



Interlochen

ARTS CAMP

Interlochen, Michigan
14th Program of the 99th Season

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WORLD YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Cristian Măcelaru, conductor

Sunday, July 5, 2026
7:30pm, Kresge Auditorium

WORLD YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Cristian Măcelaru, conductor

PROGRAM

Continental Express Sam Wu
(b. 1995)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43 Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)
Allegretto
Tempo andante, ma rubato
Vivacissimo
Finale: Allegro moderato

*The audience is requested to remain seated
during the playing of the Interlochen Theme.*

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PROGRAM NOTES

by Tarren Sexton

Continental Express

Sam Wu

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, strings

Duration: 10 minutes

This piece by award-winning composer Sam Wu was co-commissioned by the New York Youth Symphony and Interlochen Center for the Arts as part of the Jon Deak First Music Program. This program awards commissions to young composers under the age of 30 across genres and instrumentation—including jazz, orchestral, and chamber music—and seeks to champion new works. “Continental Express” is based on a high-speed rail journey across the United States, with stops in the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and the Mojave Desert. This piece was premiered by the New York Youth Symphony in March and will receive its Interlochen premiere at this concert.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

Jean Sibelius

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, strings

Duration: 45 minutes

Sibelius began composing his second symphony while in Rapallo, Italy during the winter of 1901, shortly after the overwhelmingly successful European tour that premiered one of his most popular pieces, *Finlandia*. Far from the cold, bleak winters of his native Finland, Sibelius found inspiration in the libertine tale of Don Juan, which forms the basis for the theme introduced by the bassoon in the beginning of the second movement. While in Italy, he was moved by the religious iconography of Florence and penned another theme for the second movement, the sketch of which was labeled "Christus" by the composer.

These themes of life, death, and resurrection may have held a special place for Sibelius, as his eldest daughter Kirsti died in February 1900 and political tensions continued in Finland due to the Russification policies enacted by Nicholas II and the Russian Empire at the turn of the 20th century. While not as overtly nationalistic as *Finlandia*, his Symphony No. 2 still inspired Finns to maintain their identity despite the oppression of the Russians: Robert Kajanus, conductor of the Helsinki Orchestral Association (now the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra), labeled the symphony a symbol of Finnish pride after its premiere by the orchestra in March 1902.

The symphony opens with a relaxed, pastoral figure in triple meter in the strings before the addition of the woodwinds and horns. This easygoing theme evolves into a much more turbulent and dramatic section, propelled forward by the strings and the syncopation found in the winds, until the violins emerge with the theme highlighted earlier by the clarinet. The mood shifts often over the course of the movement, with melodies coming and going, transitioning seamlessly from bursts of energy to the laid-back rhythmic repetition in the strings that quietly ends the movement.

The second movement begins with pizzicato by the double bass and cello, creating a foreboding walking bass that highlights the thoughts about death Sibelius may have considered when sketching this movement. The bassoons enter with a somber, morose theme before the rest of the winds and horns come in and the tempo gradually picks up. The following section demonstrates the influence of Romanticism on the music of Sibelius: intense lines in the brass are punctuated by timpani rolls, with support from the low strings bringing a sense of drama and tension to the piece. This movement is defined by its ever-changing

character, going from ethereal and melancholic to devastatingly mournful over the course of only a few measures.

The vivacious scherzo of the third movement features rapid string melodies with interjections from the brass and winds; a simple, pastoral passage led by the woodwinds; and a return to the initial thematic material. The rest of the movement continues switching between these moods, juxtaposing the frantic passages of the strings with serene melodies before progressing into the finale with the horns and other brass dominating the texture.

This brass-heavy transition creates a sense of finality, and when combined with the inclusion of themes from earlier movements, highlights the journey that has taken place over the course of the symphony. Sibelius creates a triumphant end to the symphony through memorable melodies for each section of the orchestra—particularly the lush string lines—and often repeats the rising three-note motif found throughout the symphony, allowing the audience to gain a final sense of satisfying closure for the composer’s second symphony.

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Cristian Măcelaru is a GRAMMY® Award-winning conductor widely admired for a rare fusion of interpretive rigor, emotional intelligence, and generosity of spirit. He is Music Director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre National de France; Artistic Director of the George Enescu Festival and Competition; Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Interlochen Center for the Arts’ World Youth Symphony Orchestra; and Music Director and Conductor of the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. He also serves as Distinguished Visiting Artist at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music and as Artistic Partner of the WDR Sinfonieorchester in Cologne, where he previously served as Chief Conductor.

Highly sought after as a guest conductor, Măcelaru has appeared with many of the world’s leading orchestras, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, Dresden Staatskapelle, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Wiener Symphoniker, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. His operatic work includes acclaimed productions at major houses such as Houston Grand Opera and Opera Națională București.

A passionate advocate for contemporary music, he has commissioned and premiered works by more than 50 composers, including Wynton Marsalis, Tan

Dun, Gabriela Lena Frank, Jennifer Higdon, Jake Heggie, Nico Muhly, Sean Shepherd, and Gabriella Smith.

Măcelaru received a GRAMMY® Award for his Decca Classics recording of Marsalis's Violin Concerto with Nicola Benedetti and The Philadelphia Orchestra, and has earned numerous international honors for his vast discography on labels including Deutsche Grammophon, Warner Classics, Naïve Records, and Linn Records.

Măcelaru embodies an artistic mission prizing education, accessibility, and audience connection. His work with young musicians spans conducting master classes, composer workshops, and mentorship programs across Europe and North America. Through his leadership at major festivals and institutions, he has also advanced initiatives supporting diversity, equity, and well-being.

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SECTION FACULTY

Violin I—Martin Chalifour
Violin II—Javier Pinell
Viola—Luis Casal
Cello—Natalie Helm
Double Bass—Kurt Muroki
Harp—Joan Raeburn Holland
Flute—Sharon Sparrow
Oboe—Linda Strommen
Clarinet—Scott Andrews
Bassoon—Carin Miller
Horn—Bruce Henniss
Trumpet—John Aley
Trombone/Tuba—Marco Gomez
Percussion—Nick Sakakeeny

WYSO Roster Denotes

+ Denotes Concertmaster

^ Denotes Principal/Co-Principal Chair

*Denotes Interlochen Orchestral Scholar. This merit-based scholarship recognizes exceptional high-school musicians in the Orchestra program.

~Denotes Paine Orchestral Scholar. This merit-based endowed scholarship recognizes exceptional high-school musicians in the Orchestra program.

The musicians are listed alphabetically after principals.

WORLD YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Nathaniel Quiroz, manager; Julia Hoffman, librarian; Siggy Ehrlich, asst. librarian

VIOLIN I

Paris Prior, Okla.+
Allegra Dorman, Pa.*
Ethan Fu, Ga.*
Nikhil Ginde, N.J.
Elijah Jean-Bruce, N.Y.
Anna Kim, Texas*
Alisa Kourova, Calif.*
Luke Lee, Wash.
William Lee, N.Y.
Zimo Li, Tenn.
David McGrew, Texas
Elli Nicholas, Calif.
Anthony Reyes, N.Y.
Hunter Schantz, Ohio
Arthur Sparks, Calif.
Logan Tec, Wash.
Lora Wu, N.Y.

VIOLIN II

Thomas Zhong, N.Y.*^
Gryson Bae, N.Y.
Beckett Bayan, Calif.
Aaron Cannizzaro, Italy
Hristo Dejkoski, Macedonia
Kate Dombrowski, Colo.
Melody Dong, N.Y.
Kazi Ewell, N.Y.
Alex Figueroa, Puerto Rico
Sofia Fong, Canada
Sho Huebner, Pa.
Chegene Im, Texas*
Paxton Kendall, Pa.
Arlan Khakimianov, Calif.
Daniel Park, Calif.
Irene Park, Ga.
Kevin Wang, Calif.

VIOLA

Lake Weeks, Ohio*^
Charlize Bui, Texas*
Norbu Chionis, N.M.*
Amon Givler, Pa.
Aiden Lee, Calif.
Carla Lichtenthaler,
Germany
Hailey Maddox, Kan.

VIOLA cont.

Alexander Makarov, N.Y.
Abigail Porco, W.Va.
Sofia Reyes Ayala, Bolivia
Caroline Watters,
Netherlands
Chanelle Zhang, N.Y.

CELLO

Dylan Perez, Okla.*^
Audrey Be, Mass.
Thomas Bruning, Texas
Van Devendorf, Ohio
Zoe Gomberg, Canada
Julia Ma, Ore.
Elise Poling, Texas
Ben Redfearn, Calif.
Noah Scharback, Minn.*
Elie Shin, N.Y.*
Taran Tien, Ohio
Evangeline Tjoeng, Hawaii
Samuel Ungar, Ind.
Helen Wang, Calif.*

DOUBLE BASS

Isaac Aronin, Md.^
Matthew Coleman, Pa.*
Lucia Mariscal, Mo.
Ryder McBride, Texas
John McCabe, N.M.
Adele McCleskey, Mich.
Ari Stokes, Utah*

FLUTE

Nađa Jovanovic, Serbia*^
Nam Le, Ark. ^
Nitsan Cohen-Yashar, Mass.
Samantha Pezacki, Canada
(piccolo)

OBOE

Aleksander Malej,
Poland~^
Adrian McGill, Utah^
Ellie Fittante, Ohio
Camille Stephens, Pa.

CLARINET

Owen Burch, N.C.*^
Angela Wang, N.C.^
Gabriel Gonzalez, Texas
Tom Wang, Wash.~

BASSOON

Paul Brown, Ore.*^
Darren Hack, Calif.~^
Genevieve Blum, Texas
Soren Hillesland, Calif.

HORN

Reid Allen, Ky.^
David Kissinger, Iowa^
Parker Lee, Mass.
Nicolás Moen, Spain

TRUMPET

Alexander Flores, Bolivia^
Nolan Grosse, Ohio
Elliott Herring, Tenn.
Maksymilian Sierański,
Poland*

TROMBONE

Garrett Howell, Tenn.^
Chris Bennett, Minn.
Fletcher Wilson, Tenn.*

TUBA

Ben Posner, N.Y.*

PERCUSSION

Carlos Montenegro, Fla.~^
(timpani)
Louis Krivitsky, N.C.*
Phineas Lee, N.Y.*

HARP

Cara Schneider, Alaska^
Liliana Abraham, Calif.*

PIANO

Frederik Bultje, N.Y.

WORLD YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NAMED GIFTS

Special gifts to Interlochen's endowment support our students, faculty and programs. Interlochen gratefully recognizes the following donors and their named World Youth Symphony Orchestra gifts:

Orchestral Scholar: Lawrence P. Hurst
Orchestral Scholars: William and Martha Paine
Orchestral Scholar: Wiebener Family
Nancy and Phillip Meek WYSO Conductor Endowment
Wu Family WYSO Conductor Endowment
Valade Fellows Teaching Endowment

Principal Chair (Viola): Bettyjo Heckrodt Endowed Viola Chair
Principal Chair (Cello): Martha L. Snyder Endowed Chair
Principal Chair (Clarinet): Drs. Neil and Susan Bressler Endowed Chair
WYSO Chair (Oboe): Rev. Dr. Linda Patrick and Rebecca Phelps

Gifts to perpetuate the cultural treasure that is WYSO are always welcomed. To learn more about WYSO endowment opportunities, please contact the Interlochen Philanthropy Office at 231-276-7623 or visit interlochen.org/give.

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MORE WYSO ON CLASSICAL IPR

This performance of the World Youth Symphony Orchestra is broadcast live on Classical IPR 88.7 FM, Interlochen; 94.7 FM, Traverse City; 88.5 FM, Mackinaw City; and online at classicalipr.org. Tune in right after the concert for analysis and commentary about tonight's performance, plus a look ahead at next week's concert.

REFLECTIONS ON THE INTERLOCHEN THEME

"My own connection with the camp covered a period of over thirty years, and one composition of mine will always be associated with it. During the early days, I was engaged in the composition of my Second (or Romantic) Symphony, which had been commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. One late evening, after the rehearsals of the day had been completed, I wandered back to the rustic shell where all of the concerts in those days were given. It was a beautiful evening with the moonlight filtering through the great pines and lighting both the land and the lake. I sat down at the piano and, in the silence of the deserted amphitheater, began to improvise. I had wanted this symphony to be a symphony of and for youth. I wanted to express in music the nostalgia which is as much a part of youth as of age. As I was improvising, a melody came to me which seemed to express that youthful nostalgia. It became the "slow section" of the first movement of the symphony. That it was, indeed, a theme of youth seemed to be borne out by the fact that the young people of Interlochen, when they first heard it, adopted it as "their theme." Every broadcast and every concert began and ended with this melody, until it became known as the "Interlochen Theme." The title is quite justifiable, for without Interlochen it might never have been written."

—Howard Hanson, *A Romantic Symphony: The Autobiography of Howard Hanson*

INTERLOCHEN ARTS FESTIVAL UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

World Youth Symphony Orchestra: Earl Lee, conductor Sunday, July 12, 2026 - 7:30 p.m., Kresge Auditorium

Experience an evening of vivid storytelling and orchestral brilliance as the World Youth Symphony Orchestra brings legendary landscapes and fairytales to life. Under the baton of Earl Lee, these exceptional young musicians perform Respighi's dazzling Fountains of Rome. The adventure continues with Stravinsky's electrifying Firebird Suite (1919), a masterpiece of magic, danger, and triumph inspired by Russian folklore. The program also features Patrice Rushen's Keepers of the Crown, a vibrant and dynamic contemporary work that adds fresh energy and bold spirit to the evening. Join the World Youth Symphony Orchestra for a powerful performance where timeless classics and modern voices collide in one memorable night.

World Youth Symphony Orchestra: Jader Bignamini, conductor Sunday, July 19, 2026 - 7:30 p.m., Kresge Auditorium

Experience the power of mentorship, mastery, and magnificent music as the World Youth Symphony Orchestra performs side by side with members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the baton of acclaimed conductor Jader Bignamini. The program opens with Michael Abels' Unbound. The evening culminates in Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, one of classical music's most beloved masterpieces, journeying from darkness to triumph through soaring melodies, passionate intensity, and unforgettable grandeur.

For information and tickets, visit interlochen.org/tickets

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Every performance at Interlochen reflects the generosity of people like you who invest in young artists and their potential. Make your gift today to provide essential scholarships and sustain the transformative opportunities that help young artists grow at Interlochen.

interlochen.org/donate



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In consideration of the performing artists and other patrons, the use of flash photography is not permitted. Federal copyright and licensing rules prohibit the use of video cameras and other recording equipment.

In order to provide a safe and healthy environment, Interlochen maintains a smoke-free and alcohol-free campus. Michigan law prohibits any weapons, including concealed weapons, on Interlochen property because we are an educational campus.

Thank you for your cooperation.

www.interlochen.org