

For Immediate Release:

*Metropolitan Youth Symphony is back—live—with
an ambitious mix of classics and new works for the
2021/22 season*

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PORTLAND, OR (September 7, 2021):

Music Director Raúl Gómez-Rojas is pleased to launch a 2021/22 season packed with diverse, high-impact repertoire, where talented young musicians will perform traditional masterworks, groundbreaking American composers, and new music by young Oregon composers.

Season highlights:

- In our season-opening concert in November, students will play the iconic **Symphony No. 5 by Ludwig van Beethoven**, symbolizing a journey from tempest to triumph, as we celebrate making music in person together again.
- Our March concert will feature **Smoulder**, by Linfield University's own **Andrea Reinkemeyer**, and **Symphony No. 1, Afro-American**, by the brilliant and prolific Black American composer **William Grant Still**.
- In May, the season closes with the always-spectacular **Symphony No. 4 by Pyotr Tchaikovsky**.
- Each concert will feature the **world premiere of an original symphonic composition by local young composers**, created through The Authentic Voice commissioning program in partnership with Fear No Music's Young Composers Project. The November concert will include a collaborative piece *Theme and Variations* on "Subwoofer Lullaby," from the video game Minecraft soundtrack. A writer and student leader from I Am M.O.R.E. will collaborate with a young composer for the May concert.
- Two talented student soloists (TBA)— winners of the **MYS's annual Concerto Competition** — will perform in March and May.



2021-2022 Concert Season Details

Opening Night — Fate Knocking

November 14, 2021, 7:30 pm

Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall

- *Theme and Variations* on “Subwoofer Lullaby,” from the video game Minecraft soundtrack, arranged by Haladar Wright, Kara Taylor, Elaina Stuppler and Joseph Young. All four young musicians are part of The Authentic Voice commissioning program in partnership with Fear No Music’s Young Composers Project.
- Symphony No. 5 in C Minor by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827). The German composer and pianist is considered one of the most brilliant Western composers of all time, and a crucial transitional figure connecting the Classical and Romantic ages of Western music. His fifth symphony is one of the best-known compositions in classical music and it is widely considered one of the cornerstones of Western music.

Spring Concert — In Characters of Fire

March 6, 2022, 7:30 pm

Newmark Theatre

- World premiere of *Rhythms in Motion*, a work by composer Rohan Srinivasan, a 2021 graduate of Sunset High school who now attends the Juilliard School of Music in New York City.
- *Smoulder*, by Andrea Reinkemeyer (b. 1976). This American composer’s work has been described as “clever, funky, jazzy and virtuosic” (Detroit News, Daily Gazette). Dr. Reinkemeyer serves as Associate Professor of Music Composition & Theory at Linfield University, and her piece *Smoulder* evokes the devastation of forest fires and other ominous signs of climate change.
- Symphony No.1, *Afro-American*, by William Grant Still (1895 - 1978). Written in 1930, this was the first symphony by a Black composer to be performed by a major orchestra — the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in 1931. The symphony boldly combines the conventions of jazz, blues and spirituals with the classic tradition.
- A performance by MYS’ Concerto Competition winner.

Season Finale — Resilience and Triumph

May 20, 2022, 7:30 pm

Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall

- Symphony No. 4, op. 36 by Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840–1893). Working during the Romantic Period, Tchaikovsky brought Russian music to unprecedented international popularity. He dedicated his Symphony No. 4 to his patroness, Nadezhda von Meck, affirming her as an equal partner in its creation.
- World premiere of a collaborative work by The Authentic Voice composer Koharu Sakiyama and Nevaeh Bray, a student leader and writer from the I Am M.O.R.E

program, the award-winning youth leadership development program founded by S. Renee Mitchell.

- A performance by MYS' Concerto Competition winner.
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Tickets: \$11-\$43 at www.playmys.org or call 503-239-4566.

Our Partners

The Authentic Voice

In 2018, MYS launched [The Authentic Voice commissioning program](#) in partnership with FearNoMusic's Young Composers Project (YCP) to teach young musicians to use their artistry to empower others and create joy in the world. The partnership gives young composers an opportunity to write full symphony orchestra and to hear their work performed while musicians get to play never-performed music written by their peers.

