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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to welcome all of you to the season-opening concert of our 75th season. It's incredible to think about what it means for an organization to have been around for this long. 75 years ago, Queen Elizabeth II ascended the British throne, Mr. Potato Head hit the market as the first toy ever promoted via a television commercial, and the Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded for the discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance, which would later lay the groundwork for the MRI. We have an exciting program lined up this year to celebrate the 75th anniversary of this fantastic orchestra. Please look out for more information, and I hope you will be able to take part in the festivities.

I would also like to welcome the Senior Orchestra home from a tremendous tour in Japan. It's always exciting when CYS goes on tour. International tours provide a tremendous experience for our students to experience new cultures, and the community exchange of sharing the common language of symphonic music only serves to make the experience more meaningful.

Today's Season Opener presents an exciting slate of music. *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* by Adams truly is a short ride in a fast and very rhythmical and relentless machine. Grieg's Piano Concerto has sweeping, lyrical melodies that touch us all to our very core, and I particularly look forward to an impeccable job by the strings in "Tybalt's Death" from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. I'm sure all of you parents spent countless hours listening as your children practiced this fiendishly acrobatic audition excerpt, and now we get to hear the final product.

My journey with CYS began in 1990, during CYS's 38th year. This season marks a new milestone for myself, as I am now a proud CYS parent. I'm looking forward to the journey, and with that, I invite you all to enjoy the concert and the season to come, which will hopefully be a memorable ride in a not so fast machine.



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

November 1, 2026 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
Leo Eylar, Music Director

75TH SEASON | FIRST CONCERT

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

Leo Eylar, Conductor

Short Ride in a Fast Machine . . . . . John Adams (b. 1947)

Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 16 . . . . . Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Sora Corro, Piano

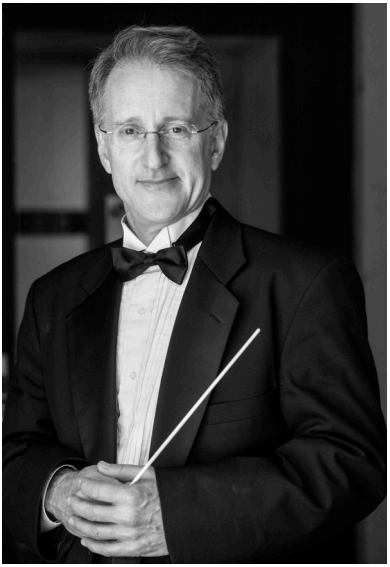
* * * * * * * * * * INTERMISSION * * * * * * * * * *

Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, op. 64. . . . . .Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

This concert is supported in part by SVCREATES, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara.

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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

SORA CORRO

Piano

Sora Corro is a sophomore in the Center of Creative Arts program at Irvington High School in Fremont, California. She began piano at the age of 2, and has been studying with Professor Sandra Shen since 2023. Most recently, Sora was selected as one of four finalists in the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition and performed the Grieg Concerto in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She was also chosen as a finalist in the 2026 Seattle International Piano Competition.

Sora has won numerous awards including first place in the Pacific Music Society Competition, East Bay Music Foundation Competition, Berkeley Etude Club Music Competition, Marilyn Mindell Piano Competition, Gavilan College Youth Piano Competition, United States Open Music Competition, CAPMT State Honors competition, and Ross McKee Piano Competition, where she gave a solo recital and was featured in the *Independent Coast Observe* (ICO). She has also received top prizes in the Reno-Tahoe, San Francisco International, and Chicago International Piano Competitions and was named a recipient of the National Chopin Foundation Scholarship for 2025-2026.

In 2023, Sora performed her Kabalevsky piano concerto with the Urbana-Pop Orchestra in Champaign, Illinois. As the first place winner of the South Valley Symphony, California Youth Symphony Young Artist, and the Santa Clarita Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competitions, Sora will perform all three movements of the Grieg Concerto throughout 2026. She has participated in masterclasses with many accomplished pianists including Yoshikazu Nagai, Steven Spooner, Armen Babakhanian, John Perry, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Boris Slutsky, and Jean David Coen. She has attended Piano Texas, Music@Menlo, Southeastern Piano Festival, Piano Cleveland, and Juilliard's Summer Music Program.

