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New York Youth Symphony Announces 2019-2020 Orchestra Season

New York, NY - New York Youth Symphony (NYYS) and Music Director Michael Repper are proud to announce the 2019-2020 season orchestra concerts to be performed in Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall. The 2019-2020 season repertoire features a diverse array of works, from Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman* and Florence Price's Piano Concerto in One Movement, to crowd-pleasers such as Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, and Mahler's "Titan" Symphony. Featured soloists include 13-year-old piano prodigy **Harmony Zhu** on Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1, cellist **Sterling Elliot** on Dvořák's Cello Concerto, and pianist **Michelle Cann** on the Price Piano Concerto. Ms. Zhu will make her Carnegie Hall debut as part of the Roy and Shirley Durst Debut Artist series. Mr. Elliot is appearing as part of a partnership with the Sphinx Organization.

The three orchestral concerts all include the world premiere of a new work commissioned through the NYYS First Music program, chaired by Christopher Theofanidis. This season's First Music composers are **Marco-Adrián Ramos, Tanner Porter, and Patrick O'Malley**. The commissions, titles forthcoming, include a collaboration between composer Tanner Porter and students from the KIPP Academy Middle School in the South Bronx, where the NYYS has been in residency for the past two seasons. This piece will also receive a second performance at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Summer 2020.

Music Director Michael Repper says, "We are thrilled to perform some of the most popular orchestral repertoire, alongside a host of newly-commissioned works and the Carnegie Hall premieres of established pieces by women and composers of color. With the collaboration between composer Tanner Porter and students from the KIPP Academy Middle School, this season's programming showcases our commitment to presenting inclusive professional-level concerts from outstanding young orchestral musicians and soloists at Carnegie Hall."

As the premier independent music education organization for ensemble training in the New York metropolitan area, the NYYS has provided over 6,000 music students unparalleled opportunities to perform

at world-class venues including **Carnegie Hall** and **Jazz at Lincoln Center** and to study with world-renowned artists, all tuition-free. Beyond the instruction from accomplished musicians, students gain valuable life skills — commitment, discipline, focus, collaboration — and friendships that last a lifetime.

Performances for the 2019-2020 Season:

Michael Repper, Music Director

Sunday, November 17, 2019 at 2 PM

Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage:

Joan Tower: *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman No. 1* (Carnegie Hall premiere)

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 1 in C major, Op. 15, featuring Harmony Zhu, piano

Marco-Adrián Ramos: First Music commission and world premiere – title forthcoming

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*, Op. 35

Sunday, March 1, 2020 at 2 PM

Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage:

Dvořák: Concerto in B minor for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 104, featuring Sterling Elliott, cello

Tanner Porter: First Music commission and world premiere – title forthcoming

Respighi: *Pines of Rome*

Sunday, May 24, 2020 at 2 PM

Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage:

Patrick O'Malley: First Music commission and world premiere – title forthcoming

Florence Price: Piano Concerto in One Movement, featuring Michelle Cann, piano (Carnegie Hall premiere)

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D major, "The Titan"

ARTIST BIOS

Michael Repper is the Music Director of the New York Youth Symphony and the Northern Neck Orchestra of Virginia, and the Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Maryland. An internationally-recognized conductor of classical music, jazz, pops, and musical theater, he enjoys conducting both youth and professional orchestras around the world. Mr. Repper served as the Peabody Institute/Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Conducting Fellow for two seasons, assisting his long-time mentor Marin Alsop, and continues to conduct the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in several educational concerts annually. He has collaborated on large-scale productions of symphonic and theatrical works with the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at Ravinia, the Peabody Institute of Music, the New School of Music, and more. Having led the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, JOFICAT Orquesta Barcelona, and Youth Ensemble of Acarigua, Venezuela, Mr. Repper is renowned for his ability to inspire instrumentalists, choruses, and audiences of all ages and nationalities. He conducted the world premiere of *Spiritual America*, a song cycle by William Britton, featuring the Grammy-nominated Metropolis Ensemble, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, and Indie-Rock duo Wye Oak, the studio album of which will be released in May 2019. A committed proponent of diversity, inclusion, and training in the arts, he founded the Reinecke Youth Chamber Music Fellowship, providing \$1000 scholarships and mentorships to young musicians in the Mid-Atlantic who are interested in studying chamber music.

