

The 2024-25 season of the Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles is made possible thanks to the generous contributions from our gracious supporters.



Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings | Beyond Boundaries, May 18 @ 1:00 PM



Pacific Symphony Youth Concert Band | Of Valor & Honor, May 18 @ 7:00 PM



Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble | People & Places, May 19 @ 7:00 PM



Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra | Monuments, May 20 @ 7:00 PM

PACIFIC SYMPHONY YOUTH ENSEMBLES (PSYE)

Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles (PSYE) is one of the largest pre-professional musical training programs in the nation, nurturing and inspiring young musicians in grades 6 through 12.

PSYE provides members with advanced and innovative artistic experiences, fostering musical development, personal growth, and lifelong learning through the art of classical performance.

The PSYE program is comprised of four performing ensembles (Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra, Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble, Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings, and Pacific Symphony Youth Concert Band), all of which are united by the artistic vision of Pacific Symphony Music Director Carl St.Clair. Each ensemble focuses on advancing student musicianship in a nurturing environment through professional repertoire and unique performance experiences. Students enjoy clinics with Maestro St.Clair, regular coaching sessions with Pacific Symphony professional musicians, and interactions with world-renowned guest artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Cho-Liang Lin, Narong Prangcharoen, Derrick Skye, Glenn Dicterow, and many more.

Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles primarily perform in the world-renowned Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa, CA, as well as in various additional venues across the region. These warmly received, and well attended performances are free to the public and touch the lives of thousands of Southern California residents each season.

Membership in PSYE is determined by annual auditions for all new and returning members and are held each spring, attracting on average over 650 candidates each season. The 320 students who are current members of the Youth Ensembles program represent over 75 school music programs in and around Orange County. Most if not all of PSYE's graduates pursue opportunities in higher education, attending such notable institutions as Juilliard, Johns Hopkins University/Peabody Institute, UCLA, University of Michigan, Stanford, Yale, Brown, Vanderbilt, Rice, and many more.

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ELIZABETH STAHR'S LEGACY: A SYMPHONY OF DEDICATION AND HEART

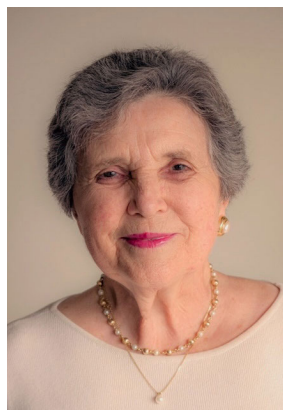
Elizabeth Stahr's impact on Pacific Symphony and PSYE—and on the cultural life of Orange County—cannot be overstated. Her passing on April 29, 2025, leaves a void in our hearts, but her legacy resounds in every note played by the Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles.

"Elizabeth Stahr was the heart and soul of Pacific Symphony's Youth Ensembles program," said John Forsyte, president and CEO of Pacific Symphony. "She didn't just support the program, she nurtured it, shaped it, and poured her love into every student, proudly calling them 'my kids.' Her leadership helped make Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles one of the finest in the nation, and her legacy will live on in every note they play."

Forsyte continued, "Her fierce devotion helped shape the cultural life of Orange County. Whether she was building a youth orchestra board or raising millions for the public library, she led with heart, humility, and purpose. She believed in young people, in beauty, in service. We are all better because she gave so much of herself to this community."

Elizabeth's generosity radiated far beyond the concert hall. From championing the Newport Beach Central Library—where the Stahr Children's Room now welcomes thousands of young readers—to her leadership with South Coast Repertory and the Girl Scouts of Orange County, Elizabeth believed deeply in creating access to the arts and education for future generations.

Alongside her husband John, Elizabeth co-chaired the campaign to build the Central Library in the early 1990s and later supported the development of the Library Lecture Hall. In 2016, she and John were honored as Newport Beach Citizens of the Year—a reflection of their lifetime of service and philanthropy.



