

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.

PSYE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerry Huang* *Board Chair*

Elizabeth Stahr* *Lifetime Director & Distinguished Counselor Emeritus to the Board ~ In Loving Memory*

Directors

Rosalind Britton
Sherry Chen
Andrew Chilcote
David Dunford
Paul Hahm

Joyce Hanson
Jennise Hwang
Hans Imhoff
Sheng Jiang
Sun Young Kwak

Eric Lee
Suzy Lee
Dot Nelson
Herb Roth
Elaine Sarkaria

Walter Stahr*
Peter Tan
MarlaJoy Weisshaar
Larry Woody
David Yeung

PSYE EX-OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

Carl St.Clair*
Music Director, Pacific Symphony

John Forsythe*
President, Pacific Symphony

Eileen Jeanette
*Senior Vice President of Artistic Planning
& Production, Pacific Symphony*

Shawne Natalia Zarubica
*Managing Director, Pacific Symphony
Youth Ensembles, Pacific Symphony*

Daniel Escobar
*Director of Individual Giving and
Governing Members, Pacific Symphony*

Johanna Gamboa-Kroesen
*Music Director, Pacific Symphony
Santiago Strings*

Jacob Sustaita
*Music Director, Pacific Symphony Youth
Orchestra & Pacific Symphony Assistant
Conductor*

Gregory X. Whitmore
*Music Director, Pacific Symphony Youth
Wind Ensemble*

Angela Woo
*Music Director, Pacific Symphony Youth
Concert Band*

Jonathan Bergeron
*Youth Wind Ensemble & Concert Band
Manager, Pacific Symphony*

Mel Domingo
*Youth Orchestra Manager,
Pacific Symphony*

Bethany Goldberg
*Youth Ensembles Coordinator,
Pacific Symphony*

Danielle Liu
*Youth Quartet & Octet Coordinator,
Pacific Symphony*

Frances Cisneros
*Youth Concert Band Saxophone Coach,
Pacific Symphony*

Amy Hendricks
*Youth Concert Band Percussion Coach,
Pacific Symphony*

Meri Sheegog
*Santiago Strings String Coach,
Pacific Symphony*

Alex Tran
*Youth Concert Band Brass Coach,
Pacific Symphony*

Haiyang Wang
*Youth Concert Band Wind Coach,
Pacific Symphony*

Gillian Okin
*Youth Ensembles Intern,
Pacific Symphony*

* Also member of Board of Directors
for Pacific Symphony
† Pacific Symphony Life Director

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.



PEOPLE & PLACES

Monday, May 19, 2025 @ 7 p.m.

Dr. Gregory X. Whitmore, conductor
Dr. Leah McGray, guest conductor
John Mackey, guest composer
Giovanni Santos, guest composer
Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble

Scan the code below for full concert information and program notes



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

PERCY GRAINGER *Shepherd's Hey*
(ED. R. MARK ROGERS)

ANTONIO ÁLVAREZ *Suspiros de España*
(ED. CHARLES A. WILEY)

NOAH CHANG *Looking Up* (World Premiere)

GIOVANNI SANTOS *Chavez, 1927*

—INTERMISSION—

VALERIE COLEMAN *Roma*
Dr. Leah McGray
guest conductor

JOHN MACKEY *Sheltering Sky*

JOHN MACKEY *Aurora Awakes*

MEET THE PSYWE

Dr. Gregory X. Whitmore / Music Director
Jonathan Bergeron / PSYWE Manager

FLUTE

Ouyue (Alice) Yu, *principal*
Kaya Baird
Christine Choi
Siyu (Chelsea) Jiang
Euna Kim
Jia Kim
Sol (Sarie) Kwak
Yeeun (Christine) Oh
Jae Eun (April) Park
Jacqueline Tseng
Emily Zhao

OBOE

Madelynn AuYeung, *principal*
Grace Kim
Sydney Kramer
Joshua Lee

CLARINET

Ken Liu, *principal*
Mason Ahn
John Cho
Anderson Ham
Jenna Hong
Seongwon (Wonny) Jang
Matthew Kim
Benjamin Lee
Kaden Lee
Meitong (Annie) Song
Eric Wong
Yumeng (Erica) Zou

BASS CLARINET

Dylan Rosen, *principal*

BASSOON

Sohrab Zarin, *principal*
Normandie Olsen

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Thomas Zhao, *co-principal*
Edward (Ben) Curley, *co-principal*
River Bridson
Noah Chang
Brandon Chien
Megan Chou
Jayden Lee
Nolan Nelson
Vincent Nguyen
William Wu

