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2024-2025

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73rd Season



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2026 INTERNATIONAL TOUR - JAPAN

The CYS Senior Orchestra will embark on a
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Stay tuned for more information.
If you would like to hear about CYS's Companion Tour,
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been an exciting year for CYS and I'd like to welcome you to our Spring Concert. Today, the Senior Orchestra features some challenging repertoire in Ravel's *La Valse* and Respighi's *Feste Romane*. I had the privilege of playing *La Valse* and Respighi's *Pines of Rome* when I was in CYS. The orchestra is also performing two newer works, including the US premiere of Golovko's Colombian Marimba Concerto. I want to congratulate CYS's own Apple Gao on winning the Young Artists Competition. It's an amazing accomplishment to play as a featured soloist with CYS especially when competing with such amazing talent throughout the entire Bay Area; I always felt a sense of immense pride when one of my fellow members in the orchestra took the stage.

Our Music Director, Leo Eylar, continues to produce and develop one of the top music education programs in the nation. It's a significant undertaking for students to play such demanding repertoire. Looking back, it's sometimes hard to imagine that middle and high school students are capable of this caliber of artistic output and yet Leo continues to deliver in his 35th season. Our other ensembles led by Pete Nowlen, Kati Kyme, Anthony Lanzino, and Artie Storch continue to provide exceptional development and educational opportunities for our students.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize our Executive Director, Kiri Loehmann. Coordinating the operations of 400+ students across 7 ensembles and multiple rehearsal sites is no easy feat and wouldn't be possible without Kiri's leadership. Kiri along with our operations team, Brian McKee and Leone Rivers, work tirelessly to ensure that the organization runs smoothly and the students can receive the best possible experience. And of course, none of this happens without the commitment and efforts of our parents and volunteers – thank you.

The board recently held its first fundraising event, Music is Magic. I'd like to thank board member Lael Sigal for her vision and dedication in making this event happen, and Regina Pareigis for her enthusiasm and generous contribution as the host of our event. Fundraising is an essential component of CYS's operations as membership fees do not cover our entire budget. Additional support allows our organization to provide financial assistance; if you haven't already, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution by using the donation box in the lobby or via our [website – www.cys.org/donate](http://www.cys.org/donate). I hope you will enjoy today's concert and the rest of our 73rd season.



Tyson Mao
President, CYS Board of Directors

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Help CYS start its endowment through bequests and trusts. You can also designate CYS as the beneficiary of your retirement plan or of a life insurance policy. Please contact kiri@cys.org if you are interested in planning a gift!

CALIFORNIA YOUTH SYMPHONY

441 California Ave. #5, Palo Alto, CA 94306 • www.cys.org

March 30, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Hertz Hall | University of California, Berkeley

Leo Eylar, Music Director

73RD SEASON | SECOND CONCERT

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

Leo Eylar, Conductor

Fate Now Conquers Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

Colombian Marimba Concerto . . . Sergei Golovko | arr. Graham Lloyd

I. 1st Movement

II. 2nd Movement

III. 3rd Movement

Apple Gao, Marimba

(US Premiere)

La Valse Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

***** INTERMISSION *****

Rhyme or Reason Nathan Daughtrey (b. 1975)

Featuring the CYS Senior Orchestra Percussion Ensemble

Artie Storch, Director

Feste Romane Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

I. *Circenses (The Circus Maximus)*

II. *Il Giubileo (The Jubilee)*

III. *L'Ottobrata (The October Harvest)*

IV. *La Befana (The Epiphany)*

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LEO EYLAR

Music Director

Senior and Associate Orchestras

Conductor-Composer Leo Eylar grew up in a musical family. He began studying violin at the age of nine and was accepted into the private studios of both Jascha Heifitz and Ruggiero Ricci. His early teachers included Virginia Baker, Joachim Chassman and Eudice Shapiro. Eylar attended Northwestern University and the University of Southern California, where he received his Bachelor of Music degree Summa cum Laude.

