Welcome to MYS

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you who are participating in the Metropolitan Youth Symphony this season. We are excited to see so many of our current musicians returning and to meet so many who are new to the MYS family.

The MYS Culture
MYS is a welcoming community of students, families, conductors, coaches, teachers, supporters and volunteers. On stage and off, students support and inspire one another. We empower our students to achieve excellence in a balanced and meaningful way, by supporting their musical development and celebrating their varied interests and passions.

MYS is a safe space for all students. MYS does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, or the presence of any mental or physical disability in its employment, programs and activities.

Staying Informed
You will find answers to most of your questions regarding policies and procedures for the year in this handbook: please read it thoroughly.

Weekly announcements are emailed on Wednesdays, which will include information on concerts, special events, fundraisers, and more. Additional practice notes and other items may be emailed by your group’s volunteer manager or conductor as needed. Please make sure that we always have your most current email; in most cases this is our primary method of communication.

Our Season
The MYS Season begins with Orientation and the first rehearsal on the first Saturday after Labor Day and concludes with each group’s final concert.

We look forward to watching you develop your musical skills with MYS, and we know that you will forge connections and friendships that will last a lifetime.
Contacting MYS

MYS Office
4800 S Macadam Avenue, Suite 105, Portland, OR 97239
503.239.4566
playmys.org

Office hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday

Staff
Raúl Gómez  Music Director  rgomez@playmys.org
Diana Scoggins  Executive Director  dscoggins@playmys.org
Chris Whittemore  Artistic Operations Manager  production@playmys.org
Carrie Stephens  Marketing & Communications Manager  communications@playmys.org
Sarah McLain  Program & Development Coordinator  programs@playmys.org

Questions?
Chris Whittemore: rehearsals, concerts, scheduling, auditions, absences, music
Carrie Stephens: advertising, social media, press
Sarah McLain: registration, tuition, concert tickets, volunteering, t-shirts
Diana Scoggins: sponsorships, planned giving, donations

Artistic Team
Raúl Gómez  Symphony Orchestra/Interlude  rgomez@playmys.org
Alexandria Christy  Symphonic Band  alexandria_christy@yahoo.com
Jeff Peyton  Concert Orchestra  jeffrey.peyton@gmail.com
Paloma Griffin Hébert  Vivaldi Strings  palomalot@gmail.com
Giancarlo Castro D’Addona  Sinfonietta Orchestra  giancomposer@gmail.com
Kevin A. Lefohn  Baroque Strings/Hillsboro Strings  klefohn@gmail.com
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Ryan Meagher  Jazz Ensemble  ryan@ryanmeagher.com
Adam Eccleston  Flute Ensemble  adameccleston3@gmail.com
Michael Roberts  MYSticks/Percussion Studio  michaelr7511@gmail.com
Erica Boland  Portland/Hillsboro Overture  requiemvln@gmail.com
MYS is offering online rehearsal sessions for Fall Term, which runs Sept 12 – Dec 19. We hope to return to in-person rehearsals on January 9, 2021.

All rehearsals will take place using the Zoom platform. Group-specific information will be sent after students audition and are placed in an ensemble.

**Online Rehearsal Schedule for Fall 2020:**

- Symphony Orchestra/Wind Ensemble | 10am-12pm (Studio Classes: 10:40-11:25am)
- Concert Orchestra/Symphonic Band | 11am-1pm (Studio Classes: 11:40am-12:25pm)
- Flute Ensemble | 10:30am-12pm
- Vivaldi Strings | 10am-11:30am (Studio Classes: 10:30-11:15am)
- MYSticks (Percussion ensemble A) | 10:30-11:30am
- Percussion Ensemble B | 11:30am-12:30pm
- Sinfonietta Orchestra | 12:30am-2:00pm (Studio Classes: 1:00-1:45pm)
- Baroque Strings/Chamber Strings | 11am-12:30pm (Studio Classes: 11:30-12:15)
- Interlude Orchestra/Concert Band | 1:30pm-3:00pm (Studio Classes: 2:00-2:45pm)
- Portland/Hillsboro Overture Strings | 10am-11am (Studio Classes: 10:15-10:45am)
- Jazz Ensemble | 10:30am-12pm

**Music Theory class times:**

- Levels 1-3: 9:00-9:55am
- Level 4 (Basic Composition): 1:00-1:55pm

**Attendance**

Regular attendance is crucial for your artistic growth and the success of your ensemble. All MYS rehearsals are mandatory. However, you are allowed a limited number of excused or planned absences during any one concert term.

**Absences**

Definitions of acceptable absences:

- Planned absences: non-MYS events planned well in advance (such as tests, competitions, family or travel commitments, and school music events).
- Excused absences: illness or emergency.

**Students in all ensembles** are allowed up to three excused or planned absences during the Fall term. If you go over the allowed number of excused or planned absences before a concert, you may not be eligible for the upcoming performance at the discretion of the conductor.
**Late Arrivals / Early Departures**

Be on time! Being “on time” in an online rehearsal setting means having all your materials, your instrument tuned, and being warmed up, by the time you enter the rehearsal “room”. Arriving at the time of rehearsal is disruptive and will be considered late. Leaving early without warning is equally disruptive and disrespectful to fellow students. MYS may contact parents if a musician is absent, arrives late, or leaves early without prior permission. Three late arrivals or early departures will equal an absence.