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Justin Vo, *principal*
Armaan Diwan

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Alison Shiao, *principal*
Jacobo (Jacob) Herrera
Monteon
Lake Muther

FRENCH HORN

Heidi Hernandez, *principal*
Brandon Dee
Yujia (Aurora) Li
Aviv Poliva
Koen Wang
Rico Xu

TRUMPET

Myles Sanjurjo, *principal*
Austin Ahn
Esteban Celaya
SooHo Cho
Ryan Choi
Yuheng (Larry) Li
Nicolas Nogal
Claire Sim
George Ty
Eric Zhu

TROMBONE

Parker Medvitz, *principal*
Marie Bocanegra
Luca Dustin
Jaden Jung
Adrian Perez
Gwyneth Renger
Sophie Yu

BASS TROMBONE

Ryan Kim, *principal*

EUPHONIUM

Israel Gomez, *principal*
Audrey Ly
Diego Tarry
Tehmina Zarin

TUBA

Yosef (Violet) Dif, *principal*
Alex Bowser
Eli Magdaleno
Bryan Woo

DOUBLE BASS

Kenneth Ostaszewski, *principal*

PERCUSSION (alphabetically)

Adelynn Case
Ella Hyunjee Choi
Gracie Fox
Momoka Hayashibe
Amanda Muther
Oliver Shiwota

PIANO

Noah Chang, *principal*

HARP

Amber Chui, *principal*

SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Arnold O. Beckman High School
Artesia High School
California High School
Crean Lutheran High School
Cypress High School
Diamond Bar High School
El Dorado High School
El Toro High School
Eleanor Roosevelt High School
Glen A. Wilson High School
Irvine High School
Los Altos High School
Marina High School
Northwood High School
Orange County School of the Arts
Oxford Academy
Portola High School
Redlands East Valley High School
Richard Gahr High School
Sage Hill School
San Marcos High School
Santa Margarita Catholic High School
Santa Monica High School
Sonora High School
Troy High school
University High School
Valencia High School
Vista Murrieta High School

Sections listed alphabetically
under principal.

ABOUT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR



Gregory Xavier Whitmore is Conductor of the University Symphonic Winds at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). In addition to this artistic responsibility,

Dr. Whitmore is an Associate Professor of Instrumental Music Education and serves as Area Coordinator of the CSUF Music Education Department. Dr. Whitmore is also in his 11th season as Music Director of the Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble, one of only a handful of youth wind ensembles connected to a group one professional symphony orchestra (Pacific Symphony) in the United States.

Dr. Whitmore's previous appointments in higher education include tenure as Director of Bands at Irvine Valley College (Irvine, CA), Mt. San Antonio College (Walnut, CA), and College of the Desert (Palm Desert, CA). Prior to his work in higher education, Dr. Whitmore spent 13 years as Director of Bands at Cathedral City High School (Cathedral City, CA).

A proud Midwesterner and native of Ann Arbor, Michigan; Dr. Whitmore earned his bachelor's degree in instrumental music education from The University of Michigan School of Music, Theater and Dance. While a student at Michigan, Dr. Whitmore performed in the University of Michigan Symphony and Concert Bands; and led the University of Michigan Marching Band as "Michigan's Man Up Front" - Drum Major - from 1999 to 2001 - becoming the second Black Drum Major in the history of the University of Michigan. Dr. Whitmore received his master's degree in music with an emphasis in wind conducting from California State University, Fullerton. Dr. Whitmore holds a master's degree, and a doctorate in music and music education from Columbia University (Teachers College) in the city of New York.

A Second Place Winner of the 2017 American Prize in Conducting, Dr. Whitmore has conducted ensembles around the world in such notable concert venues as The Golden Hall of The Musikverein (Vienna), The Wiener

Konzerthaus (Vienna), The MuTh (Vienna), Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall (Costa Mesa, CA), Symphony Hall (Chicago), The Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), Carnegie Hall (New York City), Walt Disney Concert Hall (Los Angeles), Meng Concert Hall (Fullerton, CA), Weill Hall (Sonoma, CA), The Ambassador Auditorium (Pasadena, CA), Holy Trinity Church (Stratford, England), St. John's Smith Square (London), Chateau Vaux le Vicomte (Paris), and Heidelberg Castle (Germany). Under Dr. Whitmore's direction, the Cathedral City High School Symphony Band was selected to perform as the showcase ensemble during the 2008 California Band Directors Association Annual Convention. Dr. Whitmore is a conductor for the WorldStrides Honors Performance Series. With a research interest in music educator values as operationalized into pedagogy, in addition to investigating the concert band as an artistic medium; Dr. Whitmore has presented research at music education symposia throughout the United States and abroad, including The Midwest Clinic, and the International Society of Music Education World Congress. Dr. Whitmore's research has been published in *Visions of Research in Music Education*. Dr. Whitmore has been recognized in four editions of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* and he has been included in the 2005/2006 Edition of the National Honor Roll's *Outstanding American Teachers*. Dr. Whitmore was selected to represent the State of California by *School Band and Orchestra Magazine* in the 2008 edition of "50 Band Directors Who Make a Difference".