A happy girl with multiple talents, 13-year-old **Harmony Zhu** became the youngest "Young Steinway Artist" at age 10 and has been featured three times on NBC's *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, CBC News, NPR's *From the Top*, and CBS, among many others, for her exceptional gifts in piano, composition, and chess. Ms. Zhu has performed with such renowned conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and John Giordano, among others. Last year, Ms. Zhu toured with the Israel Philharmonic, appeared with the Detroit Symphony for three concerts, and made her soloist debuts at the Ravinia Festival and Aspen Music Festival. The year prior, she opened The Philadelphia Orchestra's season under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. A student of Yoheved Kaplinsky at Juilliard Pre-College since 2014, Ms. Zhu won the Concerto Competition in her first year of study there. She has distinguished herself by consistently winning first prizes from an early age while competing

within older age categories. Ms. Zhu is an accomplished composer and improviser, and studies composition with Ira Taxin. In chess, Ms. Zhu holds the World Champion title in her age group after winning the World Youth Chess Championships. She enjoys reading, drawing, creative writing, spelling, math, history, dancing, singing, ping pong, playing violin, and bird watching. Ms. Zhu is also her school's Spelling Bee Champion.

Sterling Elliott has soloed with the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, the South Bend Symphony Orchestra, the New World Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and many more as well as a performance at the 2019 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. In 2015 and 2016 Mr. Elliott performed a 7-week national tour with the Sphinx Virtuosi, and in 2018 was a featured soloist on tour including a performance at Carnegie Hall. He began his cello studies at the age of three and made his solo debut at the age of seven when he became the first-place Junior Division winner of the PYO Concerto Competition. Other notable accomplishments include 1st place in 2019 National Sphinx Competition Senior Division, 2019 Camerata Artists International Competition, grand prize in the First Presbyterian Young Artist Competition, 1st place in the 2014 Sphinx Competition, 2014 Richmond Symphony Concerto Competition, and more. Mr. Elliott has enjoyed the honor of performing for cellist Yo-Yo Ma and also performing alongside recording artist Jennifer Hudson. Mr. Elliott currently studies with Joel Krosnick at the Juilliard School working toward an undergraduate degree in cello performance where he is a proud recipient of a Kovner Fellowship.

Concert pianist **Michelle Cann** is a young artist with a deep musical commitment to performing a wide range of repertoire throughout the US and to bringing the arts to local communities. Ms. Cann made her orchestral debut at age 14 and has since performed with orchestras including the Florida Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Ms. Cann recently soloed with The Dream Unfinished Orchestra in New York City, where she performed the New York City premiere of Concerto in One Movement by composer Florence Price, the first African-American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer. The Boston Musical Intelligencer wrote "Michelle Cann...was a compelling, sparkling virtuoso, bringing this riveting work to life in its first New York performance". She performed Price's piano concerto as a guest soloist with the Knoxville Symphony as well. Ms. Cann regularly appears in recital and as a chamber musician throughout the US, China, and South Korea at premiere concert halls including the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and will make her Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Youth Symphony in May 2020. Michelle has been frequently featured on both WRTI 90. 1 and WHYI TV in Philadelphia on such shows as *Creatively Speaking with Susan Lewis*, *Onstage at Curtis*, and *Philadelphia Music Makers*. Michelle received her Bachelor and Master degrees in piano performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music studying with Paul Schenly and Daniel Shapiro and received an Artist Diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia studying with Robert McDonald. She is currently on staff at the Curtis School of Music and the Luzerne Music Center, and has previously served as the choir director of two thirty-member children choruses in the El-Sistema inspired program, "Play On Philly". Ms. Cann is the founder of a new program, "Keys to Connect", which strives to strengthen the bond between parent and child through the shared study of piano.

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