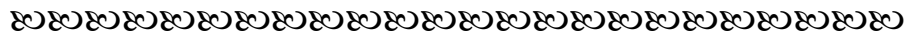


NORWALK

YOUTH

SYMPHONY

HANDBOOK
FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS
2009-2010



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ABOUT THE NORWALK YOUTH SYMPHONY

The purpose of the Norwalk Youth Symphony is to enrich the lives of young people within a musical community. We provide the finest possible training, practice and performance opportunities, enabling our students to learn, share and enjoy the power of music.

In partnership with parents, teachers and schools we:

- provide exposure to diverse orchestral styles under the guidance of musical professionals,
- identify and educate motivated students regardless of financial circumstance,
- foster a sense of achievement and self-esteem through a developmental approach, and
- promote self-discipline and teamwork through respect for artistic standards.

Founded in 1956, the NYS has expanded since that time to include over 230 musicians from more than 30 area towns each year. Its reputation has also grown. Many alumni have gone on to study professionally at music conservatories and colleges such as Juilliard, Eastman, Manhattan School of Music, Berklee College of Music, Hartt College of Music, Northwestern and the New England Conservatory. Graduates have also played in college orchestras at Yale, Harvard, Dartmouth, Wellesley, Ithaca, Brown, Princeton, University of California at Berkeley, Williams, MIT, Hamilton, Boston College, Columbia and others. One alumnus is a three-time Grammy Award winner. All NYS members gain an invaluable discipline and musical experience that instills a lifelong appreciation of music and the arts.

STRUCTURE - The Norwalk Youth Symphony is comprised of five ensembles representing four levels of youth orchestras. The five ensembles, each with its own highly qualified conductor, allow the individual to progress with young musicians of similar ability.

PRELUDE ORCHESTRA is an entry-level orchestra for string players.

PHILHARMONIA STRING ORCHESTRA provides a transition for string players to the more difficult repertoire that will be performed in Concert Orchestra.

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRAL WINDS provides the first experience for many woodwind and brass players to perform orchestral music and provide a transition to the more difficult repertoire that will be performed in the upper orchestras.

CONCERT ORCHESTRA is a full orchestra performing on an intermediate level.

PRINCIPAL ORCHESTRA is a full orchestra performing advanced repertoire.

Membership and placement are by audition only. Each player, including a returning musician from the previous year, is auditioned every year by the conductors in late August and the beginning of September to ensure correct placement according to individual ability.

The Norwalk Youth Symphony is sponsored by the City of Norwalk.

Norwalk Youth Symphony
Sara Watkins Executive Director
email: NYSed@optonline.net
71 East Avenue, Suite N
Norwalk, CT 06851
Telephone: 203-866-4100 Fax: 203-866-0012
Cell phone (during rehearsals only): 203-984-2658
Web page: www.norwalkyouthsymphony.org

CONDUCTORS

TARA SIMONCIC was appointed conductor of The Norwalk Youth Symphony **Principal Orchestra** in 2001. Originally from Stockton, California, Ms. Simoncic grew up in a musical family. Her father a composer and her mother a flautist, Tara was encouraged to study several instruments at an early age, but chose to focus on the trumpet at the age of six. Tara was bitten by the conducting bug while she was pursuing her Bachelor of Music degree in trumpet performance at the New England Conservatory of music. There, she founded the Stravinsky Septet, an ensemble which toured New England with a staged production of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* and other works with similar instrumentation that were commissioned by the ensemble. Deciding to further her studies in conducting, Ms. Simoncic received her Masters of Music degree in orchestral conducting from Northwestern University. Soon after, she won the position of assistant conductor with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, a one-year position during which time she covered subscription concerts and conducted the orchestra's pops, run-out and chamber orchestra concerts and was the conductor of the Knoxville Symphony Youth Orchestra.