(Pictured L-R) Son Walter Stahr, Pacific Symphony Music Director Carl St.Clair and Elizabeth Stahr

She was a patron, a mentor, a mother figure to many, and a passionate advocate for the transformative power of music, books, and community. We at Pacific Symphony are proud to have been among the many organizations forever shaped by her light. Elizabeth didn't just support the Youth Ensembles—she believed in them, and in doing so, helped hundreds of young musicians find their voice. Elizabeth Stahr will be deeply missed, but never forgotten. Her song plays on.

A funeral service will be held at St. James Episcopal Church, Newport Beach, at 11 a.m. on Friday, May 30.



BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Sunday, May 18, 2025 @ 1 p.m.

Dr. Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen, conductor
Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings

Scan the code below for full concert
information and program notes



BRENDAN MCBRIEN *Genesis* for String Orchestra
(world premiere)

DAG WIRÉN *Serenade for Strings, Op. 11*
I. Preludium: Allegro molto
II. Andante espressivo
IV. Marcia: Tempo
di marcia, molto ritmico

STEPHAN KONCZ *A New Satiesfaction*

JORDAN JINOSKO *Three Sketches of*
Unblemished Earth
II. Woodlands
III. Heights

MICHI WIANCKO *La Follia Variations*
for String Orchestra

(No Intermission)

This afternoon's performance is generously
sponsored by **Elaine Sarkaria**.

This afternoon's performance is dedicated to
Elizabeth Stahr, in loving memory.

Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

MEET THE PSSS

Dr. Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen / Music Director
Carlos Correa / Santiago Strings Interim Manager and
Pacific Symphony Concert Operations Manager
Meri Sheegog / String Coach

VIOLIN 1

Grace Chun
Abigail Chung
Annessa Hui
Faith Jung
Noel Jung
Joanna Kang
Emmalyn Kim
Evan Kim
Eunice Lee
Daniel Park
Lena Seo
Eric Shin
Anna Shung
Victoria Shung
Wesley Tsai

VIOLIN 2

Changbeom (Nathan) Cho
Harmonie Fu
Alicia Huang
Katie Hwang
Madeleine Joo
Jimin Kang
Atticus Kwok
Junseo (Bona) Lee
Kevin Liu
Summer Park
Lucas Poon
Mason Przytulski
Winson Shen
Lana Sirkin
Connor Wang
Lyvia Wang
William Yan

VIOLA

Kaitlyn Chen
Abigail Chua
Kenneth Chung
Yuchen (Lucas) Hu
Junjin (Jesse) Huang
Junyu (Jerry) Huang
Haeyul (Tyler) Kim
Ayaka Kobayashi
Gracie Park
Rebecca Park
Jamie Isabelle Reyes
Pyron Tan
Natalie Wen
Zhuowen (Emily) Xiao

CELLO

Seojun Baek
Anastasia Catanus
Annabelle Chantana
Audrey Chen
Aidan Chew
Zachary Gerhart
Theodore Kim
Jayden Eubin Lee
Kaitlyn Lee
Duhan Li
Audrey Ma
Jeeho Park
Louis Shen
Erin Suh
Abigail Yoo

DOUBLE BASS

Sartaj Benipal
Parker Brueggeman

SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Alderwood Elementary School
Beacon Park School
Chaparral Middle School
D. Russell Parks Jr. High School
Deerfield Elementary School
Eastwood Elementary School
El Rancho Charter School
Golden Elementary School
Heritage Oak Private Education
Hughes Middle School
Irvine High School
James L. Day Middle School
Jeffrey Trail Middle School
Kraemer Middle School
Lakeside Middle School
Legacy Magnet Academy
McPherson Magnet School
Mission Viejo Christian School
Northwood High School
Orange County School of the Arts
Orchard Hills School
Oxford Academy
Patton Elementary School
Pioneer Middle School
Rancho San Joaquin Middle School
Sage Hill School
Sierra Vista Middle School
Solis Park School
South Lake Middle School
St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Stonegate Elementary School
Tesoro High School
Turtle Rock Elementary School
Valencia High School
Venado Middle School
Westpark Elementary School
Woodbury Elementary School

ABOUT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR



Dr. Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen is an Assistant Professor of Music Education at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) where she teaches music education courses and supervises student teaching. She

is a Fulbright Scholar, holds a Doctorate in Education from the University of California, Los Angeles, a Master's of Music Education in String Pedagogy from The Hartt School of Music, and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and Violin Performance from Chapman University. Dr. Gamboa-Kroesen is delighted to serve as Music Director of the Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings, a premier youth string orchestra in Southern California.

