

AMERICAN YOUTH SYMPHONY
2020 Virtual

gala



Thursday, May 7th
4:00 pm Pacific | 7:00 pm Eastern



PROGRAM

Alyssa Katahara, Harp

Alex Mansour, Cello

Cooking Demonstration, Maxine Banks

AYS Concertmaster Interview, Gallia Kastner & Philip Marten

WORLD PREMIERE *Geometric Unity*

Carlos Izaray & AYS Virtual Orchestra

Korngold Commission Panel

Wan Rosalind Wong, Piano

Co-Hosts: Tara Aesquivel, AYS Executive Director & Matt Marcy, Comic-Magician

Guest Appearances: Carlos Izcaray, AYS Music Director & Kevin Dretzka, AYS Board Chair



HARP

ALYSSA KATAHARA

Marcel GRANDJANY:

Rhapsodie

Alyssa Katahara has performed alongside the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Master Chorale, and New World Symphony. As a soloist, Ms. Katahara has been featured with the Burbank Philharmonic, Colburn Conservatory Orchestra, Pasadena Community Orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra, National Philharmonic, and Interlochen Arts Camp Philharmonic.

Ms. Katahara's future summer plans are to include a fellowship with the Tanglewood Music Center and her past summers have been spent at the Académie Internationale d'Été de Nice, Aspen Music Festival and School and as a fellow at the Music Academy of the West and National Repertory Orchestra. She is an Interlochen Arts Academy graduate where she studied with Joan Holland. Ms. Katahara continued her harp studies at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where she is currently a Master of Music degree candidate.



Photo by Christina Cutts



Photo by Noah Kentis

Alexander Mansour is a composer, pianist, and cellist from Los Angeles, California. His music is fascinated with the lyricism of romantic expression, dramatic juxtaposition of disparate harmonies, and dynamic narrative structures.

As a cellist, Alex serves as principal of American Youth Symphony, and has joined the New York String Orchestra Seminar for their Christmas concerts at Carnegie Hall. He has also appeared on NPR's "From the Top". He has studied with Katinka Kleijn (CSO), and during an exchange in London, with Richard Lester (Royal College of Music).

Visit his website to learn more about his past projects, <https://www.alexmansourmusic.com/>

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ALEX MANSOUR

AYS Principal Cello

Astor PIAZZOLLA: *Oblivion*

CELLO

Carlos IZCARAY: *Geometric Unity*

WORLD PREMIERE

Geometric Unity was written during the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic that, to this day, has kept most people sheltered at home. Working together with the team of the American Youth Symphony, we looked for ways to keep developing the performance skills of our incredibly gifted young musicians even though they could not come together in person. The idea of an virtual orchestra playing original content quickly became the leading strategy for the whole team, and a powerful wave of inspiration took over us.



The result is an orchestral work for 20+ players, designed to be performed and experienced from home via technological means. 7 musical episodes are threaded together, each with different moods that go from wonder to sorrow, joy, and triumphant thrill.

Another source of inspiration came from the intellectual side. During the first days of developing this project, I came across an online discussion of Eric Weinstein's new theory titled *Geometric Unity*. Fascinated by his idea of a 14 dimensional universe, and the beautiful mathematical equations supporting it, I aimed to provide a harmonic language that could be both complex yet palatable and enriching for the common ear. Thanks to another internet sensation, the phenomenally gifted Jacob Collier, I was also inspired to treat this harmonic complexity with the overall feelings and hopes of our society during these times.

The fact that all involved on the performance and production teams were miles apart was definitely a challenge. However, it was incredibly inspiring to write a piece for these young musicians that I've had the pleasure of working with since becoming AYS Music Director. Knowing exactly who I was writing for proved to be very advantageous. I listened to their auditions, selected them for the orchestra, performed with them previously, and wrote every part with each musician in mind. Special thanks to the amazing musicians and AYS administrative team for the opportunity to create and make music together.

American Youth Symphony Virtual Orchestra

FIRST VIOLIN

Gallia Kastner
Bree Fotheringham
Hannah Chou

SECOND VIOLIN

Evan Johanson
Wenqi Ke
Ani Sinanyan

VIOLA

Johanna Nowik
Yun-Chieh Jenny Sung
Alec Santamaria

CELLO

Alex Mansour
Michael Ljungh

BASS

Sam Miller

FLUTE

Elizabeth LaCoste

OBOE

Laura Arganbright

CLARINET

Sérgio Coelho

BASSOON

Lieza Hansen

HORN

Valerie Ankeney

TRUMPET

Forrest Johnston

TROMBONE

Michael Dolin

TUBA

Errol Rhoden III

TIMPANI and PERCUSSION

Jonathan Wisner

PERCUSSION

Jeremy Davis

PIANO

Wan Rosalind Wong

HARP

Alyssa Katahara



MAXINE BANKS

Cooking Demonstration

Maxine Banks' career in event production began over 25 years ago as an executive chef at a then-small Los Angeles-based catering company. Helping build up the business, she turned the company into one of L.A.'s most successful caterers. From there, Banks moved on to form Maxine Banks Events with the intent to serve high quality, contemporary interpretations of classic cuisine, to create intelligent design, to seek out stunning locations, and overall to provide a thorough, professional service that guarantees an event's success.