In 2000, Ms. Simoncic was accepted into the doctoral program in conducting at the University of Kansas City, Missouri and appointed assistant conductor of the Kansas City Ballet but declined the position to be one of two students accepted into the first conducting class at the Manhattan School of Music. Since then, she has become one of the most active conductors of her generation in the New York area, working with the Brooklyn, Kingsborough, New Amsterdam and Greenwich Symphony Orchestras and the Bergen Philharmonic. Ms. Simoncic served on the conducting faculty at the C.W. Post Music Festival (Long Island) for three years, and has been a guest conductor at the Kinhaven Summer School of Music (Vermont). An advocate of contemporary music, Ms. Simoncic has worked with the Manhattan School of Music Composer's Orchestra and was appointed conductor of the Flexible Orchestra in 2004.

Her conducting training extends to Europe, where she has studied extensively in master classes at the Canford Summer School of Music (England) and with the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic (Czech Republic), the West Bohemian Symphony Orchestra (Czech Republic), the Adygeya Republic National Symphony Orchestra and the Astrakhan Symphony Orchestra (Russian Republic), where she has recently been invited back as a guest conductor. She has studied with Zdenec Macal, David Gilbert, Iloh Yang, Victor Yampolsky, George Manahan, George Hurst and Kirk Trevor.

RICHARD BROOKS was appointed conductor of the Norwalk Youth Symphony **Concert Orchestra** in 1998 and has been conducting professionally since 1981. His guest conducting credits include the Fairfield County String Festival, Charles Ives Center for the Arts and several regional school festival orchestras in New York. He has served since 1987 as music director and conductor of the Cheshire Symphony Orchestra and held the same position with the Danbury Community Orchestra for 20 years. Mr. Brooks is on the affiliated music faculty of The Gunnery in Washington and the Wooster School in Danbury, teaches violin and viola privately and is a freelance classical and jazz violinist. He holds a degree in violin performance from Western Connecticut State University and has performed at many venues in the Northeast, including Lincoln Center and the New Haven Jazz Festival. Music from his 1998 CD album *Violin Electric* on the J-Bird Records label has been heard on National Public Radio's *Echoes* program.

JESSICA MCNAMARA was named conductor of the Philharmonia Strings Orchestra in 2009. Jessica attended Providence College on a full scholarship and double majored in music and psychology. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Providence College with a degree in Music Education. Since graduating from college she has been teaching in the Westport School system. Jessica is currently completing a master's degree in music education with a concentration in conducting at the Hartt School, University of Hartford. During the summer of 2009 she co-founded the Ridgefield Summer String Orchestra, a community orchestra for children and adults that meets once a week throughout the summer. Jessica regularly plays violin with the American Chamber Orchestra and is an active member in a string quartet

CARLY KULAWITZ was appointed conductor of the new NYS ensemble, Philharmonia Orchestral Winds, in the 2009-2010 season. Carly is a recent graduate of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, from which she holds a Bachelor of Music in both Clarinet Performance and Music Education. In addition conducting the NYS ensemble, Carly is a full-time graduate student in Music Education at Columbia University's Teachers College.

At the Eastman School Carly was a member of the Eastman Wind Ensemble and had the opportunity to record this past October with the Canadian Brass, in which we released Manhattan Music, a collection of works written about New York City.

SUSAN JIMENEZ was appointed the conductor of the **Prelude Orchestra** in 2009. She is presently teaching elementary strings in the Fairfield Public School system. She has served as a conductor with the Waterbury Youth Symphony from 1996 to 2006, and in 2003, founded the organization's summer music program.

Mrs. Jimenez grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she attended a High School that specialized in visual and performing arts. From there she went on to obtain her Bachelor's Degree in cello performance from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. In 1994 she received an Artist Diploma in Cello Performance from the Hartt School, University of Hartford, and in 1996, received her Master's Degree, also in Cello Performance, from Queens College, City University of New York. In 1998, she completed the Alternate Route to Certification and has been teaching in the public schools ever since. In September, she will start a long term Suzuki Cello training program at the School for Strings in Manhattan.

