

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EMPIRE STATE YOUTH ORCHESTRA KICKS OFF 2024-2025 CONCERT SEASON WITH "CONFLUENCE: A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF AMERICAN MUSIC" AT TROY SAVINGS BANK MUSIC HALL ON OCTOBER 27, 2024

October 17, 2024 Schenectady, NY -- Empire State Youth Orchestra (ESYO) launches its 2024-2025 season with an exhilarating concert entitled, *Confluence: A Celebration of American Music*. This event, which will take place on Sunday, October 27 at 3pm at Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, marks the beginning of a season dedicated to the theme of "Flow," inspired by water and its dynamic, ever-shifting nature.

Led by Music Director, Etienne Abelin, in his third full season with ESYO, the Symphony Orchestra will perform a program that brings together classical, jazz, and rock in a celebration of American creativity. With a spotlight on the diverse voices that have shaped the nation's musical landscape, *Confluence* promises a rich exploration of the rhythms, stories, and emotions that flow through American culture.

The concert features alto saxophone soloist, Teresa Rodrigues, a standout senior from ESYO's Youth Jazz Orchestra. Rodrigues will bring her lyrical prowess to Duke Ellington's *In a Sentimental Mood*, Horace Silver's *Peace*, and George Gershwin's *Summertime*, all arranged for orchestra and saxophone by Swiss American composer Daniel Schnyder. These pieces, interwoven with compositions by icons such as Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, and Samuel Barber, create a tapestry of sound highlighting the fluidity of American music across genres. Adding to this exploration of flow is Nina Shekhar's *Lumina*, a vibrant contemporary work that uses contrasts of light and dark to capture sudden bursts of radiance amidst shadowy textures.

"Playing with the Symphony Orchestra is an incredible opportunity, and so different from my experience in Jazz Orchestra. I'm really inspired by the music and can't wait to share it with the community," says Teresa Rodrigues.

The concert opens with Copland's iconic *Fanfare for the Common Man*, a stirring tribute to the spirit and resilience of everyday Americans. Copland's *Hoe Down* from *Rodeo*, a lively celebration of the vitality and pioneering spirit of the American frontier, Charles Ives' contemplative *The Unanswered Question* and Samuel Barber's emotionally rich *Second Essay for Orchestra* are also on the program, as well as Jimi Hendrix's legendary *Purple Haze*, arranged by Daniel Schnyder. This dynamic twist, blending rock with classical traditions, highlights the concert's theme of *confluence*. As the concert draws to a close, the orchestra will perform two encores: Leonard Bernstein's exuberant *Mambo* from *West Side Story*, capturing the vibrant cultural mosaic of America, followed by the reflective *Somewhere*, a poignant expression of hope and unity. These encores provide a joyful and uplifting finale to an evening that celebrates the diversity and richness of American music.

“This season, we continue our exploration of the elements, shifting from last year’s theme of air to the idea of ‘Flow,’ inspired by water,” says Abelin. “Flow is all about how music and emotions move, how they carry us forward, much like a river gathering energy and changing course. Our goal is to explore reaching states of flow in our rehearsals and performances, where skill, focus, and letting go merge, allowing the music to take on a life of its own. We’ll also be experimenting with creating seamless transitions between pieces during performances, so that the music flows continuously without interruption. We are excited to see this theme come alive in our performances this year.”

Confluence, on October 27th, is just the beginning of an exciting season for ESYO’s 14 ensembles and free after-school program CHIME. Symphony Orchestra will collaborate once again with Rensselaer Orchestra in March and April under the direction of Robert Whalen, this time performing Hector Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique* in a program titled *Fluid Realities*. Other season highlights include an exchange of ESYO’s Youth Jazz Orchestra with the Worcester Youth Orchestras (MA), the beloved *Melodies of Christmas* performances, and a highly anticipated summer tour of Symphony Orchestra to Central Europe with concerts in Bratislava, Vienna, and Prague.

Event Details: *Confluence: A Musical Celebration of American Music* Date: Sunday, October 27, 2024

Time: 3:00 PM

Venue: Troy Savings Bank Music Hall

Tickets:

<https://www.troymusichall.org/events/2904/esyo-confluence-a-celebration-of-american-music/>

For more information about the concert, visit

<https://esyo.org/news-concerts/893-confluence-a-celebration-of-american-music>

About Teresa Rodrigues: Now in her 4th year in ESYO jazz ensembles, Teresa Rodrigues started as a member of the Repertory Jazz Orchestra, conducted by Keith Pray, for two years before moving to the Youth Jazz Orchestra, conducted by Peter Bellino. Her musical journey started at Carondelet Music Center in Latham, with introductory piano at age 6. In 5th grade, she picked up the alto saxophone in school band, while continuing to study piano privately, with Mary Alice McCullen-Senecal. Rodrigues currently studies with Brian Patneaude (saxophone, since 2020) and with Wayne Hawkins (piano, since 2021). She attributes all the blame for her love for jazz to her parents, her teachers, the All Ears Jazz Workshops run by Keith Pray and Arthur Falbush, and to inspirational tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman. In addition to ESYO groups, Teresa plays regularly with the Shenendehowa High School jazz and wind ensembles, led by Brian Carucci, in the SUNY Schenectady Community College Big Band, led by Dylan Canterbury, multiple area honor bands (NYSSMA Area All-State, Suburban Council, and SWCMEA All-County Jazz Bands) and in private events with a small jazz combo. She has also participated for the past two summers in the Skidmore Jazz Institute, and most recently, this past summer, in L'Astrada's "Stage Jazz", a workshop within the Jazz in Marciac festival, Marciac, France.

