

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.



MONUMENTS

Tuesday, May 20, 2025 @ 7 p.m.

Dr. Jacob Sustaita, conductor
Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra

Scan the code below for full concert
information and program notes



ROSSINI *William Tell Overture*

ELGAR *Cello Concerto*
I. Adagio - Moderato
II. Lento - Allegro molto
Oooju Robinson, cello

—INTERMISSION—

FERDE GROFÉ *Grand Canyon Suite*
I. Sunrise
II. Painted Desert
III. On the Trail
IV. Sunset
V. Cloudburst

This evening's performance is generously
sponsored by **Pacific Life Foundation**.

This evening'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 PSYO

Dr. Jacob Sustaita / Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra Music Director
Mel Domingo / Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra Manager

FLUTE

Jianing (Aurora) Han,
co-principal
Angela Wang, *co-principal*
Erin Liao
Sophia Zhou
Yige (Gloria) Zhou

OBOE

Junxi (Jesse) Hu, *co-principal*
Connor Shim, *co-principal*
Ting Yu (Grace) Lai
Aidan Lee
Ahri Shin

CLARINET

Samuel Choi, *co-principal*
Sean Yu, *co-principal*
Rick Chi
Kenny Song
MingLiang (Brian) Yu

BASSOON

Arim (Ariana) Kim, *principal*
Logan Elliott
Jay Xu

FRENCH HORN

Cameron Rhees, *principal*
Tyler Bartow
Anna Wilsen

TRUMPET

Allison Molin, *co-principal*
Jayden Peng, *co-principal*
Kaitlyn Chung
Daniel Lee

TENOR TROMBONE

Luke Carruth, *co-principal*
Haiden Chase, *co-principal*
Owen Ramos
Licheng (Jerry) Xu

BASS TROMBONE

Joshua Koines, *principal*

TUBA

Ace Tecson, *principal*

PERCUSSION

Vivienne Hsi
Dorina Lin
Talon Lu
David Wong

HARP

Calene Lee, *co-principal*
Sydney Lee, *co-principal*

PIANO

Kyle Yeung, *principal*
Richard Feng

VIOLIN 1

Rubi Lee, *concertmaster*
Brendan Chang
Amelia Kang
Andrew Kao
Seaena Kim
Sylvie Kim
Audrey Lee
Eileen Lee
Jiyool (Jaynie) Lee
Jacob Liu
Dylan Nguyen
Lucas Nguyen
Jonathan Suh
Inwoo (Danny) Yoo
Lucy Woo

VIOLIN 2

Justin K. Park, *principal*
Anika Chen
KariAnne Chien
Jimin Ha
Athena Hui
Elena Miyamoto
Nicholas Nguyen
Kyuri (Victoria) Park
Hannah Schweiger
Natalie Tran
Ho Sen (Ken) Xiao
Claire Yuan
Chloe Woo

VIOLA

Heejae (Kayla) Kim, *principal*
Yichen (Ethan) Bei
Caroline Cho
Sumin Cho
Audrey Guo
Justin Hong
Annabelle Jin
Brandon Kim
Brian Kim
Jayden Kim
Ashley Liau
Johan Sears
Peyton Tan
Nicholas To

CELLO

Oooju Robinson, *principal*
Daniel Goo
Alex Hwang
Aiden Kim
Zachary Kim
Arianna Lai
Amy Lantz
Jeremy Lee
James Leehealey
Verena Lo
Kathryn Loutzenheiser
Cristian Muresan-Santa Ana
Daniel Park
Josie Velez
Charlotte Yeh
Jaxon Yoon

DOUBLE BASS

Soleil De Jesus, *principal*
Claire Holben
Jacelle Penano
Noa Stewart

Sections listed alphabetically
under principal.

SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Aliso Niguel High School
Arnold O. Beckman High School
Canyon High School
Corona del Mar High School
Crean Lutheran High School
Diamond Bar High School
El Dorado High School
Eleanor Roosevelt High School
Fountain Valley High School
Huntington Beach High School
Irvine High School
Legacy Magnet Academy
Long Beach Polytechnic High School
Mira Costa High School
Monta Vista Academy

Murrieta Valley High School
Northwood High School
Orange County School of the Arts
Oxford Academy
Pacific Academy
Pacifica Christian High School
Portola High School
Sage Hill School
St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Sunny Hills High School
Trabuco Hills High School
Troy High School
University High School
Valencia High School
Woodbridge High School

ABOUT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR



Dr. Jacob Sustaita serves as the Assistant Conductor for Pacific Symphony and Music Director Carl St. Clair, a position he has held since the fall of 2020. Dr. Sustaita also serves as

Music Director and Conductor for Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra (PSYO), the premier training orchestra of Orange County, recognized as one of the most outstanding youth orchestras in the country. Dr. Sustaita is the newly appointed Orchestra Director for the Orange County School of the Arts Symphony Orchestra. In the fall of 2021 and 2022, Dr. Sustaita served as Acting Director of Orchestras at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB).

From 2015-20, he led the Sam Houston State University Symphony, Chamber, Ballet, and Opera Orchestras as Director of Orchestral Studies. In 2016, Dr. Sustaita and the Symphony Orchestra performed the American

premiere of Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 1 (original Linz version) with high praise from the American and European Bruckner Societies.

Dr. Sustaita is a frequent guest conductor and clinician across the country. In 2015, Sustaita was selected by Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute to serve as Assistant Conductor for Charles Dutoit and the National Youth Orchestra of America (NYO). Dr. Sustaita regularly conducted and coached the orchestra during its New York residency and on their seven-city tour of China and Hong Kong.

A native of Texas, Dr. Sustaita completed his Doctorate and Bachelor of Music degrees at the University of Houston, where he served as Assistant Conductor for the Moores Opera Center for three seasons. He also earned a Master of Music degree from both Penn State University and Rice University. His honors include: Schissler Conducting Fellowship, Rice University Prize and Provost Fellowship, and American Prize semi-finalist and finalist. His teachers and mentors include Carl St. Clair, Charles Dutoit, Franz Krager, Brett Mitchell, Gerardo Edelstein, and Paavo Järvi.

ABOUT THE GUEST ARTIST



Ooju Robinson is a 17-year-old cellist from Irvine, California. He began studying cello at the age of six with Patricia Hicks. Since 2021, he's been under the tutelage of Dr.

Richard Naill at the Colburn School. Robinson has served as co-principal cello with Pacific

Symphony Youth Orchestra (PSYO) and has been an active member of the PSYO Quartet and Octet for several seasons. Robinson has performed as soloist with Pacific Symphony in their Youth Concerts series, as well as with the Woodbridge High School Philharmonic Orchestra. He is the 2024 Satori Strings Competition Grand Prize winner, and 2025 Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition winner.

ABOUT PSYO

Founded in 1993, Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra (PSYO) has emerged as the premier training orchestra of Orange County. Under the artistic guidance of Pacific Symphony's renowned music director Carl St.Clair, PSYO is quickly being recognized as one of the most outstanding youth orchestras in the country.

Representing over thirty-four schools in the SoCal region, PSYO offers performance opportunities to instrumentalists in grades 9-12 and is one of four youth ensembles offered by Pacific Symphony's Youth Ensembles program. PSYO provides members with advanced and innovative artistic experiences and encourages musical and personal growth through the art of performance. Each season students enjoy regular interactions with Maestro Carl St.Clair, with guest artists and composers, and with the 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. PSYO also enjoys periodic international tours, including to Bulgaria in 2011, to China in 2016, and to the Czech Republic and Austria in 2023.

Each season PSYO presents a three-concert series, generously sponsored by individual donors. Members also participate in an annual side-by-side performance with Pacific Symphony, where students rehearse and perform in concert with their professional counterparts. Additionally, PSYO's Spring concert each season features the winner(s) of the annual concerto competition auditions, open to all current PSYO members. All performances take place at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Weekly rehearsals are held at UC Irvine between September and May each season and members are selected through annual auditions each Spring.