His violin teachers included Glenn Dicterow, Concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic, and Samuel Magad, Concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony. In 1980 Eylar joined the Seattle Symphony and in 1982 he was awarded an International Rotary Foundation Grant to study conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna, Austria. After studies there with Otmar Suitner, he returned to the U.S. and completed his Master's Degree in conducting at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, simultaneously holding the position of Co-Concertmaster of the San Jose Symphony from 1984-89.

Eylar was on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music from 1985-88, during which time he conducted a nationally televised performance of "America Sings" with Bobby McFerrin and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Orchestra. He is also Professor Emeritus at California State University, Sacramento, having retired in May 2018, after 30 years as the Director of Symphony Orchestra & Opera and teaching composition, theory, history, and orchestral conducting. Since 1990 he has been Conductor and Music Director of the California Youth Symphony. Under his masterful and spirited direction the orchestra soon enhanced its reputation as one of the finest youth orchestras in the world and won first prize in the International Youth and Music Festival in Vienna, Austria, in July 1994. Over the course of his tenure, the orchestra has performed to great critical acclaim across four continents. He has also guest-conducted extensively throughout Europe and Asia, including prestigious music festivals in Japan, Austria, France, and Australia. Eylar has also been a frequent guest conductor of the San Jose Symphony. With a repertoire of over 500 symphonic works conducted, as well as numerous operas, Eylar brings a vast range of expertise and depth to his conducting.



Eylar is also a composer of international stature. His compositions, which blend a rich, coloristic neo-romanticism with elements of jazz and driving Eastern European rhythmic vitality, have been performed in Carnegie Hall, as well as in England, the Netherlands, Japan,



Germany, Russia, China, and Austria. His original works have been commissioned by the Dutch contemporary orchestra “De Volharding,” the San Francisco ensemble “Earplay,” and the prestigious German “Ensemble8,” among others. In 1993 *The Temptation of St. Anthony for Horn and String Orchestra* was performed by the California Youth Symphony, and was acclaimed by the press as a “symphonic gem.” In 1994 the Seattle Symphony, along with well-known trumpeter Jeffrey Silberschlag, recorded Eylar’s *Dance Suite for Trumpet and String Orchestra* on the Delos label, which received plaudits from the press. Also in 1994 his *Variations on a Troubadour Theme for String Orchestra* was performed by the San Luis Obispo County Symphony. In 1995 Eylar’s *Rhapsody for Orchestra*, which was subsequently nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, was performed by the California Youth Symphony and recorded in Japan the following year. In 1997 he conducted the world premiere of his Violin Concerto, *An Orpheus Legend*, in San Luis Obispo with noted violinist Ralph Morrison as soloist. *An Orpheus Legend* was featured by CYS during its Spanish Tour in the summer of 1998, and recorded in Spain with violin soloist Kenneth Hsu.

The world premiere of Eylar’s *Concerto for Harp and String Orchestra* took place in 1998. In 2004 the internationally recognized German string bass virtuoso Christine Hoockt recorded Eylar’s *Suite in Three Movements for Bass and Piano* as the leading work on her debut CD. Other commissions have included an octet for the German contemporary group “Ensemble8,” a 14-minute orchestral work titled *Tonescapes* to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the California Youth Symphony, a Sonata dedicated to well-known German bassoonist Frank Forst and a large-scale percussion duo titled *Two Klee Sketches* composed for CYS’ own percussion director Artie Storch and CSUS percussion director Daniel Kennedy. Eylar recently completed a work based on the Orpheus legend, scored for large symphonic wind ensemble, that was premiered on June 1, 2018 at the Mondavi Center by the UC Davis Concert Band under the baton of Pete Nowlen.

Eylar’s music is published by the well-known German publishing house, Accolade Musikverlag, in Munich.



