe*

Danny Nguyen\*

*bassoon*

Hunter O'Brien

*flute*

Aidan Pasquale

*bass*

Adam Sadberry\*

*flute*

*woodwinds*

Jacob Schafer

*violin*

Barton Sopata

*trumpet*

Elizabeth Spencer

*cello*

Catherine Urban\*

*violin*

Mayara Velasquez

*cello*

Ashley Wang

*cello*

Karissa Williams

*violin*

Marquis Wincher

*low brass*

Joy Yanai

*cello*

Sergein Yap

*viola*

### Chamber Music

#### Program Coaches

Whitney Bullock

Zelda Gray

Russell Haehl\*

Ella Sharpe

#### Melody Program

##### Teachers

Matthew Daily\*

Mairéad Flory

Luis Gutiérrez Fonseca

Ruth Garcia

Christian Ibañez

Tony Luong\*

Luis Ramirez

Emma Reynolds

Ryan Rongone

Jacob Speakman\*

Mario Zelaya

**Coda Music  
Program Director**

Jackson Guillén

**Coda Program  
Assistant Directors**

Omar Escobedo

Nora Henschen

**Lead Teachers**

Samantha Arizpe

Luis Gutiérrez Fonseca

Ruth Garcia

**Assistant Teachers**

Jonathan Andino

Larysa Horichenko

Christian Ibañez

Vu Pham

Angelica Velasquez

Natalie Zaldivar

Mario Zelaya

**Interns**

Alejandro Castillo\*

Ivy Kubin

Tony Luong\*

Victor Rodriguez\*

**2025/26 Coda****Mentorship Cohort**

Julia Biral^

Arjun R. Chandupatla^

Sophia Franco^

Olivia Koo^

Mercedes Lundberg^

Shreya Sendos^

**Coda Program Mentor**

Mahee Agrahar

Ava D'Souza^

\*Houston Youth

Symphony alum

^ *Current HYS musician***Parent  
Volunteers**

Nikki Achivida

Olayinka Akinyemiju

Yvonne Pham Bicocca

Amy Billasch

Yang Bo

Rebecca Briggie

Aba Coleman

Amber Danley

Kristen Huang Diaz

Jenny Gao

Carissa Helms

Kimberly Jones

Tatiana Judd

Elaine Loggenberg

Jaye Mao

Melanie McLeod

Catalina Molano

Martha Mollett

Laura Montalvo

Lucy Ngu

Chi Nguyen

Alia Qaissy

Danette Quaicoe

Rolando Rodriguez

Yolanda Rodriguez

Mindy Snow

Ying Song

Becky Stegall

Lydia Tam

Yaping Wang

Joan Wijatno

Sue Wu

Tao Xu

Xiao Yang

Wei Zuo

# Houston Youth Symphony

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## HYS is celebrating 80 years next season!

Join us for a special concert on Sunday, January 31, 2027 featuring the HYS Symphony performing Mahler Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection."

With Kingwood Chorale, directed by Todd Miller and Rice Chorale directed by Tom Jaber.

It will be an unforgettable event—you won't want to miss it!

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For updates on concert details, check [houstonyouthsymphony.org](http://houstonyouthsymphony.org)

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Houston Youth Symphony is funded in part by grants from the Texas Commission on the Arts and the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance.



Texas  
Commission  
on the Arts



Funded in part by the  
City of Houston  
through Houston Arts Alliance



Freedom 210



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
for the ARTS



TOURNAMENT  
of CHAMPIONS  
CHARITABLE TRUST



Houston Youth Symphony

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Suite 245

Houston, Texas 77027

713-785-2422

[HoustonYouthSymphony.org](http://HoustonYouthSymphony.org)