Dr. Whitmore belongs to professional organizations that include College Band Directors National Association, Kappa Kappa Psi Honorary Band Fraternity, Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity, Pi Kappa Lambda Honor Society, The National Association for Music Education, Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association, and the California Music Educators Association. Learn more about Dr. Whitmore at gwhitmore.com.

ABOUT PSYWE

Established in 2007, Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble (PSYWE) made its debut under the direction of Michael J. Corrigan, the well-known music educator and recipient of the "Band Educator of the Year" award from the California Music Educators Association, with support from Larry Woody and the Woody Youth Fund. In 2009, Joshua Roach of the Thornton School of Music at USC was appointed music director. Under Roach's direction and unique enthusiasm, and with the artistic guidance of Pacific Symphony's renowned music director, Carl St.Clair, PSYWE quickly became the premier youth wind ensemble in Orange County. The 2014-15 season inaugurated the tenure of current music director Dr. Gregory X. Whitmore. Under Dr. Whitmore's visionary leadership, PSYWE has undertaken numerous commissions and world premieres, and continues to explore new music initiatives.

In 2016-17, PSYWE celebrated its 10th anniversary season, culminating in a tour to Austria and the Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival in Vienna, where PSYWE took first prize in its category, with performances in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein, the MuTh Concert Hall, and Vienna's legendary Konzerthaus.

Representing over 28 schools in the SoCal region, PSYWE offers performance opportunities to instrumentalists in grades 9-12 and is one of four youth ensembles offered by Pacific Symphony's Youth Ensembles program. PSYWE provides members with an advanced and innovative artistic experience and encourages musical and personal growth through the art of performance. 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, PSYWE presents a three-concert series. Performances are presented at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

ABOUT THE GUEST CONDUCTOR



A dynamic conductor of both wind band and orchestral ensembles, **Dr. Leah McGray** is currently the Conductor of the Wind Orchestra at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo. Previously,

she was the Director of Instrumental Studies for the State University of New York at Geneseo, and Rhodes College in Memphis TN, conducting their Wind Ensembles and Symphony Orchestras as well as teaching classes in conducting and musicianship.

Dr. McGray earned her degrees from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, the University of Toronto, and Acadia University. She is in demand internationally as an adjudicator across the United States, South Korea, and Canada, and has been guest conductor for a variety of youth orchestras and honor bands, including the 2023 National Youth Band of Canada. Twice awarded major research grants, her scholarship explores techniques of non-verbal leadership, and wind ensemble repertoire by traditionally underrepresented composers.

PSYWE PROGRAM NOTES



Born in Melbourne, Australia, **Percy Grainger** (1882-1962) was one of the twentieth century's most idiosyncratic composers. After spending his youth in the city of Melbourne, he moved to

Germany in 1895 to study at the conservatory in Frankfurt. After several years of study he settled in London in 1901, where he lived until the outbreak of World War 1. Upon the onset of violence Grainger left Europe and settled in the United States. Grainger lived in White Plains, in Upstate New York, for the remainder of his life.

Grainger maintained a lifelong interest in folk music, particularly English and Scandinavian. During his decade in England, he maintained friendships with composers such as Delius and Grieg whose interest in folk music mirrored his own. He also spent a good deal of time collecting, recording, and transcribing folk songs, participating in the English folk music revival of the early decades of the 20th century. Although he is best known today for his arrangement of the traditional English folk song "Country Gardens," he also



Born in Andalusia, in the south of Spain, **Antonio Álvarez Alonso** (1867-1903) was a Spanish pianist and composer. Orphaned from an early age, Alonso studied music at the Escuela

Nacional de Música de Madrid. After living much of his life in Andalusia, he spent his last six years in Cartagena, a city on the country's Mediterranean coast. He often gave open air concerts there, sometimes with famed Spanish violinist Pablo de Sarasate, and composed much popular dance music.

composed a good deal of original music, much of which is experimental and highly unusual. The vast majority of his works are of relatively short duration, and unlike many other classical composers, Grainger sought to achieve continuity and sameness rather than musical contrast and form. Grainger spent the beginning of his career firmly establishing his reputation as a pianist, and did not begin publishing his compositions until 1911.