FEATURED SOLOIST

APPLE GAO

Percussion

Apple Gao is a 18-year-old percussionist and a senior at Lynbrook High School. They began playing percussion at the age of 5, learning under the direction of Ja Hsieh. They have also taken lessons from Artie Storch and currently study under Galen Lemmon. In addition to percussion, Apple has taken piano lessons with Shu-Hua Cheng from a young age.

This is their sixth year as a member of the California Youth Symphony, as well as their third year in the Senior Orchestra. They have been selected to perform in the California All State Ensembles since 2020 and the Santa Clara County Honor Band since 2022. They have been a part of their school's Marching Band and Winter Percussion programs since their freshman year.

Apple was the winner of the 2022 Lynbrook and Monta Vista High School Concerto Competition and was selected to perform all around the United Kingdom as the marimba soloist with the Lynbrook and Monta Vista combined wind ensemble. Additionally, they won first place in the mallet ensemble category and second place in the mallet solo category at NCPA's I&E competition in 2023.



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PROGRAM NOTES

Fate Now Conquers **Carlos Simon**

In January 2024, the Boston Symphony Orchestra revealed that composer Carlos Simon would become its inaugural Composer Chair, effective from the start of the 2024–25 season in September. The orchestra first performed his work, *Fate Now Conquers*—a piece inspired by Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7—in the spring of 2021.

Carlos Simon’s recent work is marked by a profound engagement with Black musical traditions reinterpreted through the lens of contemporary classical concert music. In this approach, he follows the legacy of early 20th-century innovators like William Grant Still and Florence Price, who seamlessly blended Black spirituals, dance music, and the blues into sophisticated musical forms. Deeply aware of history’s continuity, Simon actively champions musicians of color both inside and outside the classical realm. His eclectic influences range from the gospel hymns of his father’s church and radio-play pop tunes to the classical canon and the evocative scores of film composers like John Williams. Growing up in Atlanta, his formative musical experiences were rooted in Black gospel, playing piano in his father’s church. By high school, he was already set on becoming a classical pianist and composer—a journey that has taken him from concert compositions to touring with singer and actress Jennifer Hudson.

The composer has written the following regarding his work *Fate Now Conquers*:

“This piece was inspired by a journal entry from Ludwig van Beethoven’s notebook written in 1815:

“Iliad. The Twenty-Second Book

But Fate now conquers; I am hers; and yet not she shall share

In my renown; that life is left to every noble spirit

And that some great deed shall beget that all lives shall inherit.”

Using the beautifully fluid harmonic structure of the 2nd movement of Beethoven’s 7th symphony, I have composed musical gestures that are representative of the unpredictable ways of fate. Jolting stabs, coupled with an agitated groove with every persona. Frenzied arpeggios in the strings that morph into an ambiguous cloud of free-flowing running passages depict the uncertainty of life that hovers over us.

We know that Beethoven strived to overcome many obstacles in his life and documented his aspirations to prevail, despite his ailments. Whatever the specific reason for including this particularly profound passage from the Iliad, in the end, it seems that Beethoven relinquished to fate. Fate now conquers.

Colombian Marimba Concerto **Sergei Golovko | arr. Graham Lloyd**

The *Colombian Marimba Concerto* by Ukrainian composer Sergei Golovko was published in 2024, and draws inspiration from sacred places in Colombia such as the Sierra Nevada de Santa Maria, the historic Cartagena de Indias, the Colombian Pacific coasts, and the eastern plains. The music describes a vibrant and contrasting landscape that is infused with the sound of *currulao*, *cumbia*, *joropo*, and *pasillo* dance rhythms that are found in Colombian folk music. Influenced by the great Latin jazz pianist Michel Camilo, the work invites listeners to immerse themselves in states of dance, taste, intimacy, and calm. Apart from being a work of high virtuosity for the marimba soloist, it embodies a deep and serious investigation and appropriation of each of the elements above, both on a stylistic level as well as their translation into the format of the drum-set, congas, piano, and electric bass. The three-movement work is a testament to the composer's deep love for the music of Colombia. The California Youth Symphony is delighted and honored to be able to offer the US premiere of the full three-movement work for marimba and orchestra at today's concert.

La Valse **Maurice Ravel**

Ravel first toyed with the idea of paying musical tribute to Johann Strauss in 1906, and the notion reappeared a decade later. However, the turmoil of World War I and his declining health—effects that would trouble him for life—kept him from developing his tentative score, then titled “Wien” (“Vienna”). It wasn't until 1918 that ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev persuaded him to revive the project. Diaghilev had envisioned pairing this work with Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, but when Ravel's piece, later known as *La Valse*, was completed, Diaghilev lamented that it wasn't suited for the ballet stage. As a result, its debut performance was delayed until 1929 under Ida Rubinstein.

By January 1919, immersed in composing his homage to Vienna, Ravel described his process as “waltzing frantically.” He viewed *La Valse* as both the ultimate expression of the Viennese waltz and a “fantastic and fatefully inescapable whirlpool”—a metaphor for Vienna's doomed march toward the devastation of war. The work's surreal atmosphere begins with a hazy, mist-like introduction, where fragments of waltz themes slowly emerge, evoking a dimly lit Imperial ball circa 1855. As the piece unfolds in a series of continuous sections, each melody presents a different facet of the classic dance form.

Midway, the initial clarity gives way to fragmentation; themes overlap and clash amid disruptive orchestral effects—low strings, fluttering flutes, and abrupt brass outbursts—that shatter the earlier rhythmic flow. What began as a seductive waltz transforms into a violent, demonic dance, culminating in a five-note motif that severs the waltz's structure and brings this brilliant, unsettling work to a shattering close.

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Rhyme or Reason

Nathan Daughtrey

Based around a 4-bar simple, syncopated rhythm, which is offset & layered on itself over & over, *Rhyme or Reason* attempts to make 5 percussionists sound like 10. Each player is responsible for at least one keyboard and one battery instrument without much rest across the 5-1/2 minute duration.

Feste Romane

Ottorino Respighi

Ottorino Respighi was one of the most well-known Italian composers from the beginning of the twentieth century. His style is influenced by the French impressionists, Rimsky-Korsakov and Richard Strauss, but with his very own touch. Respighi's fame is mostly based on his instrumental works, especially the orchestral triptych of symphonic poems, *Fountains of Rome* (1916), *Pines of Rome* (1924), and *Feste Romane* (Roman Festivals), composed in 1928. The premiere was held on February 21, 1929 at Carnegie Hall in New York City, with Arturo Toscanini conducting the New York Philharmonic. The work consists of four sections heard without pause:

The Circus Maximus

The opening movement conjures the brutal spectacle of ancient gladiatorial combat, where warriors fight for survival amidst a backdrop of blaring trumpet fanfares. Over the clamor, delicate strings and woodwinds evoke the solemn plainchant of the early Christian martyrs, whose faith stands in stark contrast to the savage roars of the wild beasts (brass) they face. The segment concludes with a cascade of powerful, turbulent chords, accentuated by resounding organ pedals, symbolizing the tragic fall of the martyrs.

The Jubilee

Celebrating the Papal festival that refers to the Christian Jubilee, this movement incorporates a stirring quotation from the German Easter hymn, "Christ ist erstanden." We hear the hymn from a distance as the pilgrims near Rome, at which time they are treated to an awe-inspiring vista from Mt. Mario, punctuated by the resonant tolling of church bells.

The October Harvest

Harvest Capturing the vibrancy of Rome's autumnal harvest and hunt festival, this piece is marked by a jubilant French horn solo that heralds the season's bounty. Simultaneously, the chime of bells and the playful notes of a mandolin weave in delicate love serenades, reflecting the harmonious interplay of celebration and nature.

