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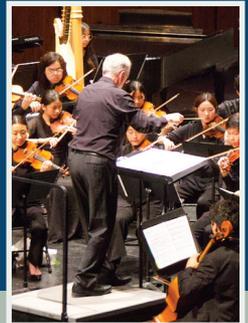


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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you all for attending our spring concert. The organization has had a great year so far with the Senior Orchestra's participation in the Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival performing at Davies Symphony Hall.

Today's concert features our co-concertmaster, Kayla Lee, with Erich Korngold's Violin Concerto which opens with a theme from the 1937 film *Another Dawn* and expansively explores the full spectrum of the violin's capabilities. And while we conclude with Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major, I feel an obligation to cheer on my friend and fellow CYS Board Member, Kevin Cho '04, as he steps on the podium. Kevin and I both played violin in CYS around the turn of the millennium and I'm excited for what is to be a thrilling and unforgettable experience.

While it's always impressive to see middle and high school students performing the extremely demanding repertoire worthy of even the most elite professional orchestras, Kevin's presence on the stage and on our Board is a reminder of the enduring bonds of CYS. I've known Kevin for 25 years now, and I did "Eylarobics" and trivia at Redwood Glen during CYS Senior Orchestra camps.

It's clear that a group of hardworking and talented students supported by the efforts of their families is bound to produce a lifetime of friendships. These friendships are what makes this concert and CYS special to me, and I hope that our students on stage will be able to have the same feeling in the future.



Tyson Mao
President, CYS Board of Directors

Today's concert, valued at \$20 per seat, has been provided at no cost for everyone to enjoy. Please consider making a tax deductible contribution that will help CYS to continue offering tuition assistance and free educational initiatives. Thank you for investing in the finest musical training, the opportunity for personal growth, and the next generation of leaders!

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CALIFORNIA YOUTH SYMPHONY

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

March 29, 2026 | 7:30 PM

California Theatre

Leo Eylar, Music Director

74TH SEASON | SECOND CONCERT

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

Leo Eylar, Conductor

Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*. Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
arr. Arturo Toscanini
Kevin Cho, Guest Conductor

Violin Concerto in D Major, op. 35. Erich Wolfgang Korngold
(1897-1957)
I. Moderato nobile
II. Romanze
III. Allegro assai vivace
Kayla Lee, Violin

***** **INTERMISSION** *****

Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major, op. 100. Sergei Prokofiev
(1891-1953)
I. Andante
II. Allegro marcato
III. Adagio
IV. Allegro giocoso

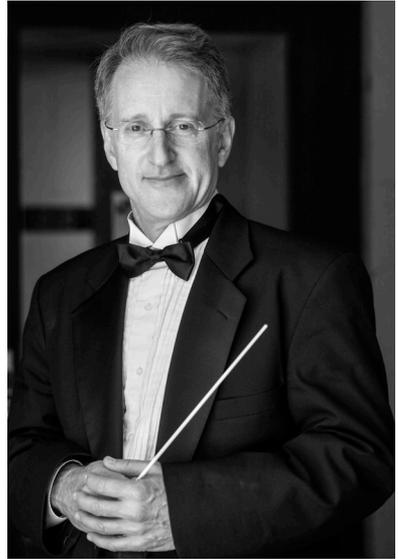
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LEO EYLAR

Music Director

Conductor-Composer Leo Eylar, born in Los Angeles, 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 CSU, Sacramento where he served on the full-time faculty for 30 years directing the symphony orchestra, as well as teaching music theory, history, and composition. 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 400 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. Recent 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. Recent commissions have included a Sonata dedicated to well-known German bassoonist Frank Forst, a large-scale percussion duo titled *Two Klee Sketches*, and a large symphonic wind ensemble work *Orpheus and the Maenads: The Last Dance* based on the Orpheus legend.



FEATURED SOLOIST

KAYLA LEE

Violin

Kayla Lee is a senior and fourth-year Honors Fellow at Valley Christian High School in San Jose. She studies violin with Zhao Wei at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-college Division. Kayla has earned top prizes at the United States Open Music Competition, Korean-American Music Supporters' Association (KAMSA), and the Silicon Valley Music Competition. She has also received awards from the Pacific International Music

Competition, the Burlingame Music Club Young Musicians Competition and the Peninsula Symphony Orchestra Young Musicians Competition. She has previously appeared as a soloist with the Palo Alto Philharmonic, KAMSA Youth Orchestra, Temple Hill Symphony, and the California Youth Symphony (CYS) Associate Orchestra.