PSYO PROGRAM NOTES



Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) was an Italian composer who gained enormous fame for his many operas. Born in Pesaro, Italy to musician parents (his father a trumpeter, his mother a singer), Rossini began to compose by the age of twelve and went on to attend music school in Bologna. His first opera was performed in Venice in 1810 when he was 18 years old and in 1815 he was engaged to write operas and manage theatres in Naples. In the period 1810-1823, he wrote 34 operas for the Italian stage that were performed in Venice, Milan, Ferrara, Naples, as well as many other cities.

During this period he produced his most popular works, including the comic operas *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, *The Barber of Seville* and *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella) which brought to a peak the *opera buffa* tradition he had inherited from celebrated forbears. He also composed opera seria works such as *Tancredi*, *Otello* and *Semiramide*. All of these attracted admiration

for their innovation in melody, harmonic and instrumental color, and dramatic form.

In 1824 he was contracted by the Opéra in Paris, for which he produced among others an opera to celebrate the coronation of Charles X, *Il viaggio a Reims*, revisions of two of his Italian operas, and in 1829 his final opera *William Tell*, after which he went into semi-retirement, though he continued to compose cantatas, sacred music and secular vocal music.

The ***William Tell Overture*** is in four parts, each following without pause: *Prelude: Dawn; Storm; Ranz des vaches (Call to the Cows); Finale: March of the Swiss Soldiers*. And although there are no horses or cavalry charges in the opera, this finale section is often used in popular media to denote galloping horses, a race, or a hero riding to the rescue. Its most famous use in that respect is as the theme music for the television series *The Lone Ranger*.



Born in the English countryside of Worcestershire, **Sir Edward Elgar** (1857–1934) was a composer whose music often expressed the emotional undercurrents of his time.

Written in 1919, in the shadow of World War I, his **Cello Concerto** is marked by a sense of deep personal loss and national mourning. The first movement, *Adagio – Moderato*, opens with a bold, declamatory statement from the solo cello, leading into music that is introspective and elegiac in tone. The second movement, *Lento – Allegro molto*, begins with a quiet stillness before bursting into a spirited scherzo, offering flashes of lightness and energy within the concerto's otherwise somber world.



Composer, arranger, conductor, and pianist **Ferde Grofé** (1892–1972) was born in New York, although he moved to Los Angeles with his parents at the age of five. Grofé was immersed

in classical music via a distinguished family background. His grandfather had been the principal cellist with the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra, one of his uncles had been its concertmaster, his mother was a violinist, and his father was professional singer.

Grofé began studying music at home in early childhood. Once it became apparent that he had inherited his family's musical talents, his parents sent him to Leipzig in 1900 to study piano, viola, and composition with Otto Leonhardt, esteemed professor at the Leipzig Conservatory. Grofé moved back to the United States after studying with Leonhardt for two years. Uninterested in academics, he dropped out of school and worked odd jobs.

As a teenager, Grofé played piano and violin for dance ensembles and alto horn in brass bands. At the same time, he played viola in the Los Angeles and San Francisco symphonies. He also performed in movie theatres, vaudeville theatre, and cabarets in many locations throughout western United States. Grofé began composing music of his own in 1908. At the same time, he found supplemental work as an arranger for Art Guerin, the leader of one of the first jazz

bands in San Francisco. Work with Guerin marked Grofé's initial contact with jazz, complementing his extensive experience in classical and popular music.

In 1917, Grofé met Paul Whiteman, the leader of what would soon become one of the most prestigious jazz bands in the country. Three years later, Whiteman hired the young composer. Grofé first played with Whiteman's band at the Hotel Alexandria in downtown Los Angeles, where performances attracted movie stars and other celebrities. Later that year, Grofé moved with the band to Atlantic City, then to the Palais Royale theatre on 48th and Broadway in New York.

Grofé orchestrated Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1924—Gershwin had composed the music but left the orchestration to Grofé, acting in his capacity as the band's official orchestrator. The piece secured Gershwin's reputation as a composer of classical music, but also helped launch Grofé's reputation as a composer in his own right. After the work's wild success, Whiteman deliberately sought out similar types of music, helping lead the way to the development of symphonic jazz, a new stage in the evolution of jazz. Seeking new music for his ensemble's growing repertoire, Whiteman encouraged Grofé to compose similar pieces.