Prior to her appointment at UCLA, Dr. Gamboa-Kroesen taught orchestra in the Irvine Unified School District for 16 years, conducted the Long Beach Harmony Project Orchestra,

was on faculty at the Chapman University Conservatory of Music from 2012-19, and served as mentor teacher for UCI, CSULB, and Chapman University. She received the 2015 Orange County Outstanding Educator, Instrumental Music Award, and the 2016 IUSD Excellence in Teaching Award for Visual and Performing Arts.

Dr. Gamboa-Kroesen's scholarship and research interests include inclusive teaching practices, school connectedness, and culturally responsive pedagogy. She enjoys an active schedule of conference presentations including presentations for College Music Society, National Association for Music Education (NAfME) National Music Research and Teacher Education Conferences, the California All-State Music Education Conferences (CASMEC), and Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association Annual Conferences. Dr. Gamboa-Kroesen regularly serves as guest conductor and clinician for orchestras in California and Arizona and delivers curriculum workshops for school districts throughout Southern California.

ABOUT PSSS

Now in their 34th season, Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings (PSSS) has become a regionally and nationally recognized youth string orchestra.

Sponsored by The Orange County Chapter of the Suzuki Music Association of California/Los Angeles Branch, PSSS was founded by Lonie Bosserman and Margie Chan in 1991, and was known as the Santiago Strings Youth Orchestra before joining the Pacific Symphony family in 2007. Led by renowned educator Irene Kroesen from its inception through the 2021-22 season, PSSS welcomed its new music director, Dr. Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen in the fall of 2022. Dr. Kroesen is a member of the music faculty at UCLA and her tenure represents an exciting new chapter for the ensemble. Santiago Strings also benefits from the invaluable artistic guidance of Pacific Symphony Music Director Carl St.Clair.

Representing over 36 schools in the SoCal region, PSSS provides an experience that nurtures the confidence, poise, and musical sensitivity of young musicians through the study and performance of outstanding

string orchestra literature. PSSS serves instrumentalists in grades 6 through 9 and is one of four youth ensembles offered by Pacific Symphony's Youth Ensembles program. Each season, students enjoy interactions with Maestro Carl St.Clair, guest artists and composers, and professional musicians of Pacific Symphony. Students also engage in an annual weekend retreat and are offered free and discounted tickets to Pacific Symphony performances throughout the season.

Each season, PSSS presents a two-concert series at Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. In its 25th anniversary year, PSSS was invited to participate in the National Orchestra Festival in Tampa, Florida as part of the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) annual conference. In its 2017-18 season, PSSS embarked on a musical and cultural exchange tour to Costa Rica, engaging in workshops and giving concerts in the cities of Cartago, San Ramón, and the capital city of San José.

I PSSS PROGRAM NOTES



Brendan McBrien (b. 1960) is a renowned music educator, freelance musician, composer, arranger, and contributing writer to *The Instrumentalist magazine*. For the past 30 years, his professional

playing experiences have included symphony orchestras, opera, musical theater, movie and television work. His compositions for band and orchestra are published with the Alfred, Kjos, and Warner Brothers Music Companies. His newest work, **Genesis for String Orchestra**, presented here in its world premiere performance, is dedicated to Dr. Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen and Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings.



Born in a small town in Sweden 150 miles west of Stockholm, **Dag Wirén** (1905-1986) studied piano, percussion, and celesta as child. He pursued formal musical education, studying

organ and composition at the Swedish Royal Academy of Music. After graduating in 1931, he furthered his composition studies in Paris from 1932 to 1934. While there, Wirén became acquainted with the music of Stravinsky and Prokofiev.