As a performer, she has played in orchestras throughout Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. She was the former principal cellist of the Norwalk Symphony. Currently she is a member of the Greater Bridgeport Symphony, and the Waterbury Symphony.

POLICIES FOR NYS MEMBERS

PLACEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE

The primary outcome of the auditions is assignment to one of the five Norwalk Youth Symphony orchestras. Acceptance and placement decisions are at the sole discretion of the conductors' considerable professional judgment and are final. Orchestra placements will be posted on the NYS web site during the week preceding the first rehearsal. Orchestra placement as well as seating assignments will be posted in the lobby at the first rehearsal.

SEATING ASSIGNMENT

The audition is also important as an aid to the conductors in determining seating assignments. Seating in an orchestra is not determined by ranking. Rather, it is done in the best interests of the individual musicians and the orchestra as a whole. String players will NOT necessarily be seated according to ranked ability but by the conductor in such a way as to best benefit the orchestra. Changes in strings seating may be made throughout the year. This may involve rotation back and forth between the first and second violin sections.

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

All NYS members are expected to take all reasonable steps to participate in their school music programs. Those not participating may be asked to discuss the matter with the NYS Board's Executive Committee.

PRIVATE STUDY

It is expected that all members will pursue private study on their orchestral instruments. Limited scholarship assistance for private lessons is available.

ORCHESTRA PARTICIPATION

To preserve orchestral integrity, musicians who (i) audition and do not accept their assigned orchestral placement; or (ii) withdraw during the year for any reason other than medical necessity; or (iii) fail to participate in a concert for any reason other than medical necessity; or (iv) are dismissed during the year may be suspended from NYS for that orchestral year and be barred from re-auditioning in the orchestral year following the year of such non-acceptance, withdrawal, failure to participate, or dismissal. The above situations shall be referred to the Executive Committee of the NYS for an investigation and for the imposition of the full or lesser sanctions.

INSURANCE:

The Norwalk Youth Symphony's insurance policies do not cover instruments owned by individual members. Please check your own household coverage.

MUSIC:

Each player is responsible for the care of his/her music and for bringing it (in its binder) to all rehearsals. Music is distributed at the beginning of each concert period. There is a \$5 fee to replace music after the second rehearsal for each concert.

TUITION AND FEES, 2009-10 SEASON

	ORCHESTRA PROGRAM		
	Principal	Concert	Philharmonia/Prelude
TUITION	\$710	\$665	\$590
4 SEASON TICKETS	\$150	\$150	\$150
SNACK FEE	\$20	\$20	\$20
MUSIC FEE	\$15	\$15	\$15

Families with more than one member purchase only one set of season tickets.

PAYMENT

NYS offers two payment options:

Option I: **Full payment at the first rehearsal.**

Option II: **Three equal payments** due September 13th, October 15th, November 15th. This option includes a \$35 processing fee.

All tuition must be paid by November 22nd.

Please contact the office for scholarship applications and to discuss payment arrangements.
Scholarship applications are due at the first rehearsal.

**CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO NORWALK YOUTH SYMPHONY
CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS MAY BE MADE WITH MASTERCARD OR VISA ONLY**

ATTENDANCE

ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP:

NYS rehearsals begin and end promptly. **Students are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to each rehearsal** to give them time to tune, warm up and be ready to begin playing at the announced start of the rehearsal. Any musician who is not present at the first downbeat of the rehearsal will be considered late. Also, please pick up your child on time. In the interest of safety, those musicians who are not picked up within a reasonable time (generally, 15 minutes after the end of practice) are transported to the Norwalk Police Station at One Monroe Street, Norwalk.