**Absence, Late Arrival & Early Departure Notifications**

An online absence form must be submitted at least two weeks before the rehearsal you need to miss, arrive late or depart early. The online form can be found at: playmys.org/current-players/absence-notification-form/. **This form is required** for ALL absences, including illness or emergency, as well as all late arrivals or early departures.

**Online Rehearsal Etiquette**

Although virtual rehearsals may appear to be less formal than being in a school setting, expectations for student conduct remain the same. Your conductors and other musicians deserve the same respect and etiquette. Plan ahead and test your equipment. This includes your Internet connection, your hardware and your online calling tools (Zoom).

- Set up a quiet space in the home for rehearsal time. Make sure it is equipped with your music stand, sheet music and a writing instrument.
- There should be no eating, drinking, or gum chewing on camera (except for water).
- Be kind: Make a point to be kind in your comments, even if you disagree with someone.
- No yelling: In most situations, typing in all caps is inappropriate. Most online users perceive the use of all caps as shouting.
- Excessive movement on camera can be distracting. If you must change locations with your camera, turn your camera off until you have placed it in its new location.

It is highly recommended that students keep the camera on for the entire rehearsal, since it is important for instructors to be able to evaluate the visual aspects of students’ playing in addition to their sound. If you anticipate this being a problem, we encourage you to contact a staff member or your conductor to discuss.

If a musician does not meet MYS requirements for behavior, disciplinary action may be taken. In some cases, the musician will be put on probation or dismissed from upcoming performances. Other disciplinary action will be determined by conductors and MYS staff and could ultimately result in expulsion from the organization.

Remember that throughout the rehearsal, people can see you. So, act in the same way you would when you were physically present with others. This includes:

- No offensive language
- No behavior that is rude or hurtful
- No behavior that disrupts the ability of others to participate in and learn from rehearsals
Rehearsals & Concerts

Technology Requirements
Participants will need internet access (high-speed access is recommended). MYS is not responsible for data usage charges from cellular carrier.

All rehearsals will be held through the teleconferencing app Zoom. Participants will need to have a free Zoom account; no account upgrades are necessary. Desktop or laptop computers are recommended, but mobile devices are also useable. Use of the computer or phone’s camera and microphone will be also necessary to participate via Zoom.

Each musician will be asked to record two performances throughout the Fall term. This will require simultaneous use of two devices: a computer/smartphone and camera/smartphone. Headphones or earbuds will also be necessary for this step.

Printer (recommended, but not required): you will be asked to print sheet music at home from our website. If you do not have access to a printer, please email production@playmys.org and we will arrange an alternative way of getting your music to you.

Concerts
MYS concerts for Fall Term will be virtual due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions. Please join us on the MYS YouTube Channel on November 21 at 7pm PST for our Fall Concert Celebration and December 23 for our first-ever Holiday Spectacular at 7pm PST.

Concerts for our Winter and Spring terms will be announced once we know the status of live performances.

Volunteers
Parental involvement at Metropolitan Youth Symphony is vital. As a non-profit organization, we depend upon a strong and interconnected community to help us keep costs low and to keep the quality of our programs high. There are many ways in which you can contribute to the enrichment of your child by helping out at MYS.

Volunteer tasks may include:
- Acting as group manager or librarian
- Coordinating volunteer activities, planning events, and assisting with fundraisers

Contact the us for additional information or to volunteer for a specific job or event: programs@playmys.org or 503-239-4566.
Concert Dress

Students should wear all black for any item of clothing that will appear on camera. This includes:

• Black pants/skirt/dress that fully covers legs if they will be on camera
• Black shoes and socks if they will show
• Shirts/tops can be long or short sleeved with necklines above the collarbone. They should not have any writing/logo/decal etc or accent color. A black MYS t-shirt (available on our website) is the only acceptable exception.
• Fabrics should be opaque (not sheer)
Due to the ongoing pandemic, MYS is planning to offer online sessions for Fall Term, which runs September 12 – December 19. We hope to return to in-person rehearsals on January 9, 2021. If that is not possible, we will continue with the online format.

**Fall Tuition**

- Tuition for the Fall Term of the 2020-2021 season is $285 for all ensembles except Portland and Hillsboro Overture Strings which is $260. Tuition is due September 12, 2020 (the first day of rehearsal). A $20 late fee will be assessed after that date. Fall Term ends on December 19th.
- Sibling Discount: 1st enrolled student is billed at the full ensemble rate, 1st Sibling tuition rate is $245, 2nd Sibling is $215.
- Once your student has received placement in an ensemble, tuition may be paid by credit card via the website or by check. There is a $5 processing fee if paying via credit card.
- To pay tuition by check fill out the Tuition Form and write your student(s)'s name(s) in the memo line of the check.
- We offer Financial Aid and Installment Plans. Please fill out a financial aid form and mail with required documents to the MYS office. For more information about paying by installment, contact Sarah McLain at programs@playmys.org.
- Tuition is non-refundable.