Wirén's musical style from 1930s and early 1940s was heavily influenced by neoclassicism, featuring propulsive rhythms, melodic simplicity, and extended diatonic harmony. After World War II, his music achieved a greater sophistication, especially in terms of form. In these later works, Wirén sought to create a unique musical structure for each work rather than relying on traditional sonata or symphonic form. In addition to formal complexity, his later style also features greater concentration and expression. Unlike many other composers of his time, Wirén sought to devise a musical modernism which was still accessible to non-specialists.

Wirén composed his **Serenade op. 11** in 1937. The piece is the composer's most famous work. Its lively first movement features tight motivic construction, while the second movement offers a lyrical interlude. The finale is parody of military marches, featuring string

writing that imitates drums. While Wirén is not known to have directly infused political views into his music, it is easy to read into the movement's parodied martialism a political statement on the rising German militarism of the late 1930s.



Born in Vienna, **Stephan Koncz** (b. 1984) studied music at the Vienna Musikhochschule, the Vienna Conservatory, and the University of Vienna. His teachers and mentors include

Daniel Barenboim, Steven Isserlis, and other renowned musicians. Koncz has been a cellist with the Berliner Philharmoniker since 2010 and is an active performer in chamber groups in addition to his orchestral career.

Koncz's **A New Satiesfaction** (2018) was inspired by *Gymnopédie #1* (1888) by Erik Satie. Although it is often considered an arrangement of Satie's work, it goes far beyond that; in fact, it is more a recomposition than an arrangement. Originally written for string quartet, the piece also includes musical references to Rossini's *William Tell* Overture. It incorporates influences of French impressionism, minimalism, and modern dance music.



Esteemed composer **Jordan Jinosko** (b. 1994) takes much inspiration for her music from history, mythology, and nature. Her work, which encompasses both concert and film music, has been

performed in many noted venues including Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. One of the many important facets of her music is its expression of the composer's experiences and pride as a nonbinary Asian-American, in her own words "ultimately presenting a triumphant celebration of queer identity."

Three Sketches of Unblemished Earth (2021) was inspired by composer's backpacking trip along the Appalachian Trail. Each movement reflects a distinct experience along her journey. The second movement is "essentially folksy travelling music, and it's [sic] kind of

represents a more active time of day, you're hiking along the trail, and you see squirrels scurrying." The third movement, in the composer's own words, represents "the music that I started to hear in my head when I was looking out for the top of these mountains, and hills, and cliffs. And really, ultimately, I want the piece to be a reminder of the beauty of the earth and, a reminder of everything that we have to lose if we don't change as a society and fight the global climate crisis."

One of the most important composers of the mid-Baroque, **Arcangelo Corelli** (1653-1713) led a multifaceted musical career as a composer, violinist, violin teacher, leader of string ensembles, and opera director. He was the single most influential composer of his time, shaping musical style and form among many composers throughout Europe. In fact, many important elements of what became known as "the Baroque sound" were invented by Corelli.

In addition to his music's influence, Corelli also helped cement what would soon become the model for classical compositional careers. Firstly, Corelli was the first composer to become famous purely through instrumental music rather than sacred or secular vocal music. Secondly, he was the first to garner an international reputation via the publication of his music rather than through the direct efforts of patrons (although he did work for many patrons). Finally, Corelli was the first composer of "classic" works which were admired long after their composition—as opposed to the earlier model of ephemeral works composed for specific occasions and quickly supplanted by new ones.

Born in the small town of Fusignano forty miles east of Bologna, Corelli spent most of his life in Rome, where he worked for numerous aristocratic patrons including Queen Christina of Sweden. In addition to his duties for patrons there, he also travelled extensively to perform, both within Italy and in other parts of Europe. Unusual for composers of his time, his music was held in high esteem long past his lifetime—particularly in England, where he was arguably even more popular than Handel. Many of Corelli's works were republished and performed in London for over a century after the composer's death.