Grofé first visited the Grand Canyon in 1917. While he was clearly inspired by what he saw, the exact date he decided to convey his experiences into music is unclear. While Grofé once stated that he had begun planning a musical work based on the natural wonder in 1922 while vacationing in Kingman, Arizona, he later dated it to a 1926 trip to England. Whenever it had originally been conceived, Grofé began the actual composing of *Grand Canyon Suite* in 1929 and completed it in 1931.

The work was originally planned to be in four movements, with each depicting the Grand Canyon at various times of day from sunrise to sunset. Other early plans for the piece included a movement paying tribute to the local Hopi tribe of Native Americans, and another depicting other natural wonders of Arizona. Once Grofé settled on a five-movement structure, he gave the composition its original title "Five Pictures of the Grand Canyon" before settling on its current designation.

The work is well known for its use of extramusical sound effects. In the third movement, coconut shells are used to evoke the sound of a mule climbing along the trail descending into the canyon. In the final movement, thin sheets of metal are used to evoke sounds of wind and thunder. Grofé first composed the work for chamber orchestra and later arranged it for full orchestra. The piece marked the culmination of Grofé's engagement with symphonic jazz.

Grand Canyon Suite premiered November 22, 1931 in Chicago, performed by Whiteman's ensemble. The piece marked the culmination of Grofé's career in symphonic jazz. Contemporary newspaper accounts of the premiere noted that piece was greeted by "recurring waves of enthusiastic approbation, and cries of 'composer!'" During the applause, "the audience was insistent for a glimpse of Grofé, and he was forced to proceed to the stage." The concert also included a performance of Gershwin's *An American in Paris*.

Following *Grand Canyon Suite's* premiere, a bitter feud arose between Grofé and Whiteman. This was largely due to Whiteman becoming jealous of Grofé's growing acclaim and publicity. The immediate spark was an article for *Time Magazine* written by Earl Sparling entitled "Ghost Writer of Jazz," which stated, "if Whiteman has been the King of jazz, Grofé, beyond question, has been the prime minister." The article carried the suggestion that it had actually been Grofé, rather than Whiteman, who had been the singular driving force behind the Whiteman band's musical successes. When Whiteman demanded Grofé ask publishers to retract it, Grofé responded, "Why? It's just the truth."

The idea behind Sparling's article, while exaggerated, was not entirely without merit. The "Whiteman sound" was in no small part the Grofé sound—his skilled arranging was a significant component in the band's characteristic sound. Despite his skill (or perhaps because of it), when Grofé's employment contract was about to expire at end of 1931, Whiteman added a clause to his contract renewal that would have assigned to Whiteman all rights

to Grofé's music. Grofé refused, quitting Whiteman's band early in 1932.

Following his departure from Whiteman's band, Grofé worked as a radio arranger and conductor in the 1930s and 1940s, frequently appearing as guest conductor for bands in many parts of the country. Grofé also served as arranger for Radio City Music Hall, and was honored as its composer laureate in 1932. Continuing his performing career, he appeared with the all-electric New World Ensemble at the 1939 World's Fair. Grofé also taught orchestration at the Juilliard Summer School from 1939 to 1942.

Concurrently to his conducting, performing, and teaching careers, Grofé continued his compositional career. Leaving symphonic jazz behind, he composed and arranged many works for concert band from the mid-1930s through the mid-1960s. He also wrote the music for several film scores. In addition to band and film music, Grofé composed many classical works. Besides several ballets, in the 1940s and 1950s he focused on large-scale works, particularly depictive tone poems which, like *Grand Canyon Suite*, often included special sound effects created by non-musical instruments. He completed his monumental Piano Concerto in D Minor in 1959.

Like Gershwin, Grofé's multifaceted musical career stands at the crossroads of classical music, popular music, and jazz. While *Grand Canyon Suite* remains his most famous work, all his music pays tribute to the country he loved, its natural wonders, its diverse people, and its unique heritage.

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.