

## **Metropolitan Youth Symphony Begins 2020-21 Season with Innovative Instruction by Local and International World-Class Musicians, Fall Term Culminates in a Virtual Holiday Spectacular**

PORTLAND, OR (September 2020) — Metropolitan Youth Symphony (MYS) announces that its Fall Term, beginning September 12, will be fully online, and will feature two virtual concerts, including the first-ever Holiday Spectacular. MYS will utilize technology to expand access to renowned artists and create unique programming, providing valuable opportunities for students. March and May concerts will be announced when it is known whether in-person rehearsals and concerts will be possible.

### **Innovative Cross-Genre Virtual Concerts**

Fall Term Virtual Concerts will be broadcast on the MYS YouTube channel on **November 21** for the Fall Concert and a festive Holiday musical celebration on **December 23**. MYS will present the entirety of **Grieg's Peer Gynt Suites 1 & 2**, with movements re-ordered to match Ibsen's original play, and featuring narration recorded by students. Symphony Orchestra will perform the opening and closing movements and other MYS ensembles will complete the remaining selections. The concert will highlight music by American composers **Florence Price** and **William Grant Still**, and will close with a rousing rendition of **Beethoven's Ode to Joy**, performed by all MYS ensembles.

The **Holiday Spectacular Concert** will include collaboration with **Oregon International Ballet Academy** as students together perform select movements and dances from Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker."

### **Virtual Rehearsals and Studio Classes**

MYS' online program will provide students a place to stay connected to their music and to their friends, while working on a variety of repertoire including classical masterworks and new music by young and diverse composers from Portland and beyond. In addition to our **excellent team of conductors**, MYS is adding new core faculty to our artistic staff, consisting primarily of **Oregon Symphony musicians**, who will lead **weekly studio classes** with small groups of musicians for enhanced learning.

### **Virtual Master Classes**

MYS also welcomes special guests from the best orchestras and conservatories around the world, including Ko-ichiro Yamamoto from **Seattle Symphony**, Javier Gandara from the **Metropolitan Opera Orchestra**, Julian Gil Rodriguez from **London Symphony**, Dominic

Seldis from the **Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra**, Andrew Brady from **Atlanta Symphony** and Leone Buyse from **The Shepherd School of Music** to lead a series of **Sunday master classes** throughout the season. “With geographical boundaries no longer relevant thanks to modern technology, we are thrilled to give our students access to an extraordinary roster of world-class musicians from top international orchestras and schools,” remarked MYS Music Director Raúl Gómez.

### **International Youth Orchestras**

Beyond the music, MYS is partnering with youth orchestras from around the world, including **Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Haiti** and **El Salvador**, to offer selected international students the opportunity to participate in our online program. This adds richness to the students’ intercultural experience, witnessed during the organization’s 2019 tour to Italy and Austria.

### **The Youth Orchestra Commissioning Initiative**

MYS is partnering with **Portland Youth Philharmonic** and the **New Jersey Youth Symphony** to take part in a new collaborative project. The Youth Orchestra Commissioning Initiative (YOCl), designed by PYP to create remote performances of new works by women and composers of color, connects young musicians with composers who will write short chamber music pieces that students can rehearse and perform from their homes. “MYS is delighted to participate in this exciting project with PYP. We whole-heartedly support David Hattner’s vision to bring youth orchestras together to commission music for online performances by women and composers of color, and look forward to the impact the project will have, both on students and the musical community at large,” says MYS Executive Director Diana Scoggins. MYS has commissioned new works by American jazz violinist **Regina Carter**, Afghan folk-inspired composer **Seare Farhat**, Costa Rican composer and vocalist **Bernardo Quesada**, Mexican composer **Gustavo Larrea**, and MYS alumna **Katie Palka**, all to be performed at the March 2021 concert. Please see attached pdf for MYS YOCl composer bios. The full list of YOCl composer bios can be found here: [youthorchestras.org/composers-1](https://youthorchestras.org/composers-1).