Grainger began composing *Shepherd's Hey* in 1908. The work was originally written for solo piano and was completed in 1911. The piece is based on a Morris dance, a type of English folk dance dating to the fifteenth century. Its main theme is based on a folk melody played by the violinist of Bilford Morris Dancers, a Morris dance group based in Bilford, England. This theme was published by ethnomusicologist Cecil J. Sharp. Decades after composing the piano version, Grainger orchestrated *Shepherd's Hey* in 1949 on the suggestion of Leopold Stokowski, the famed conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Alonso is today known almost exclusively for *Suspiros de España* ("Sighs of Spain"). The piece was composed in 1902 in Cartagena and was inspired by music for the royal infantry that he heard after giving one of his outdoor concerts on the main street of the city. A *pasodoble*, it has come to symbolize Spain itself, particularly among refugees from the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s. It was used in the 1939 film of the same name, as well as for the 2005 Mediterranean Games. In 1938 the following text by Juan Antonio Álvarez Cantos (1897-1964) was added for the film version --->

Quiso Dios, con su poder,
fundir cuatro rayitos de sol
y hacer con ellos una mujer.

Y al cumplir su voluntad,
en un jardín de España nací
como la flor en el rosal.

Tierra gloriosa de mi querer,
tierra bendita de perfume y pasión:
España, en toda flor a tus pies
suspira un corazón.

¡Ay de mí! ¡Pena mortal!,
porque me alejo, España, de ti.
¿Por qué me arrancan de mi rosal?

Quiero yo volver a ser
la luz de aquel rayito de sol
hecho mujer
por voluntad de Dios.

¡Ay, madre mía!
¡Ay! ¡Quién pudiera
ser luz del día
y al rayar la amanecida
sobre España renacer!

Mis pensamientos
han revestido
el firmamento
de besos míos;
y sobre España,
como gotas de rocío,
los dejó caer.

En mi corazón,
España, te miro,
y el eco llevará de mi canción
a España en un suspiro.

God wished, with his power,
to cast four rays from the sun
and to make a woman with them.

And when He fulfilled His desire
in a garden of Spain I was born
like the rose in its bush.

Glorious land of my love,
blessed land of perfume and passion,
Spain, in every flower at your feet,
my heart sighs.

Oh poor me! Mortal pain!
Why do I go away from you, Spain?
Why do they uproot me from my rose bush?

I want to return to
the light of that little sun ray
made woman
by desire of God.

Oh, my mother!
Oh, who could be
the light of day
and at the point of dawn
over Spain be reborn!

My thoughts
have coated
the firmament
with my kisses
and over Spain,
like drops of dew,
it let them fall.

In my heart,
Spain, I see you
And the echo will carry from my heart
to Spain in a sigh.



Noah Chang is currently a senior member of PSYWE serving as both pianist and saxophonist and has been pursuing composition as a focus since his freshman year.

His notes for *Looking Up* (2025) include the following: "I wrote this piece while considering what has happened in my life and what has influenced it the most. Growing up I've always been a dreamer, and continue to be one, but writing this piece caused me to consider, just a little bit more, the ins and outs of living such a life; to look a bit more at what it means to live such a hopeful and positive life. Put simply, *Looking Up* is a memoir, and it's a memoir of a boy, and this boy is a dreamer. He is a boy with the same aspirations and dreams as everyone else, hoping that he is the lucky one, hoping that his dreams will come true."

And his story does have triumph. It does have hope and success. But more than that is the feeling of defeat. The feeling of frustration, anger, and sadness. It is the overwhelming resentment that accompanies dashed dreams and swallowed hopes. *Looking Up* is ultimately the story of a boy rejoicing in his successes and coming to terms with his failures. It's a memoir of his life and a testament to the bittersweet reality that not all dreams come true."



A native of Puerto Rico, **Giovanni Santos** (b. 1980) moved to California in 1990 at the age of 10. The son of a Cuban father and Dominican mother, Santos received a Bachelor of Music from La

Sierra University in Riverside and a Master of Music from USC in 2007. Currently a professor and the director of wind and percussion studies at La Sierra, Santos conducts several ensembles including big band and symphonic winds. He has had work premiered by the United States Naval Academy Brass Band Ensemble at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, with himself as conductor.