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

Students are allowed **no more than two (2) absences per concert, or 6 absences per season.** There is no differentiation made between “excused” or “unexcused” absences; all are counted equally. **IF YOU ARE GOING TO MISS A REHEARSAL, YOU MUST LET THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KNOW BEFOREHAND.** You may report absences on our website (www.norwalkyouthsymphony.org). As a matter of courtesy, the Conductor may also be informed. It is preferred that you notify the NYS one week prior to the rehearsal that you will be missing.

Tardiness or leaving early may be counted as one half (1/2) an absence. Students are tardy if they are not in their seats, tuned, with their music on the stands at the scheduled rehearsal time. If a student is excluded from a concert for attendance reasons, that student may remain in the program without penalty, **PROVIDED THAT HE OR SHE ATTENDS THE CONCERT AS A MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE AS A SHOW OF SUPPORT FOR HIS/HER FELLOW MUSICIANS.**

Because of the high level of musicianship required by the orchestras, attendance at **concerts, pre-dress and dress rehearsals is mandatory.** Students who are absent from a mandatory rehearsal may not be permitted to perform in the concert. If a student misses a concert, he/she may be barred from participation in the program for the remainder of the season and may not be permitted to participate again until one full concert season has passed.

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURE:

If bad weather causes a rehearsal cancellation, a message will be posted on our web site, www.norwalkyouthsymphony.org. There will also be a message on the office voice mail (203-866-4100) and this information will be sent to Connecticut and Westchester News 12, where it will be posted on the television as well as on their web site (www.news12.com/CT). Please remember that NYS members come from over two dozen different communities, some of which have more severe weather problems than others. If a rehearsal is not cancelled and you have concerns about your child’s safety in traveling to Norwalk, we urge you to use your own best judgment. Such absences will not count as one of the two allowed absences of the concert period. Please notify the office if you decide not to send your child.

CONCERT BEHAVIOR & DRESS

It is the tradition at NYS concerts that those members who are not performing sit in the audience while their peers play. This gives them a chance to hear the other orchestras and to get a sense of the continuity that the organization provides through its graded orchestra system. **As a courtesy to their fellow performers, all musicians are expected to remain until the final group on the program has finished its performance.**

There is a standard of behavior expected of those in the audience that is as follows:

- Musicians are expected to sit quietly in their seats.
- There is to be absolutely no talking during a performance.
- No one is to leave the auditorium except during breaks between orchestras and then only singly or in the company of **one** other musician.
- The same courteous attention should be paid to those on the stage as one would expect to receive when it is his or her turn to play.
- It goes without saying that horseplay and other such inappropriate behavior is not acceptable.
- Parents, please discuss this important matter with your child before the concert. We all want the concerts to be special, so it would really be unfortunate if a few members marred the impression that our fine performances create for our audiences.

CONCERT DRESS

Correct concert dress makes our performances more professional and keeps the audience's focus on the music, not on the players. The dress code will therefore be strictly enforced. If you need assistance in finding concert dress items, please call the office. **A musician who arrives at a concert dressed in a manner which does not conform to this dress code may be denied participation in the concert or be seated in the back of his/her section.**

PRELUDE AND PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRAS

GIRLS:

- long solid black skirt (ankle-length)
- **long-sleeved** solid white top
- black shoes – no sandals
- black stockings
- no bare arms, midriffs, legs or feet
- **Cellists, bassists, harpists:** Long solid black full skirt or long solid black loose fitting DRESS SLACKS. No jeans, tight fitting, hip-hugger pants will be allowed. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

BOYS:

- plain, black slacks
- white long-sleeved shirt
- long, conservative dark tie
- black shoes
- black socks
- no sneakers

CONCERT AND PRINCIPAL ORCHESTRAS

GIRLS:

- long solid black dress or skirt (**ankle-length**)
- **long-sleeved** solid black top
- black shoes – no sandals
- black stockings
- no bare arms, midriffs, legs or feet
- **Cellists, bassists, harpists:** Long solid black full skirt or long solid black loose fitting DRESS SLACKS. No jeans, tight fitting, or hip-hugger pants will be allowed. There will be no exceptions to this rule