This year's Authentic Voice Composers

- Haladar Wright attends Alliance Charter Academy in Oregon City
- Kara Taylor attends Valley Catholic High School in Beaverton
- Joseph Young attends Mountain View High School in Vancouver
- Elaina Stuppler attends Crossroads School for the Arts & Sciences in Santa Monica, CA (she attends online)
- Rohan Srinivasan is a 2021 graduate of Sunset High school who now attends the Juilliard School of Music in New York City
- Koharu Sakiyama attends West Linn High School

Fear No Music's Young Composer's Project

Led by acclaimed composer and violist Kenji Bunch, the Portland-based ensemble Fear No Music specializes in performing music by 20th and 21st-century composers. Answering a call to encourage and cultivate musical curiosity and creativity in the next generation, the organization established the [Young Composers Project](#) in 1997 to provide training and mentorship in music composition to young people grades six to twelve. Past participants have won numerous local and national honors for their works, and many now pursue careers as composers of orchestra music, movie and television scores, musical theater works, and many other forms of music.

I Am M.O.R.E.

[I Am M.O.R.E.](#) is an award-winning, youth leadership development program that uses the power of personal storytelling, critical inquiry and social-emotional skill building to help Black youth move past the emotional grip of their trauma, rise to their potential, and shift into the depth of their possibilities.

Since its founding by S. Renee Mitchell in 2018, I Am M.O.R.E.'s vision has expanded to train youth to facilitate culturally sensitive, trauma-informed and SEL workshops for educators, organize self-care days for educators, and lead public performances and

other community- and youth-engagement projects that provide space for youth to speak their truth via the visual arts, music, poetry, dance and other creative expressions.

Annual Concerto Competition

MYS's annual **Concerto Competition**, held each January, inspires the organization's most ambitious students to master challenging and mature solo repertoire. A winner is chosen among the strings, and also among the combined category of winds, brass and percussion, with both students being presented in performance with the Symphony Orchestra.

About the Metropolitan Youth Symphony

With a foundational commitment to making music education accessible to all, the [Metropolitan Youth Symphony](#) educates, develops and promotes over 500 young musicians of all ages and levels of experience each year. MYS is one of the nation's largest youth orchestra programs, with students from 10 counties participating in thirteen ensembles including orchestra, strings, band, percussion and jazz. By providing theory classes, instrumental coaching in small groups, and opportunities to collaborate with performers across artistic disciplines, MYS seeks to develop the whole musician.

MYS provides tuition-free beginning strings, as well as tuition assistance, loaner instruments, and in-school concerts in low-income neighborhoods. MYS ensembles reflect a broad diversity of cultures and life experiences while fostering a tight-knit community through music, collaboration, peer support and self-expression. In response to rapid growth in the metropolitan area, MYS has established a satellite string program in Hillsboro, Oregon.

MYS' Symphony Orchestra tours internationally every three years. Over the past ten years, students have performed in Poland, the Czech Republic, China, and, in 2019, Italy and Austria.

Links to past MYS performances

https://youtu.be/kaWLAkX_3rk April 25, 2021 – “Groovebox Fantasy” by Portland composer Kenji Bunch. MYS Symphony Orchestra & Raúl Gómez-Rojas, conductor. A digital collaboration with Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra led by MYS during a last year's fully online season due to the COVID pandemic.

<https://youtu.be/ooQ6YKbPiDQ> May 21, 2019 – Symphony No. 1 by Florence Price. MYS Symphony Orchestra & Raúl Gómez-Rojas, conductor.

<https://youtu.be/AF528CHXzVs> November 10, 2019 – For the Uncommon Woman by Joan Tower. MYS Symphony Orchestra & Raúl Gómez-Rojas, conductor.

Music Director Raúl Gómez-Rojas

Conductor, violinist, and violist Raúl Gómez-Rojas begins his sixth season as Music Director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony. Lauded as a “visionary conductor” (Oregon ArtsWatch), Gómez-Rojas inspires audiences and artists of all ages and backgrounds to use music as a vehicle for connecting with others. Recent highlights

include performances with the Oregon Symphony, the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, and guest artists as diverse as Regina Carter, Boyz 2 Men, Lyle Lovett, The Tenors, Kermit Ruffins, the 610 Stompers and Rick Springfield.

Gómez-Rojas was selected as one of six conductors to be featured in the League of American Orchestra's 2018 Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview, after competing for the honor with nearly 150 applicants from around the world. He received masters and doctoral degrees from Louisiana State University where he studied with Carlos Riazuelo (conducting), Kevork Mardirossian and Espen Lilleslåtten (violin/viola). His conducting training also includes a fellowship at the Aspen Music Festival.

