

## Metropolitan Youth Symphony's Opening Night Presents Beloved Animated Classics



**PORTLAND, OR, OCTOBER 12, 2023** – Metropolitan Youth Symphony is proud to present opening night of its 2023-24 season, "[Music in Motion](#)," on **November 12, 7:30pm at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall**. This concert, which explores the way music and animation inspire each other, embodies MYS Music Director Raúl Gómez-Rojas' vision to explore works of distinction that redefine what belongs in a traditional "classical" concert.

Led by Gómez-Rojas, MYS' Symphony Orchestra will showcase **Modest Mussorgsky's** *Night on Bald Mountain* and **Paul Dukas'** *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* from *Fantasia*, **Joe Hisaishi's** enchanting *My Neighbor Totoro*, as well as three pieces from **Alan Menken's** illustrious body of work: orchestral suites from *Beauty and The Beast* and *The Little Mermaid*, and *Poor Unfortunate Souls*.

In its sixth year, [The Authentic Voice commissioning series](#) will feature the world premiere of *Music for an Imaginary Cartoon*.

This original piece will be composed collaboratively by local student composers Elishiya Crain-Keddi, Manu Isaacs, Max Evans-McGlothlin, A'sharia Pendergrass, and Malia Baker, all from [Fear No Music's Young Composers Project](#). Young student animators from Portland Art Museum's cinematic storytelling branch [Center for an Untold Tomorrow \(PAM CUT\)](#) will use this music as inspiration for an accompanying animation, which will release later in the season.

Each piece in this concert will implement [ConcertCue](#), a platform created by MIT Music Technology Lab that displays customized images and text in a slideshow format, timed to specific moments in the piece. This provides audience members with the opportunity to interact with the music and gain a deeper understanding of the thoughts and intentions that went into its creation. Select Symphony Orchestra students will compile these annotations, including a brief introduction of who they are, moments they enjoy in the piece, and historical information about the composer, the piece and its composition.

Ticket prices range from \$11-\$46. Tickets are now available for purchase, with additional information available at [www.playmys.org](http://www.playmys.org) or 503-239-4566.

The full concert program can be found below:

### Opening Night – Music in Motion

Symphony Orchestra, Interlude Orchestra

November 12, 2023, 7:30pm at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall

- **Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky's** *Night on Bald Mountain*: This challenging piece was inspired by the nocturnal revels of Russian lore that took place on Lysa Hora, one of the mystical "bald mountains" of Ukraine. While Mussorgsky composed various versions of this piece, it was not until his friend Rimsky-Korsakov arranged the piece for orchestra that it became the *Night on*

*Bald Mountain* well-known today. It gained even more widespread recognition when featured in Disney's iconic animation *Fantasia*.

- **French romantic era composer Paul Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*:** This piece was featured alongside *Night on Bald Mountain* in *Fantasia*. As part of the 19th century confluence of music and literature, this composition gained inspiration from a ballad written by German author and poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. A highly self-critical musician, Dukas destroyed much of his work prior to his death, but this magical orchestral scherzo lives on in high esteem.
- **World premiere of *Music for an Imaginary Cartoon*** by local student composers Elishiya Crain-Keddi, Manu Isaacs, Max Evans-McGlothlin, A'sharia Pendergrass, and Malia Baker, all from Fear No Music's Young Composers Project. Their piece will in turn inspire a short animation that will be released later in the season.
- **Alan Menken's *The Little Mermaid Orchestral Suite*, *Beauty and The Beast Orchestral Suite*, and *Poor Unfortunate Souls*.** MYS is excited to welcome Zach Galatis in the performance of *Poor Unfortunate Souls* as the voice of Ursula. In addition to serving as solo piccolo of the Oregon Symphony since 2012, Galatis frequently works with Third Angle New Music and 45th Parallel and is locally known for his vocal performances of Broadway repertoire.
- **Joe Hisaishi's enchanting *My Neighbor Totoro*:** Hisaishi arranged this piece as a concert version of his original score for *My Neighbor Totoro*, a fan-favorite 1988 Japanese animated fantasy film written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki.
- **MYS is also proud to present its Interlude Orchestra, conducted by Erica Boland**, playing *Slavonic Legend* by Elliot Del Bargo, *A Pirates Legend* by Soon Hee Newbold, and *Second Storm (Ivan)* by Robert W. Smith.

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### **About Music Director Raúl Gómez-Rojas**

Member of the 2018 class of the prestigious Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview (League of American Orchestras), Raúl Gómez-Rojas inspires audiences and artists of all ages and backgrounds to use music as a vehicle to connect, pursue excellence, and spread joy. Lauded as a "visionary conductor" (Oregon ArtsWatch), Raúl has built a reputation as an insightful leader that "captivates both performing musicians and audiences alike," and whose "positive attitude and enthusiasm make him a joy to be with" (C. Mumm, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, NY).

In high demand as a guest conductor, Raúl is equally at home on stage and in the pit, leading professional orchestras in the USA and Latin America, new music ensembles, youth, and community groups, and collaborating with a vast array of guest artists across many genres and disciplines. Highlights include performances with the Oregon Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Nashville Symphony, Oregon Ballet Theatre, 45th Parallel Universe, Fear No Music, Third Angle New Music, Tilikum Chamber Orchestra, Beaverton Symphony, the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, the Oregon International Ballet Academy, hip-hop artist Common, jazz violinist Regina Carter, Steward Copeland, Boyz 2 Men, Lyle Lovett, The Tenors, Kermit Ruffins, Rick Springfield and more. Raúl is on his eighth season as Music Director of Metropolitan Youth Symphony.

### ***About Metropolitan Youth Symphony***

With a foundational commitment to making music education accessible to all, Metropolitan Youth Symphony educates, develops, and promotes young musicians of all ages and levels of experience each year, with an enrollment of over 500 ensemble students in a typical season. MYS is one of the nation's largest youth orchestra programs, with students from 130 schools participating in fourteen ensembles including orchestral, band, flute, percussion, and jazz. Together with theory classes, instrumental coaching in small groups, and opportunities to collaborate with performers across artistic disciplines, MYS ensemble programs develop the whole musician.

MYS also provides free beginning string lessons for 70 students, as well as tuition assistance, loaner instruments, and in-school concerts at Title 1 schools. MYS ensembles emphasize development of music and leadership skills, reflect a broad diversity of cultures and life experiences, and foster a tight-knit community through collaboration and peer support.

### ***About The Authentic Voice***

In partnership with Fear No Music's *Young Composers Project*, MYS continues its sixth year of **The Authentic Voice** commissioning series. This first-of-its-kind partnership gives young composers the opportunity to write fully orchestrated pieces that are performed at each Symphony Orchestra concert, while MYS musicians gain the opportunity to play never-performed music written by their peers. Each student composer hears their piece played by MYS students at multiple rehearsals, allowing opportunities for questions, feedback, revisions, and collaboration. While student compositions were initially only performed by Symphony Orchestra, this program has expanded to include MYS Concert Orchestra, Portland Camerata and MYSfits string ensembles, and MYSticks percussion ensemble.