The Epiphany

Set in the lively Piazza Navona, this final movement reintroduces the triumphant sound of trumpets, unleashing a festive medley of Roman melodies and dances.

The scene is further enriched by the quaint strains of a barrel organ and the characterful interjection of a solo tenor trombone, portraying the jovial antics of a tipsy reveler. The work ends in a jubilant frenzy of orchestral brilliance.



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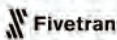


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Tim Roberts* (Respighi)

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MUSIC TEACHERS

In addition to hours of CYS rehearsals, our musicians also participate in their school bands and orchestras as well as study privately. We would like to commend the following dedicated private and school music teachers whose efforts have helped to make today's concert possible:

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Jie Li	Chamber Winds
Weiyang Cui	Chamber Winds
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THE DEBORAH SHIDLER OBOE SCHOLARSHIP



The Deborah Shidler Oboe Scholarship, created by husband and professional trumpeter, Dave Burkhart, aims at outstanding oboists in CYS who show promise for continued excellence in music.

Deb passed away on May 23, 2021, after a battle with pancreatic cancer. She was a professional oboist with SF Opera Orchestra, Symphony San Jose, and Berkeley Symphony, to name a few, and taught at UC Davis for ten years, CSU Sacramento for over 20 years, and coached at camps and workshops. Deb taught her last Zoom session with CYS the day before she went into the ICU.

Beloved for her kindness, compassion, and sense of humor, Deb was known locally and regionally for her musical gifts and as a devoted teacher. She inspired her students with her singing sound and soaring phrasing, musical and historical insight, reed-making skill, and a “You’re doin’ it!” encouragement. Deb’s footprint in the world of instrumental music education is immeasurable. This scholarship fund for outstanding oboists will help ensure Deb Shidler’s legacy at CYS.

Those interested in donating to the Deborah Shidler Oboe Scholarship Fund may donate online at www.cys.org/donate or send checks made payable to the CYS, referencing “Deb Shidler” or “Oboe Scholarship” in the memo. We thank the following donors who have supported the scholarship so far:

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2024-2025 SEASON SCHEDULE

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

SEASON OPENER

November 3, 2024 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center

Bates: *Devil's Radio*
Dvořák: *Cello Concerto* (Huisun Hong, soloist)
Mussorgsky/Ravel: *Pictures at an Exhibition*

HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 1, 2024 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center

Copland: *Buckaroo Holiday* from *Rodeo*
Daughtrey: *Sea of Tranquility*
(Percussion Section)

*Plus, Classical and Seasonal Favorites by the
CYS Orchestras and CYS Wind Symphony*

SPRING CONCERT

March 30, 2025 | 2:30 PM
Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley

Daughtrey: *Rhyme or Reason*
(Percussion Section)
Golovko: *Colombian Marimba Concerto*
(Apple Gao, soloist)
Ravel: *La Valse*
Respighi: *Feste Romane*
Simon: *Fate Now Conquers*

SEASON FINALE

June 1, 2025 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center

Higdon: *Blue Cathedral*
Stookey: *The Composer is Dead*
*Plus, additional works by CYS Graduating
Senior Concerto Competition Winners*

CYS ASSOCIATE ORCHESTRA & WIND SYMPHONY

HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 1, 2024 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
with the CYS Senior Orchestra

FESTIVAL EVENING

March 9, 2025 | 6 PM
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CODA CONCERT

May 18, 2025
1 PM – Assoc. Orchestra & String Ensembles
6 PM – Wind Symphony & Wind Ensembles
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CYS STRING & WIND ENSEMBLES

WINTER CONCERT

December 8, 2024 | 1 PM
Chabot College

FESTIVAL AFTERNOON

March 9, 2025 | 1 PM
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CODA CONCERT

May 18, 2025
1 PM – String Ensembles & Assoc. Orchestra
6 PM – Wind Ensembles & Wind Symphony
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College



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