In addition to her solo performances, she is an active chamber musician, sharing her music at community centers and senior homes. In her free time, she enjoys playing soccer on her school's varsity team and was selected to attend a Talent ID Camp at UCSF. She is fluent in Spanish and Japanese and has started learning American Sign Language.

PROGRAM NOTES

Short Ride in a Fast Machine
John Adams (b. 1947)

Few pieces announce themselves as unmistakably as John Adams's *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*. From its opening seconds, a relentlessly ticking woodblock establishes a pulse that will propel nearly the entire work. Around it, the orchestra erupts into brilliant chords, rapidly changing patterns and flashes of instrumental color. The effect is exhilarating—and slightly breathless. Adams wrote *Short Ride* in 1986 on a commission for the inaugural concert of the Great Woods Festival in Massachusetts. The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra gave the first performance, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Although Adams called the piece a "fanfare for orchestra," its wonderfully evocative title suggests something considerably more adventurous. Adams has explained the title by recalling the experience of being invited for a ride in a powerful sports car: exciting at first, perhaps, but soon fast enough to make the passenger wonder whether accepting the invitation was such a good idea.

Short Ride in a Fast Machine is one of the best-known examples of the musical style associated with American Minimalism. Rather than developing long melodies in the traditional manner, minimalist composers often build music from short, repeated rhythmic and melodic patterns that change gradually over time. Adams, however, developed a particularly colorful and dramatic version of the style. His repetitions do not simply remain in place: they accumulate energy, collide with one another and propel the music toward new harmonies and orchestral colors. The steady woodblock provides a kind of musical roadway throughout *Short Ride*, while the orchestra seems to race above and around it. Brass instruments send out brilliant fanfare-like calls; woodwinds and strings add increasingly complicated layers; and subtle changes in rhythm continually threaten to pull the music away from its underlying pulse. Yet that pulse keeps going. The result is just what the title promises: approximately four minutes of dazzling orchestral velocity—a musical machine running at full throttle, with no apparent intention of slowing down.

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Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 16
Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Edvard Grieg was only twenty-five when he composed his only completed piano concerto in 1868, but the work contains nearly everything that would come to characterize his music: memorable melodies, vivid contrasts, rhythmic vitality, and a deep connection with the music of his native Norway. Grieg had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory in Germany, where as a teenager he heard Clara Schumann perform the celebrated Piano Concerto of her husband, Robert Schumann. The experience made a lasting impression. When Grieg came to write his own concerto several years later, he chose the same key—A minor—and even began his work with a similarly dramatic gesture. And what an opening it is. A roll of the timpani unleashes a cascading flourish from the piano, plunging dramatically down the keyboard before the orchestra introduces the movement's principal theme. Within seconds, Grieg has established the relationship that will animate the entire concerto: sometimes the piano and orchestra cooperate, sometimes they converse, and sometimes the piano seems determined to take command.

The first movement ranges widely in mood, from vigorous and dramatic music to passages of great tenderness. Near its conclusion comes the traditional cadenza, an extended passage for the soloist alone. Here the pianist is given center stage before the orchestra returns for the movement's powerful conclusion. The second movement offers an extraordinary contrast. Muted strings create a quiet, almost dreamlike atmosphere before the piano enters with music of intimate simplicity. Rather than emphasizing virtuosity, Grieg allows the soloist to sing. Without a break, the concerto then launches into its final movement. Its energetic rhythms reflect Grieg's growing fascination with Norwegian folk music, particularly the halling, an athletic Norwegian folk dance. The music alternates between fiery, dance-like episodes and a broad, lyrical melody first introduced by the flute.Near the end, Grieg performs one final transformation. That lyrical melody returns, now greatly expanded, as piano and orchestra join in a majestic conclusion.