Kayla has received national recognition as a winner of the National YoungArts Competition for three consecutive years (2024–2026). She toured internationally with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America (NYO-USA) from 2023 to 2025, including the 2023 NYO2 tour to the Dominican Republic as principal violinist and the 2024 NYO-USA tour to South America. In 2025, she returned to NYO-USA as concertmaster under conductor Gianandrea Noseda, performing at Carnegie Hall and on an extensive Asia tour with violinists Ray Chen and Clara-Jumi Kang.

In addition, Kayla has performed in masterclasses with distinguished artists including Emanuel Ax, Danielle Belen, Kurt Sassmannshaus, Herbert Greenberg, Qian Zhou, Christopher Costanza (the St. Lawrence String Quartet), Fred Lifszitz (the Alexander String Quartet), the Gryphon Trio, Daniel Ching (the Miró Quartet), and the Balourdet Quartet. She has received coaching from esteemed musicians such as Jinjoo Cho, Paul Kantor, the Esmé Quartet, Janet Ying (the Ying Quartet), Jeremiah Shaw (the Telegraph Quartet), and members of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Kayla has attended the ENCORE Chamber Music Institute and the Bowdoin International Music Festival in past summers. As a passionate chamber musician, Kayla is a member of the Orenda String Quartet at Young Chamber Musicians in Burlingame and currently serves as co-concertmaster of the CYS Senior Orchestra.



GUEST CONDUCTOR

KEVIN CHO

Kevin Cho is a Managing Director and Global Head of Product Strategy & Development at Neuberger Berman, a global investment manager with \$563 billion in assets under management. He is a member of Neuberger's Operating Committee.

Previously, Kevin spent 13 years at McKinsey & Company, where he was a Partner and Global Co-Leader of Wealth & Asset Management Solutions, advising leading financial institutions on growth strategy, mergers and acquisitions, and operating model design. He also co-founded and led marketing for an ecommerce startup, and started his career at SolarCity and Morgan Stanley. Kevin is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Kevin has served on the Board of Directors of the California Youth Symphony since 2024, and on the Board of Trustees of the Manhattan-based Kaufman Music Center since 2022. He grew up in Los Gatos, CA, and began violin studies at five years old. He was a member of the California Youth Symphony for nine years, including two international tours.



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PROGRAM NOTES

by Leo Eylar

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*

Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin* tells the story of a mysterious knight who arrives to defend the innocent Elsa, asking only one thing in return: that she never asks his name or where he comes from. Love, trust, and doubt become deeply intertwined – and by Act III, everything is poised on the edge of revelation. The Prelude to Act III is one of Wagner's most electrifying orchestral openings. It bursts forth with brilliant energy. Trumpets blaze, strings surge forward, and the entire orchestra sparkles with celebration. In the opera, this music accompanies the royal wedding festivities of Lohengrin and Elsa. It radiates confidence, joy, and grandeur – the sound of a future that seems secure. Yet Wagner always layers his music with deeper meaning. Beneath the brilliance lies urgency, even tension. The music presses forward as if destiny itself cannot be delayed. Tonight, we will perform the powerful concert ending made famous by conductor Arturo Toscanini. Instead of fading gently into the opera's next scene, this version drives to a dramatic close. In the final bars, Wagner's ominous "forbidden question" motive – the musical idea representing Elsa's promise never to ask Lohengrin's identity – thunders out in the orchestra. What began as a radiant celebration suddenly carries a shadow. In just a few minutes, Wagner creates splendor, excitement, and foreboding all at once. The Prelude reminds us how fragile trust can be – and how brilliantly music can capture both joy and the tension of what lies ahead.

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Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957)

Violin Concerto in D Major, op. 35

A prodigy of extraordinary gifts, Erich Wolfgang Korngold composed his first music at the age of eight, and by thirteen his ballet *Der Schneemann* (*The Snowman*) was being produced professionally. From the beginning, his unabashed devotion to the rich harmonic language of the nineteenth century set him apart. That loyalty earned him powerful champions, including conductor Bruno Walter, pianist Artur Schnabel, and violinist Fritz Kreisler, all of whom recognized the brilliance of his craftsmanship.