Born in Lucca, **Francesco Geminiani** (1687-1762) was considered one of most important composers of his time, although his music has become relatively obscure since then. Geminiani studied music in Rome, where he found a close friend and mentor (and probably also a teacher) in Arcangelo Corelli. Like Handel, Geminiani spent much of his career in England. For Geminiani as for Handel this was a logical choice, as Italian music was very much in vogue in London at the time. Geminiani was also undoubtedly encouraged by Corelli's great degree of fame there. At same time, British violin playing was considerably less developed than Italian, so Geminiani stood to benefit from the relative lack of competition.

In London, Geminiani enjoyed the support of aristocratic patronage. He composed for his many patrons, taught violin, and performed. His years in London brought him career stability, financial independence, and wide esteem. He spent his later years alternating between London, Paris, and Dublin, although with considerably less stability. By the end of his life, his music was considered old-fashioned, derivative, and formulaic. Moreover, to an era that had come to value symmetry and balance, Geminiani's characteristic asymmetric phrase structures were increasingly seen as opaque and abstruse. Although Geminiani continued to compose and perform throughout his life, he was known almost exclusively for his op. 3, published in 1732.

In addition to performing and composing, Geminiani also maintained other professional activities. He was active as music publisher and opened his own concert venue in Dublin. Moreover, he wrote numerous treatises on music theory, helping to crystalize theoretical principles still studied today. His most famous written work is a study on violin playing. Concurrently to his musical career, Geminiani also worked as an art dealer in his later years, an activity which helped supplement his faltering musical income.



Composer and violinist **Michi Wiancko** (b. 1976) has achieved wide renowned for her original compositions and arrangements. A California native, she earned her Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music

and a master's degree from Juilliard. She composes concert and film music.

Wiancko's music has received international acclaim, and she has collaborated with many renowned artists including Yo-Yo Ma, Emmanuel Ax, and Steve Reich. She has expressed a commitment to "artistic discovery, as well as community resilience and social change." She is the founder of The Experimental Institute, a summer program focusing on music and community transformation.

Corelli's *La Follia* is the last in a set of twelve violin sonatas published in 1700 as his opus 5. The piece takes the form of a set of variations on the follia, a musical form which originated in late-fifteenth century Portugal as a folk dance. Initially a frenetic spectacle performed at a very lively tempo, its name is related to the English word "folly." Over time, the follia developed into a standardized musical formula consisting of a set chord progression combined with varying metric and melodic patterns.

Corelli's use of this musical pattern is part of a great tradition. Many composers throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries composed variations on the follia formula, using its melodic pattern as a constantly repeated figure while varying the counterpoint, harmonies, rhythms, and textures around it. Long after the Baroque, composers from Beethoven to Rachmaninoff and beyond have incorporated patterns reminiscent of the follia into some of their compositions.

During his early years in Rome, Geminiani is known to have discussed Corelli's Follia sonata with its composer. Half a century later, Geminiani revealed that Corelli had explicitly expressed "the Satisfaction he took in composing it, and the Value he set upon it." Geminiani is likely to have shared his mentor's high opinion of the work. In 1729, Geminiani arranged the last six of Corelli's opus 5 into concerti grossi—including the Follia sonata (he had arranged the first six in 1726). Unlike the modern concerto which pits an orchestra

against a single soloist, the Baroque concerto grosso contrasts a larger ensemble with a smaller chamber group.

In addition to his opus 5, Geminiani also reworked Corelli's opus 1 and 3. In fact, nearly half of Geminiani's output of concerti were arrangements of preexisting works by Corelli. While it may seem surprising to modern audiences, the process of transforming preexisting works by other composers into new versions was relatively common in the Baroque era, having often been employed by Handel, Vivaldi, and Bach.

In 2011, Wiancko composed *La Follia Variations for String Orchestra* as a reimagining of Geminiani's concerto version of Corelli's Follia sonata. She wrote it for the East Coast Chamber Orchestra, in which she also serves as violinist. A small ensemble on the Upper West Side, the group performs without a conductor. Wiancko's rendition is in some places a faithful reworking of the original, in others more highly altered, and in still others thoroughly modernized and transformed.

Joshua Grayson, Ph.D., is an historical musicologist and graduate of the USC Thornton School of Music, and the program note annotator for Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles.