Alaska Youth Orchestras presents



May 8, 2021 Atwood Concert Hall 7:00 pm

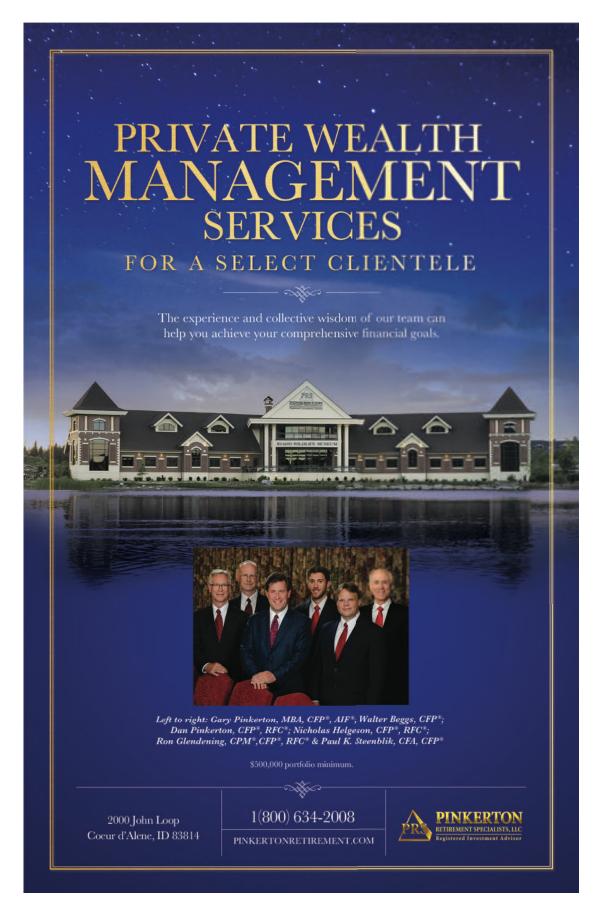
Celebrating Linn Weeda's retirement after 31 years!



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VISION STATEMENT

A community where music education and performance are valued and shared.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Alaska Youth Orchestras 1505 W. 32nd Ave., Anchorage, AK 99503 www.AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org

STAFF

Linn Weeda, Music Director ~ Denise Brown-Chythlook, Executive Director Zach Akins, Rehearsal Coordinator ~ Nina Bingham, Lead Coach Morgan Wilhelm, Admin. Intern Frank Pinkerton, Conductor Emeritus

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Bundy-Cobb, president
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Steven Alvarez ~ Nate Berry ~ Elizabeth Klemm
Chad Frichtl ~ Will Lacy ~ Cari Zawodny
Tracy LeBlanc, volunteer ~ Bob Amos, emeritus

PERFORMING DIRECTORS

Averyl Cobb, cello Shreva Suiith, violin

COACHES

Nina Bingham, 1st violin ~ Elise Gelbart, 2nd violin ~ Nancy Darigo, viola Linda Ottum, cello ~ Matt O'Connor, bass ~ Laura Koenig, flute ~ Colin Roshak, clarinet Emily Weaver, oboe ~ Kyle Noonan, bassoon ~ Chris Neverve, trumpet Bill Klemm, low brass ~ Kade Bissell, percussion

CONCERT PRODUCTION

Sheila Miller, technical director ~ Rick Miller, audio engineer Joshua Maxwell, videographer

SPECIAL THANKS

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in **music**.
I live my daydreams
in **music**.
I see my life in terms
of **music**."

- Albert Einstein

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A NOTE FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR

As I told the board of directors, it is now time for me to say goodbye. After 31 years I am retiring as music director of the Youth Symphony. Nonetheless, my connection to the Youth Symphony will still be strong. But my role will change – instead of leading, I'll be supporting.

These past decades have been an unending stream of joy: countless astounding experiences are now the source of precious memories. I have enjoyed every aspect of leading this group: every moment of music making and every person who has supported our mission. And I have particularly enjoyed working with these remarkable young musicians.

And these young musicians! The energy that I feel from them is only matched by my enthusiasm for their talent and intelligence. They have worked hard: the result you will see and hear tonight. And I note with glee that we are the first resident company to play onstage!

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the Youth Symphony has thrived this past year. This is due in no small part to the work of the staff and board. And it is because I perceive real strength for what we do that I am comfortable relinquishing my role as music director.

Goodbyes are of course sad, but they can be a prelude to the joy of again saying hello. I wish the Youth Symphony, its staff, its board and our audience the very best in its bright future. Expect many "hellos" from me in the future!

Linn Weeda Music Director

Alaska Youth Orchestras





Thank you for generously supporting Alaska Youth Orchestras





A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

I have had the honor of serving AYO in two capacities over the past 35 years: first as a musician in the 80s and then more recently as a Board member. Little did I know when I joined AYO's French Horn section in 1986 that I would be sitting here now writing my final program note as the Chair of the Board. There is much to say as we close out our season, which was arguably the toughest ever. But we made it here today, and I am so proud of what everyone has done.

It is cliché' to say I have so many people to thank and acknowledge, but I do, so here it is—first, the performers and their families. You have been through a lot, dealt with unknowns and ambiguity. You have tolerated rehearsals in your living rooms and bedrooms and shown great patience as the AYO staff and Board navigated their way through. Because of your perseverance, AYO will go on into the future.



I have long been in awe of the dedication of our coaches. Your quiet service to AYO has helped us in so many ways. Like our performers, you dealt with transitions to new technologies with grace and grit; because of your ability to adapt, we will continue to reach wider audiences and engage with a broader diversity of musicians for seasons yet to come.

Denise, my friend, while I am very ready to hand over the reins to our new Board Chair, Josie Wilson, I will miss our collegiate relationship and trusted partnership. I am so proud of the work you do every day to keep AYO moving forward. And to Linn, thank you for allowing me and the Board the space to oversee this wonderful organization. Your shoes are not easy ones to fill, but we have endeavored to find someone that can build on the legacy and honor the great work you have done. Hundreds of performers have sat in your orchestra over the years; only a few made music a career, but the lessons we learned under your conducting stay with us forever.

To the Board members who have risen to the challenge, thank you! I specifically want to acknowledge Rhonda Prowell-Kitter, who has reinvented our financial reports and kept us in check through a tough season. Will Lacy, your devotion to working with the Performing Board, is admirable. This year Averyl Cobb and Shreya Sujith were the two Performing Directors that served and, under their tenure, put AYO on the map for Arts Outreach and Advocacy. And finally, thank you to the Search Committee, including Steven Alverez and Josie Wilson (Denise Brown-Chythlook and Nina Bingham) – you added thoughtfulness and grace to a difficult task. To the rest of the Board, new and returning, I look forward to working with you as I move into the role of Past Chair; I know you will take great care of this organization we all love.

Josie, it is my honor to turn the gavel over to you and serve on your Board for the upcoming season.

With Gratitude:

Jennifer Bundy-Cobb Board Chair. Alumna





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AYO 2020-2021 SPRING CONCERT VIDEO SALES

Make the memory of AYO's 20-21 Spring Concert last forever by purchasing the commemorative video! Produced by JMM Video Productions, the concert video will include every part of our season finale event including the Alaskan and Denali Sinfonietta performances, a SURPRISE Coach's Sinfonietta performance, and a tribute to Linn Weeda's 31 years of incredible service to AYO.

Videos will be provided by way of a digital file which you will access by simply clicking a link that we provide.

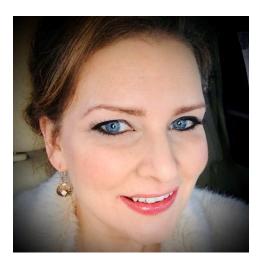
Pre sales will be fulfilled ASAP (approx. 2 weeks after the concert).



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AYO 20-21 SPRING CONCERT VIDEO



A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Welcome to the AYO Season Finale concert! We're actually here! Together! In a building! WITH A STAGE!

This season been more wonderful than we could have dreamed and harder than we could have imagined. Our musicians are the heart of every season. This year they've been that and so much more. Together we've experienced tremendous victories and devastating loss. The amazing humans that you see on stage are exceptional in so many ways. We are bursting with pride!

Change has been our constant companion throughout the past 14 months. Our staff and coaches have learned to flex and shift, allowing AYO to not only survive the pandemic, but to thrive in new and exciting ways. We've been involved in a nationwide arts advocacy campaign, learned how to record and edit videos, supported a statewide virtual music

community, and tonight we are the first PAC Resident Company to perform with a live audience since the COVID-19 shutdown.

Changes continue as we look ahead. Board President Jennifer Bundy-Cobb completes her term with many successes. She has been the leader AYO needed, as well as the mentor and friend that I've needed. Her work to create a seamless transition to incoming president Josie Wilson's term has ensured AYO's stability. I am so grateful for our 3 years together.

Linn Weeda has been at the center of AYO for 31 years. It's hard to imagine this organziation without his energy and care. Working by his side for the past 3^{1/2} years has been my honor and privilege. AYO exists today because of Linn Weeda's continual committment. He hasn't missed a single rehearsal or concert in 31 years. And now his generosity throughout the transition to our new music director, Bruce Wood, has set AYO up for a fantastic future. Linn, we will miss you every day and work to honor your legacy.

Now to the future...AYO's vision is "A community where music education and performance are valued and shared." That vision has taken a hit. We see dwindling numbers in private lessons, school programs, and in the performance community. Our vision statement is a mandate for AYO to overcome these challenges. Throughout the next 5 years, you will see AYO expand; providing music education and performance to younger musicians, supporting private, public, and home school music programs, and growing a passion for the benefits of music education and performance.

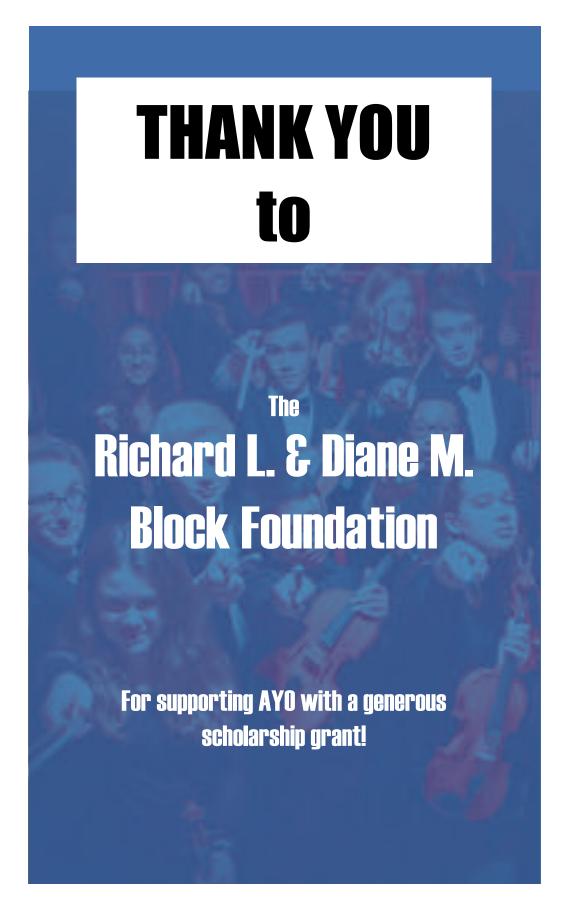
We invite you to be a part of that journey! The dedicated support of our musicians, parents/guardians, donors, funders, and friends has made our 2020-21 season possible. We are so grateful and we can't wait to share AYO's future with you!

Denise Brown-Chythlook
Executive Director

Dense Bour CAPAGE

Alaska Youth Orchestras







LINN WEEDA BIOGRAPHY

By: Mary Weeda, Cindy Epperson, and Dean Epperson



A lifelong Alaskan, Linn Weeda was born in Anchorage on July 8, 1953 - the same day that Mt. Spurr erupted. Just a few days after his birth his family escaped the messy ash by rushing to their Cooper Landing cabin.

Trumpet lessons began for Linn at Central Junior High, where his first band solo was an Italian folk song called "Come Back to Sorrento." At West High he participated in All State Band and Orchestra, Regional Band concerts, and in the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maurice DuBonney.

His undergraduate degree was earned at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1975, studying trumpet with Professor James Kowalsky, conducting with Gordon Wright, and majoring in trumpet performance and music history. Linn attended Boston University for his master's

degree from 1975-1979 where he studied with the Boston Symphony principal trumpet Roger Voisin. He won the concerto competition in the music department, was student of the year, and performed as a soloist with the university orchestra. After receiving his graduate degree, Linn taught private lessons, worked with the Greater Boston Youth Symphony, performed regularly with several area Baroque Music groups, and was heard on National Public Radio performing baroque trumpet with the Smithsonian Chamber Players.

In 1981 Linn met a violinist from Boston University by the name of Mary Dooley, and in August of 1982, Linn and Mary were married in Anchorage. They then traveled to Tupelo, Mississippi where they were hired to teach in public schools. Linn also began conducting a regional orchestra there.

In 1984 Linn and Mary returned to Alaska to teach at the King's Lake Fine Arts Camp. They traveled by car from Mississippi to Alaska accompanied by their first cat, Guido. Both began performing with the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra and Linn was promoted to principal trumpet and assistant conductor. In 1986, upon the retirement of Dewey Ehling, Linn was selected to conduct the Anchorage Youth Symphony and, with the exception of 2 seasons, has been its conductor and music director ever since.



LINN WEEDA BIOGRAPHY

By: Mary Weeda, Cindy Epperson, and Dean Epperson

As a conductor, Weeda has led orchestras in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Germany. He has been the Music Director of the Fairbanks Youth Symphony and was the Staff conductor of the Greater Boston Youth Symphony. Weeda has lead AYO on tours within Alaska and internationally to Australia and, in the summer of 2010, China.

Currently, Weeda is teaching solfege, conducting, ear training, and brass and trumpet methods at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He has appeared with many orchestras and festivals in Alaska as soloist – most recently appearing with the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, performing a movement of a trumpet sonata he wrote himself. Even though Weeda is retiring from AYO, he is continuing to be active in the music community.

Since returning to Anchorage in 1986, this lifelong Alaskan, passionate educator, performer, and conductor, has influenced and enriched the lives of generations of Alaskans who have been the grateful beneficiaries of his commitment to music education and performance.

GIFT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Music Director Emeritus

Title bestowed by AYO Board of Directors

Commemorative Signature Photo

AYO Performing Directors, Averyl Cobb and Shreya Sujith

Coach's Surprise Sinfonietta

AYO Coaches, led by Zach Akins and Nina Bingham

Linn Weeda Scholarship Fund ~ AYO Board of Directors

Ceremonial Baton ~ AYO Board of Directors

"The Maestro" ~ Morgan Wilhelm, artist

Stage Flowers ~ Mary Weeda



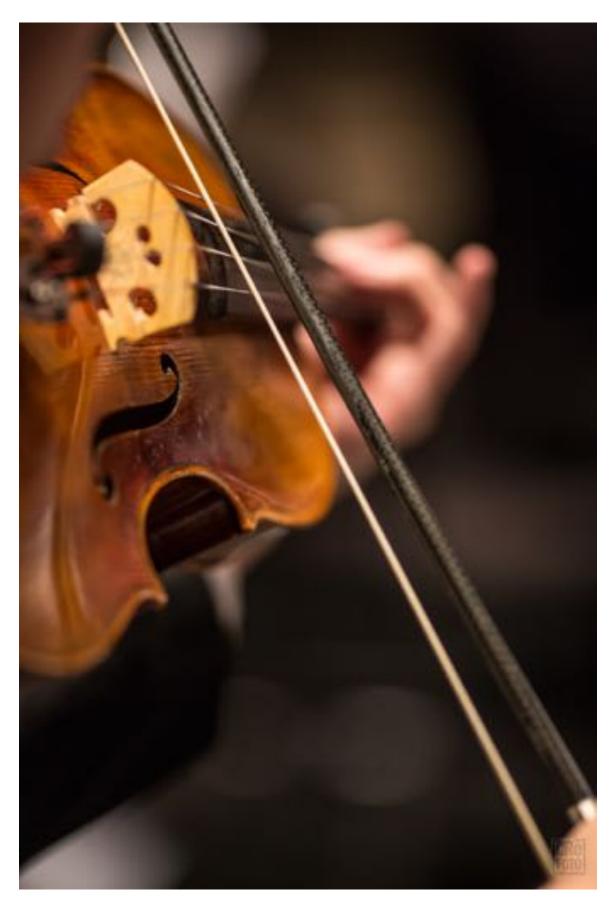
LINN WEEDA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In honor of Linn Weeda's 31 years as AYO Music Director, the Linn Weeda Scholarship Fund exclusively supports tuition scholarships for musicians are experiencing financial hardship, as well as to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion. Each AYS musician's tuition is subsidized by \$1325, leaving just \$675 in payable tuition. The Linn Weeda Scholarship Fund is available, by application, for those musicians requiring extra assistance to pay the annual \$675 tuition.



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AYO 2020-21 SPRING CONCERT VIDEO WITH OUR HEARTFELT THANKS



AYO 2020-2021 SPRING CONCERT



ALASKAN SINFONIETTA

VIOLIN 1

E Chythlook Hannah Kim Carmen Gordon-Rein Maia Brown Irae Jung Elias Soule

VIOLIN 2

Kalen Richardson Rania White Aaron Richard Emily Shem Ingrid Berryhill Nina Bingham **VIOLA**

Richard Tikiun Alana Lim Rowan Brune

CELLO

Calvin Kern Bentley Altman Hannah Goldman

BASS

Anna Lee Hyer Matt O'Connor

FLUTE

Angela Yun Sara Inoue

OBOE

Morgan Wilhelm Emily Weaver

CLARINET

Skye Lee Max Erikson Colin Roshak

BASSOONKyle Noonan

Alice Rossi-Marshal Bill Klemm

TROMBONE

HORN

Brian Adamsky

Lupe Marroquin

TRUMPET

Jake Altman

Jason Edwards

PERCUSSION

Ethan Zawodny Kade Bissell

DENALI SINFONIETTA

VIOLIN 1

Luis Munoz
Alice Imamoto
Matthew Nagel
Rebekah Dunfee
Lillian Bleeker
Rebekah Nelson
Gabriel Clingingsmith

VIOLIN 2

Shreya Sujith
Kestrel Wigglesworth
Penelope Hobbie
Julian Riley
Senneca Slocumbe
Amelia Harris
Nina Bingham

VIOLA

Keola Tabisola Emilie Bieshelt Mia Groves

CELLO

Sara Wong Averyl Cobb Josiah Verbrugge Samuel Spanos

BASS

Casi Leblanc Matt O'Connor **FLUTE**

Alex Westervelt Laura Koenig

OBOE

Mark Boedefeld Emily Weaver

CLARINET

Ali Strand Miya Hattori Amelia Muhlbauer

BASSOON

Josh Saylor Kyle Noonan **HORN**

Brian Adamskl Lupe Marroquin

TRUMPET

lan Cook Jason Edwards

TROMBONE

Bill Klemm

PERCUSSION

Ethan Zawodny Kade Bissell



Anchorage Youth Symphony

May 8, 2021 Atwood Concert Hall Alaska Center for the Performing Arts Linn Weeda, Music Director

Program

The Surprise Coach's Sinfonieta				
Ruslan and Lyudmila				
I. Overture				
The Alaskan Sinfonietta				
English Folk Song Suite				
I. Seventeen Come Sunday				
Marche Joyeuse				
Galop Infernal from <i>Orphée aux enfers</i>				
The Denali Sinfonetta				
Coronation March from Les Prophète				
Barcarolle from Les contes d'Hoffmann				
The Wand of Youth Suite No. 1, Opus 1a				
I. Overture				



The Suprise Coach's Sinfonietta

Ruslan and Lyudmila

I. Overture

Mikhail Glinka Born in 1804 in Novospasskoye, Russia. Died in 1857 in Berlin

Mikhail Glinka was the father of Russian music. Composers like Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov all looked to Glinka as their musical Adam.

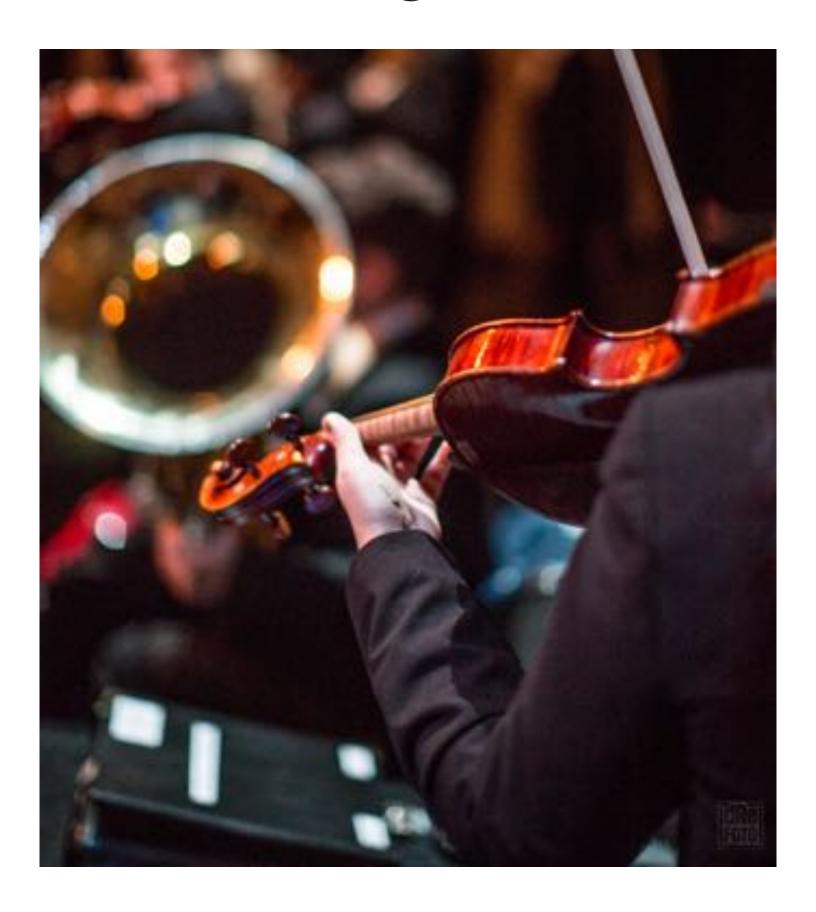
The Overture to Ruslan and Ludmilla is a curtain-raiser, with an energy and a uniquely Russian combination of earthy exuberance and heroic feeling. The overture bursts forth with an assertive motto for brass, winds, and timpani connected by scurrying strings. This boisterous theme yields to a more lyrical passage sung by the cellos before being taken up by the violins.

The coaches selected this piece for their surprise performance becuase passages of it have often appeared in the AYS audition excerpts that every prospective musician is required to play. Conducted by Zach Akins, AYO alum and operations coordinator, the coaches present this piece in celebration of Maestro Linn Weeda's 31 years of devoted and exceptional service.

SUPRISE SINFONIETTA

CONDUCTOR Zach Akins

VIOLIN 1	VIOLA	FLUTE	HORN
	· -	_	
Nina Bingham	Nancy Darigo	Laura Koenig	BrianAdmaski
Katie Wasko-Klink	Koree Guzman		Lupe Marroquin
Dawn Lindsay		OBOE	
	CELLO	Emily Weaver	TRUMPET
VIOLIN 2	Brett Lindsay	CLARINET	Jason Edwards
Elise Mitchell	Bruce Wood	Colin Roshak	
Marie Nielson			TROMBONE
Eunice Kang	BASS	BASSOON	Bill Klemm
	Matthew O'Connor	Kyle Noonan	
	Heidi Herbert-Lovern	,	PERCUSSION
			Kade Bissell



AYO 2020-2021 SPRING CONCERT



PROGRAM NOTES by Linn Weeda

The Alaskan Sinfonietta

English Folk Song Suite

I. Seventeen Come Sunday

Ralph Vaughan-Williams

Born in 1872 in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire. Died in 1958 in London Original version for band composed in 1923. Premiered July 4, 1923, Lt. Hector Adkins conducting in London. Arranged for orchestra in 1924 by Gordon Jacob.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a movement to collect and study folk music. This corresponded with the invention of the phonograph which allowed musicians to directly gather folk songs and dances. Besides studying and classifying this music, this material also influenced their own compositions.

Vaughan-Williams was one of these musicians: he spent the early part of his long career studying English folk music and collecting and categorizing English hymns. In his forties his compositions became more accomplished after he studied in Paris with Maurice Ravel. He composed nine symphonies, orchestral works of great variety, numerous vocal works, chamber music, operas and keyboard music.

His popular English Folk Song Suite was composed for military band after World War I. The composer had been traumatized by his service in the Army during that war, and for some time afterward he did no composing. But by the early 1920's he started to pen new works – including these folksong settings, originally written for military band and soon orchestrated by the composer's student, Gordon Jacob.

Tonight's performance is of the first of three movements and is based on three folksongs. Heard at the beginning is the song is Seventeen Come Sunday whose light-hearted lyrics tell of the happiness of flirting. Soon a second, quieter tune is heard: this is Pretty Caroline. The middle of the composition is based on the Christmas carol Dives and Lazarus, played in the bass instruments and combined with a fast-moving counterpoint above it.



Marche Joyeuse

Emmanuel Chabrier

Born in Ambert, France in 1841. Died in Paris in 1894.

Composed in 1888. Premier November 4, 1888 in Angers, composer conducting.

A composer of relatively small output, the reputation of French composer Emmanuel Chabrier rests on one or two very attractive works - most notably the orchestral work Espana.

Trained as a lawyer, it was on a trip to Germany that he first heard the works of Richard Wagner. Like many musicians of his generation, Wagner's influence was transforming. Upon returning to France Chabrier composed two operas. However, his talent was not creating drama like his hero Wagner but in lighter fare. This conflict between his natural talent and his wishes to be a composer of more serious works may have contributed to his mental breakdown in the last years of his life.

March Joyeuse ("Joyous March") heard tonight is a relatively early work. It is full of typical Chabrier workmanship: brilliant orchestration, engaging melodies and vivacious rhythm.





Galop Infernal from Orphée aux enfers

(Orpheus in the Underworld)

Jacques Offenbach Born June 20, 1819 in Cologne, Germany. Died October 5, 1880 in Paris. Premier, October 21, 1858.

Jacques Offenbach was perhaps the most influential and important composer of comic opera in the middle part of the 1800's. His influence extended to composers of all nationalities who wrote lighter music theater pieces, including Strauss, Gilbert and Sullivan, and von Suppé. The first and arguably most popular of his major operas, Orpheus in the Underworld is typical of his satiric approach. Its subject had been set as a tragedy before. But Offenbach composed a spoof of this timeless story. Critics were outraged, while the audiences loved it. In short order it became an international hit.

The tragedy is from Greek mythology and tells the story of Orpheus, a renowned musician who is so upset from the death of his beloved wife Eurydice that he attempts to rescue her from the Underworld by performing for Hades, ruler of the Underworld. Offenbach turns the plot around: Orpheus and Eurydice are husband and wife but live separately and lovelessly. When Eurydice dies Orpheus reluctantly travels to Hades but fails to charm the ruler to let his wife go – much to the delight of both husband and wife.

Quite possibly the most famous tune from this opera is the "Galop Infernal" at the end of Act Two. Fifteen years after the composer's death, dancers in music halls performed the once risqué can-can to this tune. Now our association is not with the high-spirited mayhem that occurs in the opera to this music, but to high kicking dancers. The composer Saint-Saëns later used the Can-can in his Carnival of the Animals. It became a satire of a satire: the piece is slowed down to depict a tortoise!





The Denali Sinfonietta

Coronation March from Les Prophète

Giacomo Meyerbeer

Born Tasdorf, Germany on September 5, 1791. Died in Paris on May 2, 1864. Composed in 1841 in Paris. First performance April 16, 1849 in Paris, conducted by Narcisse Girard.

Les Prophète (the Prophet) is the influential five-act grand opera by the then reigning opera composer, Giacomo Meyerbeer. The complex and dark plot is based on the religious wars of the 1500's, focusing specifically on the Dutch religious leader John of Leiden. In the fourth act he is persuaded to declare himself king, and the Coronation March accompanies his coronation. Fitting this tragic opera, the festive coronation is prelude to disaster and tragedy.

The march is made of two principal themes: the march itself at the beginning that is contrasted with a flowing melody taken from and aria later in the act.





Barcarolle from Les contes d'Hoffmann

(The Tales of Hoffmann)

Jacques Offenbach Born June 20, 1819 in Cologne, Germany. Died October 5, 1880 in Paris. Premier, February 19, 1881 at the Opéra-Comique in Paris; Jules Danbé conducting.

Jacques Offenbach was perhaps the most influential and important composer of comic opera in the middle part of the 1800's. As often happens, he found that his career was wanning. He hoped that The Tales of Hoffmann would revive his career and elevate his reputation past the light and frothy works for which he was known. In fact, this opera did become his most famous work, but sadly he did not live to hear it's premier.

E.T.A. Hoffmann was one of the giants of nineteenth century German literature: his most famous stories influenced artists across the genres. We know him through stories that composers later used to create iconic works: the ballets The Nutcracker (Tchaikovsky) and Copéllia (Delibes), as well as piano works by Schuman and others.

Offenbach based this opera on three of Hoffmann's stories, with the author as the main character.

The Barcarolle opens the third act opens in Venice:
Hoffmann sees his muse and the woman with
whom he is in love in a gondola, singing a duet
about love and the night. A barcarolle is an old
music form that imitates the stroke of the gondola's
oar on calm water. Offenbach uses this famous
tune several times in this act and opens the last
scene with an instrumental version which is heard tonight.





The Wand of Youth Suite No. 1, Opus 1a

Overture

Edward Elgar

Born in Worcester, England in 1857. Died in Worcester, 1934. Composed in Autumn 1907. Premiered in 1907, Sir Henry Wood, conducting.

Edward Elgar was the quintessential British composer of the Victorian era. However, his music transcends its surface nationalism. He touches deeper, universal themes in most genres, especially in his well-loved and often performed Enigma Variations, the elegiac Cello Concerto, his magnificent chamber music, and the ubiquitous Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1.

The Wand of Youth was originally written for the stage. The origins this suite occurred when the composer was still in his teens. He had written a play set in a world occupied by butterflies, giants, faeries, and moths, and where ill-tempered adults were banished. If adults were to repent the error of their ways they might be readmitted! In addition, Elgar also composed incidental music for the play, which he extensively reworked in 1907.

As Terry Grimley writes as a tribute to the composer's 150th birthday this year: "What seems to lie (close) to the heart of (his music) is a nostalgia for the beauty and sheer endless possibilities of the world as they are first experienced by a child." No other work seems to capture this essence than the seven charming movements of this music.

The overture to this suite is a reworking of the original material, retaining its youthful energy while investing it with his mature and sophisticated compositional technique.





THANK YOU

To the generous donors who helped make our season possible!

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INTRODUCING MAESTRO BRUCE WOOD



Following an intensive search process which included 26 applicants from the U.S. and two foreign countries, 11 of whom hold doctoral degrees; Alaska Youth Orchestras (AYO) Board of Directors have approved the Search Committee's recommendation to hire Maestro Bruce Wood, as AYO's Music Director, effective July 1, 2021.

Wood holds a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was the founding Music Director of the Youth Orchestras of Lubbock, serving the organization for 12 years. He studied both cello and voice in his baccalaureate program. Wood studied conducting with Catherine Comet, Robert Fountain and David Becker of the University of Wisconsin, studied

cello with Peter Howard of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and studied voice with Hugh Givens and Karl Dent. His principal mentor in the field of music education was Gerald Olson at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Throughout his career, Wood has conducted numerous professional and semi-professional ensembles. Since moving to Alaska in 2014, Wood has conducted the Community Messiah performances and led conducting workshops, while serving as the Anchorage School District Director of Fine Arts, a position that he will retire from on June 30, 2021. In addition to his musical experience, Wood has taught numerous workshops, has written a wide variety of published research and scholarly articles, and has been a featured presenter at several nationwide conferences on music education and performance.

"I am thrilled to be joining the AYO family," Wood said. "Youth orchestras have had a great influence on me, starting as a 11-year-old cellist, maturing through middle and high school ensembles, and then as an adult; sometimes playing, more often conducting. Becoming AYO's Music Director is the continuation of a passion that I've had nearly my entire life. The opportunity to grow and expand AYO with the support of the Board and alongside Executive Director Denise Brown-Chythlook is very exciting to me."







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SENIOR PROFILES AVERYL COBB

Averyl W. Cobb has played the cello in the Youth Symphony since freshman year. Averyl has been a member of the AYO Performing Director Board for two years and has played in both All-State Orchestra and State solo and ensemble. She is going to graduate from AJ Dimond High School and will be attending the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, & Arts Honors Program to study political science and minor in romance languages and literature. She'll miss seeing all of her musical friends every Monday afternoon at rehearsals. Averyl would like to thank Linda Ottum for being an amazing cello teacher and pushing her musically for the past eight years.



SHREYA SUJITH



Shreya A. Sujith has played violin in the Anchorage Youth Symphony for the past 4 years and has served as a Performing Director for the past 2, with a focus on Arts Advocacy and the interconnection of the performing arts, economics, and politics. Graduating from Service High School, Shreya will be attending the Rochester Institute of Technology this fall to study Biotechnology and Molecular Biosciences, and plans to research oncology and/or immunology. Shreya is also a Performing Arts scholar at RIT and will be an important part of the Rochester music scene.

Shreya thanks her parents for support her and spending so much time helping her strive for success. She extends a special thanks for Mr. Weeda, Ms. Nina Bingham, Denise, and

Mr. Lacy for their guidance and support stating that AYO has given her the opportunity to improve her leadership skills, and has greatly boosted her confidence.

"I love how we have the opportunity to perform world famous pieces under an amazing conductor, Mr. Weeda," says Shreya. "I have enjoyed working with other like-minded musicians to produce beautiful music. I'd also like to thank Ms. Dawn Lindsay, my private teacher. She has always pushed me to be better and has worked patiently with me through the highs and lows of my musical journey."

CARMEN GORDON-REIN

Carmen Gordon-Rein first loved the violin as it rang out like another voice—like three voices—on stage at a Barefoot Bluegrass concert in roughly 2010. What followed was a somewhat halting journey to musicianship. To date, Carmen has competed in six Solo & Ensemble festivals, was a three-time alumnus of the Alaska All-State Orchestra, and played with the West Orchestra as well as the Alaska Youth Orchestras throughout high school. Mary Schallert, Katie Eakes, Gabrielle Whitfield, and Nina Bingham taught Carmen's fingers how to shape the notes that resonate today. Carmen thinks that music is a method of communication as invaluable as speech, a language of gesture and emotion that lives in the turning of guts and the



humming of wooden boxes and the special hush of an enraptured crowd. It would be a tragedy to lose hold of, so Carmen hopes to continue to play in college and beyond.

LILLIAN BLEEKER



Lillian Bleeker's musical talents extend beyond the violin; including voice, piano, mandolin, guitar, and dulcimer. She also enjoys writing, running, hiking, and art. She is graduating from IDEA and plans to continue her education by majoring in both Vocal Performance and Communications at The Master's University in Santa Clarita California. Lillian has played in AYS for 3 years and says that her favorite thing about AYS is the community and support, which has kept her practicing and loving her instrument even through the pandemic. She extends a loving thank you to her family and friends for their support of her musical dreams, her teachers through the years, Nina Bingham, Carol Dunfee,

Sharon Theroux, Lori Walsh, and Lawana Gates. And an enormous thank you to AYS and Mr. Weeda for pushing her to keep playing and fostering her love for music.

ALICE IMAMOTO

Alice Imamoto has played the violin with AYO for all 4 of her high school years, serving as principal and concertmaster throughout several semesters. This year she was awarded the concerto winner for the Anchorage Civic Orchestra. She's graduating from South Anchorage High School after having participated in All State Orchestra every year since 2018. Throughout the summers Alice has participated in multiple music programs and has even completed a

multiple music programs and has even completed a Certificate of Music Theory from Berklee College of Music.

Alice plans to attend the University of San Francisco on a pre-med track in pursuit of becoming an OB/GYN.

She will also continue to pursue her love of the

outdoors and make sure she has time for kayaking and stargazing.

"I want to thank my mom for always bing there for me and pushing me to be my best," says Alice. "I also want to thank Emilie because I love her."



SARA INOUE



Sara Inoue has played flute and piccolo in AYO since her freshman year and says that she loves Mr. Weeda and his repertoire choices. Her favorite, she says, was Carmen, which was performed by the youth symphony last season.

Sara will graduate from Dimond High School and has participated in Solo & Ensemble and All State throughout her high school years. She is still undecided on where she will attend college, trying to decide between Smiths College, University of Virginia, and Colby College. Sara thanks her parents, sister, and brother for supporting her and loving her.



SARA WONG

Sara Wong has played the cello in AYO since 2018, serving as principal cellist of the youth symphony for the last 2 years. She will be graduating from Polaris K-12 after having participated in Solo & Ensemble and All State throughout her high school years. In addition to educational music pursuits, Sara has performed as a member of Ensemble Summa, an AYO sponsored professional string quartet, for the past 2 years. When not playing the cello, Sara writes, draws, hikes, or backpacks.

Sara plans to pursue a degree in journalism after taking a gap year to follow her dream of hiking the 800-mile Arizona Trail.

"When I was in JYS, I always looked at AYO as the most magnificent, amazing orchestra ever. I went to all the concerts and dreamt of finally playing in it," says Sara.



"Luis, Keola, Casi, and E; you are my cherished Chamber group buddies. Thank you to Denise for being the powerhouse behind Ensemble Summa, taking the reins of AYO and absolutely crushing it as Executive Director. Thank you also to Mr. Weeda for being enthusiastic conductor I've ever had."

EMILY SHEM



Emily Shem has been a member of the AYO violin section for 4 years. She's graduating from West Anchorage High School where she participated in All State Orchestra, All State Choir (first chair), and All Northwest Choir. Emily is also a member of the Alaska Chamber Singers. In addition to musical activities, Emily has been heavily involved in debate. She will be attending Lewis & Clark College to pursue a degree in both Political Science and German. Emily says she has most enjoyed the community that AYO fosters among musicians, creating lifelong friendships. She would like to thank her family and Nina Bingham.



ALEX WESTERVELT

Alex Westervelt is one of AYO's leading flute and piccolo players. In addition to music, he also enjoys skiing, running, biking, and other outdoor activities.

Graduating from West Anchorage High School, Alex will be attending the University of Puget Sound to pursue an undergraduate degree in flute performance with a minor in Spanish. He plans to continue to graduate school to pursue his doctorate and will eventually become a teacher and performer.

"AYO has been one of the greatest ensemble experiences I have been a part of," says Alex.

"AYO offers a chance to learn and grow as a group over months of practice with all kinds of music, from baroque to modern."

Alex would like to thank his music mentors; Ms. Rebecca See, Mr. Arms, Mr. Edwards, Mrs. Haag, Mrs. Stratman, Dr Koenig, Mrs. Kauffman, and Mr. Weeda.



CALVIN KERN



Calvin Kern is the principal cellist of one of the AYO 2020-2021 Sinfoniettas. Throughout his high school music career, Calvin has been awarded First Chair in All State Orchestra for the past 2 years. He's been with AYO just 1 year but says, "I've really liked playing music with all the people and having fun."

Calvin is graduating from South Anchorage High School and plans to pursue a careeer in medicine. He enjoys cross-country running and skiing, in addition to playing his cello.

Calvin thanks Linda Ottum, Mary Alice Donaldson, Nathan Levine and all the other teachers he's had throughout the years.



KALEN RICHARDSON

Kalen Richardson has served as AYO's principal 2nd violin for several years where he has proven his strong leadership skills and character. His violin skills are widely based, including performing as the lead Irish fiddler in a band. In addition he has participated in State Solo & Ensemble, as well as qualifying for All State ('17-'20), and he is a skilled composer/arranger.

Kalen will be studying mechanical engineering at Columbia University in the fall while he continues to make music and pursue his hobbies of hiking, building things, unicycling, and spending time with his friends and family. "I love the statewide, musical community that AYO has helped me build," says Kalen. "Playing music with friends and talented musicians was so much fun and incredibly rewarding! I thank my parents for making me stick with the violin; Nina Bingham, my wonderful teacher; and my best



friends, Gabriel Gullett and Esther Shore for convincing me to join AYS!"

SENNECA SLOCOMBE



Senneca Slocombe is graduating from Highland High School in Gilbert, Arizona. Benefitting from AYO's online participation options, Senneca was able to complete her senior year in spite of moving. Performing in the 2nd violin section, she says that her favorite thing about AYO is being able to play challenging music with friends from all over.

Throughout her high school music experience, Senneca has participated in All State Orchestra, Solo & Ensemble, and the Arizona Regional Orchestra. In addition to playing the violin, she likes to read and take naps.

"I'd like to thank my singularly exceptional parents who've driven me to rehearsals and concerts for years," says Senneca. "Dawn Lindsay, thank you for sticking with me through a move and a pandemic and always believing in my potential. Thank you also to Kathi Strawn for introducing me to fiddle music and to Director Linn Weeda for pushing me to reach higher and showing me that there's no limit to what I can accomplish in music and in life."

RICHARD TIKIUN

Richard Tikiun has played the viola in AYO for the past 3 years. Graduating from Chugiak High School, Richard has participated in numerous school music opportunities including Solo & Ensemble, All State Orchestra, and qualifying for All Northwest Orchestra this year.

In addition, Richard is the 2020-2021 Anchorage Youth Symphony Concerto Competition winner, performing his winning piece during AYO's Winter Virtual Concert. In addition to playing viola, he enjoys playing piano and composing music. Richard has been accepted into Central Michigan University, and is planning to study with Dr. Alicia Valoti, majoring in viola performance.



JULIAN RILEY



Julian Riley plays the violin with AYO and is graduating from West High School. He enjoys playing music in AYO and meeting other musicians.

In the fall, Julian plans to attend college at Rice University.

MIA GROVES

Mia Groves has been an AYO violist for just one year, but has a long history of youth symphony performing as a member of the Homer Youth Symphony Orchestra. Graduating from Eagle River High School, Mia enjoys art, reading, and writing, in addition to playing music.

Mia will be crossing the border to study psychology at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan.

"I'd like to thank all my music teachers over the years," says Mia. "They pushed me to keep practicing when I didn't want to. And I want to thank my family who had to endure listening to me play before it started to sound good!"







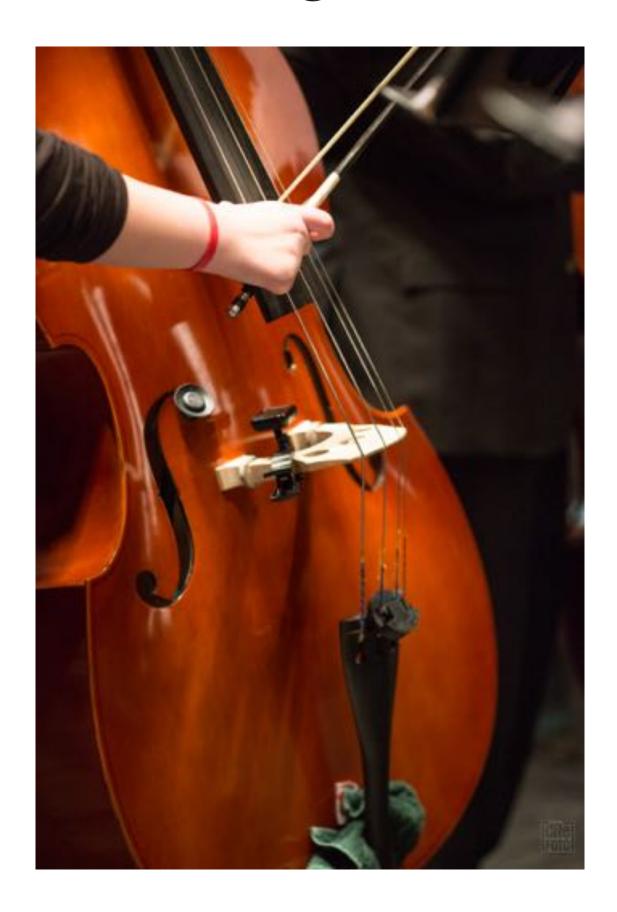
THE HISTORY OF ALASKA YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

The Anchorage Youth Symphony was formed in 1964 by Frank Pinkerton and has continued under the leadership of prominent local musicians and educators including Dewey Ehling, Kurt Pasch, Jeanne (Ray) Bruhn, Charles Gorsuch, Marlow Thomas, and, most recently, Linn Weeda.

In 1981 the Anchorage Youth Symphony Association began operating separately from the Anchorage School District and was granted 501(c)(3) non-profit status. Shortly thereafter the organization took adopted the name, Alaska Youth Orchestras. Since then the organization has remained an active member of the Anchorage arts community and has been a resident company of the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts since 2011.

Linn Weeda has served as Music Director for 31 years, expanding the program to include coaching by local professional musicians, many who were in the youth symphony as young players. Additional expansion has included recording projects, chamber music programs, touring, and scholarships.





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