Korngold also helped revive the operettas of Johann Strauss Jr., a project that brought him into collaboration with the famed theatrical impresario Max Reinhardt. When Reinhardt traveled to Hollywood in 1934 to film Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he invited Korngold to adapt Mendelssohn's incidental music for the screen. The success of that project led Warner Bros. to commission Korngold as a film composer. Over the next decade he wrote eighteen film scores, winning Academy Awards for *Anthony Adverse* (1936) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938). In doing so, he helped define the sweeping, symphonic sound of Hollywood's Golden Age.

For several years, Korngold divided his time between Europe and America, composing operas and concert works on one side of the Atlantic and lavish film scores on the other. With the outbreak of the Second World War, however, he and his family settled permanently in California. After the war, he turned once more to concert music, writing in the same lush, late-Romantic style that had always been his voice. Yet the musical climate had shifted dramatically; in an era increasingly dominated by modernism, his music was dismissed by some as old-fashioned. Time, however, has been kind. As tastes have broadened, Korngold's radiant lyricism and emotional directness have regained widespread admiration.

The Violin Concerto emerged from this period. When the violinist originally offered the premiere declined, Korngold approached the legendary Jascha Heifetz, who agreed to perform it – on the condition that the finale be made even more technically demanding. The premiere took place on February 15, 1947, with Vladimir Golschmann conducting the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

Korngold drew the concerto's themes from several of his film scores: *Another Dawn* and *Juarez* supply material for the first movement; *Anthony Adverse* provides the deeply expressive second movement; and *The Prince and the Pauper* fuels the exuberant finale. Yet the concerto is far more than a cinematic collage. It is, above all, a soaringly lyrical work – intended, in the composer's own words, “for a Caruso rather than a Paganini.” After two movements of glowing tenderness and expansive songfulness, the finale – revised at Heifetz's urging – bursts forth in a display of dazzling virtuosity and brilliance.

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Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major, op. 100

Sergei Prokofiev wrote his Fifth Symphony during the final, devastating years of World War II. He had just completed his ballet *Cinderella* and was at work on his opera *War and Peace* when he turned to this symphony. Conducting the premiere himself in Moscow in January 1945, Prokofiev described the work as “a symphony of the grandeur of the human spirit.” On the very night of its first performance, news arrived of a major Soviet military victory — and as the music began, artillery salutes thundered outside the hall. The moment felt historic.

The symphony unfolds in four large sections. The first begins quietly, almost simply, with a calm, noble melody introduced by the woodwinds. From this unassuming opening, the music gradually grows in strength and scale. Prokofiev develops the themes patiently, allowing them to expand, clash, and combine. There are moments of tenderness and reflection, but the overall feeling is one of sweeping breadth and seriousness — music that seems to look beyond the turmoil of war toward something enduring and human. By the end of the movement, the opening theme rises triumphantly over powerful, pounding rhythms in the orchestra.

The second movement is lighter and more playful — but with an edge. Prokofiev was famous for a sharp, sometimes mischievous sense of humor in his music, and here we hear it clearly. The rhythms are energetic and slightly off-kilter, the orchestral colors bright and sometimes biting. It’s music that dances, but not politely — there’s wit, sarcasm, and a kind of restless drive beneath the surface.

The third movement slows the pace and turns inward. Dark and searching, it moves with a steady, almost heavy tread. A long, yearning melody unfolds, full of quiet intensity. In the central section, the music swells into a powerful emotional outburst before gradually settling again. Near the end, the earlier melody returns, now transformed and more fragile, suspended delicately high in the orchestra. The mood is reflective, even haunting.

The finale begins by recalling the symphony’s opening idea, as if tying the entire work together. Soon the music gathers speed and momentum. Themes return in new forms, building energy as the movement drives forward. There is excitement, brilliance, and flashes of humor, but also determination. In the closing pages, the orchestra bursts into a blaze of sound — a dazzling, electrifying conclusion that brings the symphony to a powerful end.

Prokofiev’s Fifth Symphony stands today as one of the great orchestral works of the twentieth century — a work born in wartime, yet reaching toward resilience, strength, and the enduring spirit of humanity.