The concerto was first performed in Copenhagen in 1869 with the Norwegian pianist Edmund Neupert as soloist. It quickly became Grieg's most internationally successful large-scale work and remains one of the most beloved piano concertos in the repertoire. Its enduring appeal is not difficult to understand: Grieg combines the excitement of a virtuoso showpiece with music of remarkable warmth, directness and humanity.

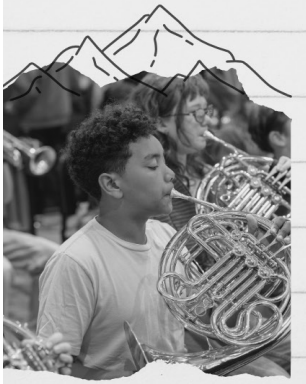


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Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*, op. 64
Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Few stories have proved as irresistible to composers as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Yet among the many musical versions of the tragedy, Sergei Prokofiev's ballet has achieved a special place. Its music can be tender and romantic, grotesque and humorous, violent and terrifying—sometimes within the space of only a few minutes.

Prokofiev composed *Romeo and Juliet* in 1935, after nearly two decades spent largely outside his native Russia. The project seemed promising, but bringing the ballet to the stage proved unexpectedly difficult. Plans for productions in Leningrad and Moscow collapsed, and dancers initially complained that portions of Prokofiev's rhythmically complex score were difficult to dance to. There was another complication: Prokofiev and his collaborators initially contemplated giving Shakespeare's tragedy a happy ending, allowing Romeo to arrive before Juliet had died. Prokofiev later abandoned the idea and restored Shakespeare's tragic conclusion. With no immediate production of the complete ballet in sight, Prokofiev brought some of its finest music into the concert hall, creating orchestral suites that helped establish the score's reputation even before the ballet received its celebrated Soviet production at the Kirov Theatre in 1940.

This afternoon's selections draw from across the ballet and follow much of Shakespeare's dramatic journey. **"Montagues and Capulets"** immediately plunges us into the world of Verona and the bitter rivalry at the heart of the tragedy. Its massive, striding music—originally accompanying the Dance of the Knights—has become perhaps the most instantly recognizable music in the entire ballet. Prokofiev then gives us a very different portrait in **"The Child Juliet."** Juliet is not yet the doomed heroine of the final scenes, but a lively young girl. The music darts between youthful playfulness and brief glimpses of the tenderness and emotional depth that will soon emerge. The stately **"Minuet"** takes us into the formal world of the Capulets' ball, while **"Masks"** introduces Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio as they arrive at the festivities in disguise. It is here, of course, that Romeo sees Juliet. In **"Romeo and Juliet,"** the public spectacle gives way to the private world of the two young lovers, and Prokofiev produces some of the score's most ardent and deeply lyrical music. The atmosphere changes again with the energetic **"Morning Dance,"**returning us to the bustling streets of Verona. But the feud between the two families soon turns deadly. In **"The Death of Tybalt,"** Prokofiev depicts the confrontation with extraordinary theatrical force. The music accelerates toward catastrophe as Romeo kills Tybalt in revenge for the death of Mercutio. Pounding orchestral chords bring the scene to a brutal close. The brief **"Aubade"**—a morning serenade—offers an almost startling return to lightness. But by now we know that the tragedy cannot be escaped. The final selections take us

into the tomb. In **"Romeo at Juliet's Tomb,"** the music becomes a great funeral lament as Romeo, believing Juliet dead, takes poison beside her. Juliet awakens too late. **"The Death of Juliet"** brings the ballet to its devastating conclusion as she discovers Romeo's body and takes her own life.

Prokofiev's achievement is remarkable. Without a word being spoken, his orchestra allows us to recognize the characters, feel the violence of their world, experience the tenderness of their love and, finally, understand the magnitude of their loss. Shakespeare supplies the story; Prokofiev makes us hear it.