**Tuition Assistance**

MYS offers need-based financial aid to families who need help with tuition payments. We recommend that you submit an application for financial aid before rehearsals begin, but applications will be accepted and assessed throughout the year. All financial aid decisions are final. Forms may be downloaded from the MYS website. Financial aid is applied to tuition and applicable classes only; other fees must be paid in full. Financial aid recipients are required to participate in MYS for the entire season.
New Member Registration and Auditions
To be accepted into MYS, new students must audition. Placement in a group is based on demonstrated skill level, not age. Musicians wishing to enter MYS should have at least one year of playing experience on their instrument and be able to read music.

- Auditions for the 2020-2021 season will be submitted via video (smartphone videos are okay!). Instructions for submitting a video audition will be emailed after the registration process has been completed. Auditions will be accepted on a rolling basis through the Fall.
- If you are unable to submit a video audition, please complete the registration process and check the box at the end of the registration form that indicates you need an alternate way to audition and you will be contacted by MYS staff.
- Due to processing times, if an applicant’s video is received after August 14, we cannot guarantee placement in an ensemble by the first rehearsal of the season. Auditions will be accepted and ensemble placements will be made on a rolling basis throughout the Fall.
- We will continue to offer auditions by request through the Fall as well as offer mid-year enrollment for the Winter/Spring Term, which begins in January.

Audition Requirements
Most auditions consist of scales, a prepared piece and sight-reading. Auditions are heard without piano accompaniment. Students who have graduated high school may audition as needed. See the MYS website for specific instructions for each instrument and group: https://playmys.org/play-with-mys/audition-requirements/

Returning Member Registration and Auditions
For all returning players (except Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Ensemble)

- Musicians wishing to return for the following year must re-audition.
- Students are not guaranteed placement based on last year’s assignment.
- The non-refundable registration fee of $40 must be paid prior to the audition, accompanied by completed registration and medical forms. The deadline for submission is two weeks prior to the audition date. Forms can be downloaded from the MYS website.
- MYS will send you a video audition instructions after your forms are received.
- MYS does not hold Winter auditions for current players.

Students Returning to Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Ensemble
Musicians may stay in Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, and Symphonic Band without re-auditioning if they meet the following requirements:

- $40 registration fee (non-refundable), completed registration and medical forms for the following year received by MYS by the last concert of the season.
- Musician must be current with tuition.
- Musician must be in good standing in their group. This means:
  - Musician didn’t exceed the allowed number of planned/excused absences per term.
  - Musician observed all rules of rehearsal etiquette (see page 3).
  - Musician demonstrated discipline and commitment to his or her team.
  - Musician successfully solved any behavioral issues brought to his or her attention by the ensemble’s conductor.
Music Outside of MYS
- MYS expects that all musicians will play in their school band or orchestra if a program exists.
- Weekly private lessons are recommended for all MYS students. Students in the following groups are required to take weekly private lessons with any local teacher: Vivaldi Strings, Concert Orchestra, Symphonic Band and Symphony Orchestra.
- The MYS office has a list of private music teachers in the Portland metro area, and will be glad to help you find a teacher.

Concerto Competition
Members of Symphony Orchestra are eligible to compete in the concerto competition (previous winners are not eligible). Winner(s) and runner(s)-up of the concerto competition perform with Symphony Orchestra or Concert Orchestra during the winter or spring terms.

Guidelines
- There are two separate categories for the concerto competition: Strings and Winds/Brass/Percussion. One winner from each category will be selected, unless the judges decide otherwise due to lack of qualified candidates in any given category. Judges may select additional winners or runners-up.
- Any piece for solo instrument and orchestral accompaniment is eligible for the competition (concerto, showpiece, theme and variations, etc). Students must have their piece selection approved by the MYS Music Director before submitting their application form.
- Selections must be between 5 and 10 minutes in duration. Typically, this means only one movement from a standard concerto, or the entirety of a stand-alone show-piece. In the case of single pieces or movements that are longer than 10 minutes, players must make cuts in consultation with the MYS Music Director.
- Selections must be performed by memory at the competition and the concert.

Important Dates
- Concerto competition application forms are due to the MYS office in December.
- Auditions will be held early in the new year. Players must prepare and memorize the entirety of their selected movement(s) for the competition. Piano accompaniment is required, and players are responsible for securing their own accompanist. Please contact MYS if you need help finding an accompanist.
- Piano entires are accepted; however auditions do not need to be accompanied.

Instrument Rentals
MYS has a limited number of instruments available for rental. The fee is $75 per year and the musician’s family is responsible for procuring insurance for the instrument, usually through the family insurance policy. Musicians wishing to rent an MYS instrument must remain in good standing with good attendance. All instruments must be returned at the end of the season in the condition in which they were received. Anyone keeping an instrument over the summer must renew the rental agreement in May.