### **The Authentic Voice and Young Composers Project**

MYS’s innovative partnership with **FearNoMusic’s Young Composers Project** continues with *The Authentic Voice*, now in its third season. The series gives young composers an opportunity to write for and hear their work performed by a full symphony orchestra, while giving ensemble musicians a chance to play never performed music by their peers. In particular, the May concert will feature a collaborative piece by several young composers in the format of Theme and Variations.

### Virtual Hangouts

MYS Music Director Raúl Gómez continues to host weekly Virtual Hangouts on Thursdays at 4pm PST on the MYS YouTube Channel ([www.youtube.com/c/metropolitanyouthsymphony](http://www.youtube.com/c/metropolitanyouthsymphony)). These virtual conversations include insight into the guests' lives with musical advice plus world premieres and live performances. Past guests include Oregon Symphony Artist-in-Residence **Johannes Moser**, Grammy-nominated violinist **Regina Carter**, world-renowned percussionist **Colin Currie**, Pulitzer Prize winner **Caroline Shaw** and more!

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With a foundational commitment to access, **Metropolitan Youth Symphony** educates, develops and promotes over 500 young musicians of all ages and levels of experience each year. MYS Music Director Raúl Gómez leads a team of professional conductors and instrumental faculty, operating 15 ensembles from beginning to advanced levels including orchestra, band, percussion, strings and jazz. MYS develops the whole musician, providing theory classes, instrumental coaching, small groups, and opportunities to collaborate with performers across artistic disciplines.

Past collaborators include violinist and MacArthur Fellow Regina Carter, Oregon Symphony Maestro Carlos Kalmar and members of the Oregon Symphony, Mariachi Una Voz (Hillsboro) and Mariachi Tradición (Forest Grove), composer Gabriela Lena Frank, the Grammy-nominated chamber ensemble A Far Cry, Friends of Chamber Music, Oregon International Ballet Academy, International Youth Silent Film Festival, Pacific Youth Choir, Brooklyn-based PROJECT Trio, and Orchestra of the Americas.

MYS provides tuition-free beginning strings classes, as well as tuition assistance, loaner instruments, and concerts at low income schools throughout the region to typically reach 5,000 students each season. 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 is currently accepting video auditions for the 2020-21 season.** Auditions are accepted through September for Fall Term and through January for Winter Term. For more information and to register, please visit [PLAYMYS.org](http://PLAYMYS.org).

**Music Director Raúl Gómez** begins his fifth season as Music Director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony. Recently selected as one of six conductors to be featured in the League of American Orchestra's 2018 Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview, Mr. Gómez competed for the honor with nearly 150 applicants from around the world. Hosted by the Nashville Symphony and music director Giancarlo Guerrero, the Preview selects conductors for their "experience, talent, leadership, and commitment to a career in service to American orchestras." A native of Costa Rica, Mr. Gómez's recent and upcoming engagements include multiple appearances with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, the Oregon Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio and Acadiana Symphony Orchestra, as well as appearances in Mexico, Brazil and Costa



raúl gómez  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rica. Previously he has held positions with youth orchestras in Louisiana and Mississippi, and at the Orchestra of the Americas. Gómez received full scholarships to complete masters and doctoral degrees at Louisiana State University where he studied with Carlos Riazuelo (conducting), Kevork Mardirossian and Espen Lillelåtten (violin/viola). Additional conducting training includes a fellowship at the Aspen Music Festival.

Led by acclaimed composer and violist Kenji Bunch, **Fear No Music** celebrates music through public performance of modern and contemporary classical music. Answering a call to encourage and cultivate musical curiosity and creativity in the next generation, FNM musician Jeff Payne established the Young Composers Project in 1997, and now provides training in music composition to young people grades six to twelve. Learn more at [ycp.fearnomusic.org](http://ycp.fearnomusic.org).

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