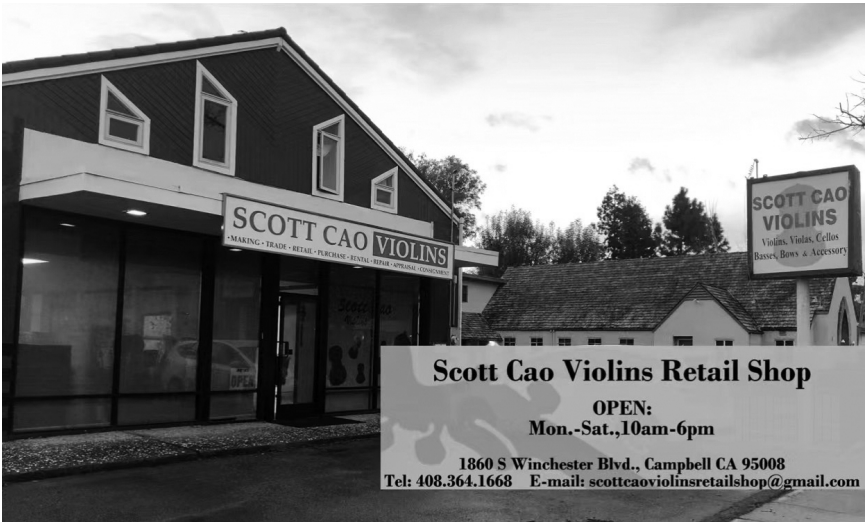
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The Deborah Shidler Oboe Scholarship, created by husband and professional trumpeter, Dave Burkhart, aims at outstanding oboists in CYS who show promise for continued excellence in music.

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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2026-2027 SEASON SCHEDULE

CYS SENIOR ORCHESTRA

SEASON OPENER
November 1, 2026 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
Adams: *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*
Grieg: Piano Concerto (Sora Corro, soloist)
Prokofiev: Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*

HOLIDAY CONCERT
November 29, 2026 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
Gershwin: Variations on "I Got Rhythm" (Natsuki Fukasawa, soloist)
Spohr: "Adagio-Allegro" from Clarinet Concerto No. 1 (Brandon Lin, soloist)
Plus, Classical and Seasonal Favorites by the CYS Orchestras and CYS Wind Symphony

SPRING CONCERT
March 14, 2027 | 2:30 PM
Chabot College Performing Arts Complex, Hayward
Elgar: Cello Concerto (Daniel Wang, soloist)
Ives: Variations on "America"
Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*

SEASON FINALE
May 30, 2027 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
Bartok: Dance Suite
Creston: *Ceremonial* (Percussion Section)
Respighi: *Pines of Rome*
Plus, additional works by CYS Graduating Senior Concerto Competition Winners

CYS ASSOCIATE ORCHESTRA & WIND SYMPHONY

WIND SYMPHONY at UC DAVIS
November 21, 2026 | 5 PM
Mondavi Center, Davis

HOLIDAY CONCERT
November 29, 2026 | 2:30 PM
San Mateo Performing Arts Center
with the CYS Senior Orchestra

FESTIVAL EVENING
March 7, 2027 | 6 PM
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CODA CONCERT
May 16, 2027
12 PM – Associate Orchestra & String Ensembles
6 PM – Wind Symphony & Wind Ensembles
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

CYS STRING & WIND ENSEMBLES

FALL CONCERT
November 22, 2026 | 1 PM
Cañada College Theatre, Redwood City

FESTIVAL AFTERNOON
March 7, 2027 | 1 PM
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College

STRING ENSEMBLES COMMUNITY CONCERT
May 15, 2027 | 11 AM
Palo Alto

CODA CONCERT
May 16, 2027
12 PM – String Ensembles & Associate Orchestra
6 PM – Wind Ensembles & Wind Symphony
Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College



PERFORM-A-THON FUNDRAISER
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