Santos' *Chavez, 1927* (2022) is a musical tribute to Cesar Chavez (1927-1993), an esteemed Mexican-American labor and civil rights advocate. Chavez grew up in

Yuma, Arizona; his parents were Mexican immigrants. An American citizen by virtue of his birth in the United States, Chavez spent two years serving in the US Navy. After his military service, Chavez relocated to California, where he lived for several years in Los Angeles and then in the Central Valley.

Chavez is famous for having co-founded the National Farm Workers Association, a nationwide labor union for agricultural workers. Throughout his advocacy for worker and minority rights, Chavez remained committed to nonviolence, utilizing tactics such as labor strikes and boycotts. Chavez was allied with California governor Jerry Brown, who signed the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act into law in 1975. Chavez held a deep belief in communal living, forming a cooperative society (similar to collective farms in Socialist countries) in Keene, California. A national historic site in Keene memorializes his life and achievements. Today, Chavez is revered national figure.

Santos' musical tribute to Chavez is constructed around eight famous Chavez quotations. Each section is based on one quote:

"There's no turning back... we will win. We are winning because ours is a revolution of the mind and heart."

"We draw our strength from the despair in which we have been forced to live. We shall endure."

"The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people."

"Preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures."

"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community."

"History will judge societies and governments, not by how big they are or how well they serve the rich and powerful, but by how effectively they respond to the needs of the poor and the helpless."

"Si se puede!" [Note: this is often translated into English as "Yes we can!" although a more accurate translation would be "Yes, it is possible!"]

“True wealth is not measured in money or status or power. It is measured in the legacy we leave behind for those we love and those we inspire.”



Composer, flautist, and educator **Valerie Coleman** has achieved a wide degree of achievement and recognition. She was named as one of the top 35 women composers by *The Washington Post* and

was nominated as classical music woman of the year by *Performance Today* in 2020. She has received commissions by prestigious institutions such as the Metropolitan Opera and Lincoln Center Theatre, and her music has been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. Coleman has been on the composition faculty at Juilliard since 2024 and is also serving on the faculties at Manhattan School of Music, Mannes College of Music, and several other schools.

In addition to her composition, Coleman is the founder of Imani Winds, an ensemble for which she has also served as flautist. She is also a co-founder of Umama Womama, a flute, viola, and harp trio which aims “to celebrate motherhood and champion the performer-composer hybrid artist model.” Devoted to fostering creativity in today’s music students, Coleman has created a summer mentorship program in New York City. She has given flute and chamber music masterclasses in 49 states and on five continents.

Coleman composed *Roma 2009*. The piece’s title refers to the language of the Romani people (in the past referred to as “Gypsies,” although this designation is now considered highly pejorative). The work is in five sections: “Romani Woman,” “Mystic,” “Youth,” “Trickster,” and “History.” Each section depicts a different facet of Romani society.



An Ohio native, **John Mackey** (b. 1973) is particularly renowned for his symphonic wind compositions. After receiving his bachelor’s degree in music from the Cleveland Institute of Music,

he received his master’s degree in composition at the Juilliard School of Music, where he studied with John Corigliano. Mackey has written much orchestral music but has focused particularly on music for wind ensemble. He is currently a resident of Cambridge, MA.

Mackey has long sought to use music as a bridge between cultures, combining elements from diverse cultural areas into single compositions. For example, his *Redline Tango*, which premiered in 2003, combines musical features of the United States and Latin America. The work brought him international acclaim as a composer, particularly through its 2004 transcription for wind ensemble.

Sheltering Sky (2012) was inspired by folk music—and by the centuries-long tradition of incorporating folk music into classical compositions. More specifically, Mackey was influenced by classical composers’ practice of devising new melodies infused with folk-like characteristics. According to music professor and wind band scholar Jake Wallace, Mackey was specifically influenced by Percy Grainger, who used this technique in works such as *Colonial Song* (1911).

Rather than a flashy showpiece, *Sheltering Sky* is about simplicity and calm serenity. As such, it is decidedly unlike much other band music by Mackey which features instrumental virtuosity. Far from a flashy showpiece, this work is a meditation on tranquil quietness.

Aurora Awakens (2009) is based on an excerpt from the epic poem *The Aeneid* (29–19 BCE) by the ancient Roman poet Virgil (70 BCE – 19 BCE). The piece is a musical depiction of Aurora, the ancient Roman goddess of the dawn. The work musically depicts the light and warmth of the coming of a new day. It includes a disguised quotation from U2’s song *Where the Streets Have No Name* and a more overt quotation from Holst’s Suite No. 1 for Military Band.

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.