AYS Alumni Interview

PHILIP MARTEN

Asst. Concertmaster of Cincinnati Symphony

Currently 1st Assistant Concertmaster of the Cincinnati Symphony, Philip Marten joined the Kansas City Symphony in 2016 as a member of the first violin section, and served as Acting Assistant Concertmaster in 2017. Prior to his appointment in Kansas City, he worked as Concertmaster of the American Youth Symphony for the 2015/16 season. As an active chamber musician, he has collaborated with Jessica Bodner, David Chan, Desmond Hoebig, Benny Kim, Scott Lee, Cho-Liang Lin, Jon Kimura Parker, Ivo-Jan van der Werff and Tien-Hsin Cindy Wu. A Kansas City native, Philip Marten grew up participating in many local music organizations including the Kansas City Youth Symphony and Heartland Chamber Music Academy. After receiving an undergraduate degree from Rice University in 2015, he went on to USC where he completed his graduate studies.

GALLIA KASTNER

AYS Concertmaster

Gallia Kastner is a twenty-two year old violinist currently studying at the Colburn School of Music. She commenced her private violin study at five and a half and at age 9, she studied with Almita and Roland Vamos at the Music Institute of Chicago. Gallia has been the concertmaster of the American Youth Symphony since 2016 and has won numerous national and international competitions. She is a winner of the Aspen Conducting Academy's Violin Competition, performing Sibelius Violin Concerto, the winner of the Dorothy Delay Fellowship for the 2020 Aspen Music Festival, performing with the Aspen Philharmonic on their next season, the Pasadena Showcase Competition, the Cooper International Violin Competition, the Blount Slawson National Concerto Competition, the Triennial Johansen International Competition.



Korngold Commission Panel

STARR PARODI

Starr Parodi first entered the public eye playing keyboards as part of the house band on the hit late-night Arsenio Hall Show. Since then she has become a vibrant part of the Los Angeles composing community, scoring hundreds of episodes of TV & film as well as being a passionate and innovative solo artist, pianist and producer whose work has been featured on NPR, the BBC, KCRW and iHEART Radio. Starr is the President of the Alliance for Women Film Composers. www.starrparodi.com



FIL EISLER

Eisler, a Czech-born, English-raised composer, producer and multi-instrumentalist, has worked with ensembles of all sizes to help bring his scores to life. Variety described his music as "smoky, elaborate film noir-inspired compositions", while Beatweek Magazine praised him for making "beautiful music" that "...almost acts as another character further enveloping the audience in its grasp." Eisler has been nominated and has received numerous awards including the World Soundtrack Awards New Discovery, SXSW Best Soundtrack Award and multiple BMI awards. www.imdb.com/name/nm1135983/



KRIS BOWERS

Kris Bowers is an Emmy Award-winning composer and pianist. His music consists of a confluence of jazz greats, classical standards, and the alternative and experimental music of his youth. Since graduating from Juilliard, Bowers has established himself at the forefront of Hollywood's emerging generation of genre-defying composers. He worked on the score for Dear White People, Green Book, When They See Us, and many other projects. Bowers continues to make an impact on the music industry as he creates new works. www.krisbowers.com



CHARLES YANG

Charles Yang is described by the Boston Globe as one who "plays classical violin with the charisma of a rock star" and the recipient of the 2018 Leonard Bernstein Award. Juilliard graduate, Yang began his violin studies with his mother in Austin, Texas, and has since studied with world-renowned pedagogues Kurt Sassmanshaus, Paul Kantor, Brian Lewis and Glenn Dicterow. He has performed as a soloist with orchestras in the United States, Europe, Brazil, Russia, China, and Taiwan, and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors. www.charlesyangmusic.com



WAN ROSALIND WONG

Claude DEBUSSY: Etude 6 pour les huit doigts

Wan Rosalind WONG: Winter

Los Angeles-based pianist Wan Rosalind Wong has been awarded numerous scholarships and competition prizes by foundations such as New West Symphony and the Getty foundation. Her live performances have been featured in concerts at major west coast museums, cultural centers, and concert halls. Rosalind studied music at UCLA with Inna Faliks and Walter Ponce. She received her Masters in 2015 and her Doctorate in 2017. She studied music hermeneutics with Roger Savage, and currently studies composition with Richard Danielpour. Rosalind taught music theory, poetry, piano, music history, and music composition privately, at UCLA, and also at Larchmont Charter School. For more information, visit her website at www.sophosmusic.org/rosalind

PIANO

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Geometric Unity Production

CARLOS IZCARAY, Composer and Director
Post Production Company: PAXEROS, edited by Chelsea Bo & Sean Drummond
Recording Engineer: Francesco Perlangeli

Special Thanks

Families and friends that supported AYS staff and artists throughout production
Richard Rosenthal
Maxine Banks
Matt Marcy
Saul Levine & Cobblestone Vineyards
Steve Linder and Michael Hanel