About Daniel Schnyder: Swiss-American composer Daniel Schnyder, born in Zurich in 1961 and now based in New York, has received numerous commissions from prominent orchestras and ensembles worldwide, including the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Chicago Sinfonietta, and Opera Philadelphia. His Grammy-nominated album *Absolution* and award-winning *Brass Trio* are among his acclaimed works. Schnyder frequently performs with his chamber project for saxophone and string quartet, blending composition, improvisation, jazz, and classical music. His opera *Charlie Parker's Yardbird* premiered in 2015, and his symphonic work *Sundiata Keita* debuted in 2010 at the Berlin Philharmonie. He continues to bridge classical, jazz, and world music, touring with ensembles like WORLDS BEYOND ORCHESTRA, which performed at the Lucerne Festival in 2023. <https://www.danielschnyder.com/>

About Empire State Youth Orchestra: ESYO engages, inspires and empowers youth through music in a progressive learning environment leading to high-level performance opportunities. More than 500 students from New York's Capital Region and western New England are selected by audition each year to perform in ESYO. With 14 performing ensembles and orchestras suiting a range of playing levels, members receive training from outstanding conductors and coaches, and tutelage from extraordinary guest artists. In 2015, ESYO launched CHIME (Creating Harmony Inspiring Musical Excellence) in Schenectady to address fundamental inequities preventing universal access to high level music opportunities for young people. Today, this free music program serves more than 150 Schenectady students. Founded in 1979, ESYO is a not-for-profit organization that has been recognized as a premier music education and performance program for youth and has received three ASCAP awards. ESYO's ensembles, led by the flagship ESYO Symphony Orchestra, perform more than 30 public concerts each year at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood's Ozawa Hall, Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, the Massry Center, Zankel Music Center, Proctors, and the annual CBS6 Christmas show, *Melodies of Christmas*. <https://esy.org/>

ESYO 2024/2025 Season

Oct 14, 2024 3:00pm SYMPHONY SIDE BY SIDE With Albany Symphony Orchestra	November 10, 2024 3:00pm REPERTORY, STRING, & CONCERTINO STRINGS ORCHESTRAS	December 15, 2024 3:00pm WIND ORCHESTRA
Oct 16, 2024 10:30am & 1pm YOUNG PEOPLES' & SENIORS' CONCERTS	November 17, 2024 3:00pm YOUTH & REPERTORY JAZZ	December 15th, 2024 5:30pm CHAMBER & FIDDLE
Oct 27, 2024 3:00pm CONFLUENCE : A CELEBRATION OF AMERICAN MUSIC Symphony Orchestra	November 23, 2024 3:00pm YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA at Worcester Youth Orchestra	December 19-21, 2024 7:30pm and December 22 2:00pm MELODIES OF CHRISTMAS
November 3, 2024 7:00pm PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES	December 9, 2024 CHIME (TBD) FLUTE CHOIR (7:30pm)	December 22, 2024 7:30pm PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES
		February 12, 2025 7:00pm REPERTORY ORCHESTRA & CONCERTINO STRINGS

<p>February 13, 2025 7:00pm STRING ORCHESTRA & YOUTH JAZZ</p> <p>March 2, 2025 7:30pm PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES</p> <p>March 9, 2025 3:00pm WIND ORCHESTRA & REPERTORY JAZZ</p> <p>March 15, 2025 PLAYATHON</p> <p>March 22, 2025 3:00pm YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA with Worcester Youth Jazz Ensemble</p>	<p>March 30, 2025 3:00pm FLUID REALITIES: SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA featuring the Lois Lyman Concerto Competition winner</p> <p>April 5, 2025 Time TBA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA with Rensselaer Orchestra</p> <p>May 2, 2025 3:00pm REPERTORY & STRING ORCHESTRAS featuring the Lois Lyman Concerto Competition runner up</p> <p>May 4, 2025 3:00pm CONCERTINO STRINGS, WOODWINDS & BRASS</p>	<p>May 9, 2025 AMPLIFY OUR VOICE CHIME CONCERT</p> <p>May 11, 2025 3:00pm WIND ORCHESTRA</p> <p>May 11, 2025 5:30pm CHAMBER & FIDDLE</p> <p>May 18, 2025 4:00pm PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES</p> <p>June 1, 2025 2-5:30pm FESTIVAL OF YOUNG ARTISTS AT SPAC</p> <p>June 30 - July 9, 2025 EUROPEAN TOUR (Symphony Orchestra)</p>
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