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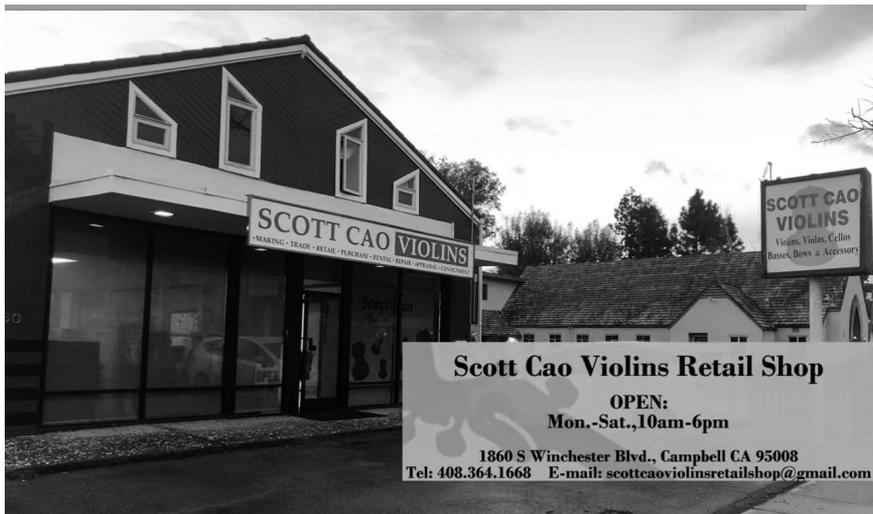
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Yan Cheng	Wind Symphony
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Masaya Miyachi	Virtuosi Strings
Nicole Miyachi	Virtuosi Strings
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Henry Chau	Intermezzi Strings
Hannah Chang	Intermezzi Strings
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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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2025-2026 SEASON SCHEDULE

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

SEASON OPENER

November 2, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Chabot College Performing Arts Complex,
Hayward

Bloch: *Schelomo, Rhapsodie Hébraïque*

(Aiden Kim, soloist)

Dukas: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*

Saarthak Shankavaram: *Slipping* (World Premiere)

Strauss: *Don Juan*

HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 7, 2025 | 2:30 PM

San Mateo Performing Arts Center

Ibert: "Allegro" from Flute Concerto

(Yongrong Chen, soloist)

Rath: *Escape Artist* (Percussion Section)

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

BAY AREA YOUTH ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL (BAYOF)

January 18, 2026 | 3:00 PM

Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco

SPRING CONCERT

March 29, 2026 | 7:30 PM

California Theatre, San Jose

Korngold: Violin Concerto (Kayla Lee, soloist)

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5

Wagner: Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*

SEASON FINALE

June 7, 2026 | 2:30 PM

San Mateo Performing Arts Center

Bernstein: Overture to *Candide*

Montgomery: *Starburst*

Price: "Juba Dance" from Symphony No. 1

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture*

*Plus, additional works by CYS Graduating Senior
Concerto Competition Winners*

PERFORM-A-THON FUNDRAISER

February 7, 2026 | 12:00 PM

Trinity Presbyterian Church, San Carlos

Participation Open to All CYS Members

JAPAN CONCERT TOUR

June 28–July 7, 2026

CYS ASSOCIATE ORCHESTRA & WIND SYMPHONY

HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 7, 2025 | 2:30 PM

San Mateo Performing Arts Center

with the CYS Senior Orchestra

FESTIVAL EVENING

March 22, 2026 | 6:00 PM

Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CODA CONCERT

May 17, 2026

1:00 PM – Associate Orch & String Ensembles

6:00 PM – Wind Symphony & Wind Ensembles

Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

*Featuring works by Beethoven, Bernstein,
Borodin, Saint-Saëns, Smetana, and more...*

CYS STRING & WIND ENSEMBLES

FALL CONCERT

November 23, 2025 | 1:00 PM

Cañada College Theatre, Redwood City

FESTIVAL AFTERNOON

March 22, 2026 | 1:00 PM

Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CODA CONCERT

May 17, 2026

1:00 PM – String Ensembles & Associate Orch

6:00 PM – Wind Ensembles & Wind Symphony

Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

*Featuring works by Price, Smetana, Mozart,
Gershwin, and more...*



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