BOYS:

- black suit preferred
- white shirt
- black shoes
- black socks
- no sneakers
- boys in Principal Orchestra wear black bow ties
- boys in Concert Orchestra wear conservative, long ties

ENRICHMENT

CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM

Beyond its orchestra program, the Norwalk Youth Symphony also encourages interested musicians to perform chamber music. This type of performance gives students the opportunity to give voice to their individual artistic expression while at the same time working in a cooperative group environment. The Norwalk Youth Symphony will work with interested musicians to form small ensembles for coaching on Saturdays at City Hall. There will be separate fees associated with this program, which will take place outside of orchestra rehearsal time. Contact the NYS office for additional information.

CONCERTO COMPETITION

The NYS sponsors a Concerto Competition every year for members of the Principal Orchestra. All who wish to do so may audition in January for this event. **MUSIC TO BE PERFORMED AT THE COMPETITION MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PRINCIPAL ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR NO LATER THAN THE FIRST REHEARSAL IN NOVEMBER.** This insures that (a) the work being prepared is playable by the orchestra and (b) the music will not have to be rented. The winner will play a movement of a concerto with the orchestra at the May concert.

SECTIONAL REHEARSALS

Professional musicians and teachers are brought to rehearsals a minimum of two times during each concert period to work specifically with different sections of all four orchestras. Such sessions are invaluable in helping to prepare each member of the NYS for performance at concerts and in producing a unified sound within sections. The dates of these sectionals are listed in the NYS 2009-10 schedule.

TRAVEL ABROAD

In the summer of 2008 NYS embarked on its first performance trip overseas. Members of the Concert and Principal Orchestras traveled to Prague, Budapest, Vienna and Salzburg. Plans are underway for a trip to Italy in the summer of 2010. The trip will be open to all members of Concert and Principal Orchestra.

MASTER CLASSES

From time to time we hold master classes, where participants in our program may perform in public for a guest instructor, who then coaches the students. Both audience members and performers can learn a great deal from these "open lessons."

ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

In order to enhance the performing experience for its musicians, the Norwalk Youth Symphony arranges for performances in such places as Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood, Music in the Parks etc. These are considered to be an integral part of the musical education the NYS offers and participation is mandatory.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service concerts enhance the performance experience for NYS musicians, while thanking the community for the support it (and its musicians) receive. Therefore, there are occasions when the NYS orchestras and chamber music participants perform benefit concerts in the area. These are also mandatory activities.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

The Youth Committee is the representative voice of all four orchestras of the NYS. Its purpose is to listen to the concerns and suggestions of orchestra members and to help make participation in the NYS a more rewarding experience. The committee meets once a month with a parent advisor who reports back to the Board of Directors as the Committee's messenger. Thus an opportunity for open communication between the orchestras and the Board is provided, and the Board receives information that helps it to run the NYS in a way that will ensure a positive musical experience for all members.

All are encouraged to participate in the Youth Committee. The first meeting will be held in September. If you are interested in participating, please fill out the attached form and return it to the NYS office.

PARENT ENSEMBLE:

The most valuable contribution parents can make is to support their student's obligation to attend all rehearsals and to encourage them to prepare the music thoroughly. However, we also need parent assistance for many other things. Please volunteer your time and talent by joining our PARENT ENSEMBLE. A sign-up form is enclosed in this folder. In addition, each family is expected to assist once with the mid-morning snack that is served to the musicians at every major rehearsal. Parents must sign up for snack duty at the first rehearsal of the season. Parents are also expected to volunteer at one concert each year.

YOUTH COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION FORM

I am interested in being a representative from my orchestra to the Youth Committee.

Name _____ Age _____

Orchestra _____

Telephone number _____ Email _____

Instrument _____

I have served on the Youth Committee for _____ years.

This will be my first year on the Youth Committee