



2023-24 Season

The Curtis Institute of Music Announces its 2023-24 Season: *Time to Discover*

Subscription tickets on sale June 8 at [Curtis.edu/Subscribe](https://www.curtis.edu/Subscribe)

View the performance calendar at [Curtis.edu/Calendar](https://www.curtis.edu/Calendar)

Curtis's thrilling season features world-class conductors Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Robert Spano ('85), Nicholas McGegan, Vinay Parameswaran ('13), and newly commissioned works by Steven Mackey, James Ra ('04), and Dmitri Tymoczko

Curtis Opera Theatre presents a bold and eclectic lineup of productions featuring a baroque masterpiece, a captivating double bill, and a twentieth-century classic: The Cunning Little Vixen

Acclaimed contemporary music group Ensemble 20/21's nature-inspired "Music of the Earth" concert returns and pioneering computer/installation artist George Lewis is this year's composer in residence

Renowned Curtis alumni Teddy Abrams (Conducting '08), JIJI (Guitar '15), and Oliver Herbert (Cello '19) return to the Curtis stage, and the life and legacy of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Ned Rorem (Composition '44) is remembered in a celebratory concert

PHILADELPHIA, PA—June 1, 2023—The 2023–24 season begins at the **Curtis Institute of Music** this October, with dynamic and innovative programming that includes orchestra, opera, and chamber music concerts, and recitals, totaling more than 150 performances in Philadelphia through May 2024.

Throughout the 2023–24 season, *Time to Discover*, Curtis students—some of the world's finest young musicians—move from the classroom to the stage, sharing their immense passion for classical music through exhilarating performances alongside internationally renowned guest artists. The new season combines beloved repertoire favorites—such as Richard Strauss's *An Alpine Symphony*, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"), and Leoš Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*—with exhilarating new works—including compositions by Raven Chacon, Angélica Negrón, Gabriella Smith ('13), and Tyshawn Sorey, and world premieres by Steven Mackey, James Ra ('04), and Dmitri Tymoczko—and much more. Subscription tickets are available June 8 at [Curtis.edu/Subscribe](https://www.curtis.edu/Subscribe); single tickets will go on sale in early July.

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This year, 159 exceptionally gifted musicians—ages 12 to 31—come to Curtis, “both a conservatory and a buzzword...known for taking the best music students in the world” (*Washington Post*), to hone their impressive artistic talents. In this intimate and inclusive environment, they are nurtured by a celebrated faculty, supported by a merit-based, tuition-free policy, and inspired by the school’s distinctive “learn by doing” approach.

“The dedication and talents of our students are unparalleled,” says Roberto Díaz, president and CEO, “but it is their exuberance that makes Curtis performances so special. I can’t wait to hear all that our students will accomplish this year, and I look forward to welcoming audiences to the extraordinary array of performances ahead.”

Curtis Institute of Music 2023-24 Season Details

Curtis Symphony Orchestra

Curtis students join together each year to create one of the world’s great orchestras. Led by internationally renowned conductors and featuring sparkling repertoire, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra is an immersive experience with unique resonance. The ensemble presents three concerts this season in the Kimmel Cultural Campus’s Verizon Hall.

- **October 22:** In the opening concert of the Curtis Symphony Orchestra season, GRAMMY Award-winning conductor **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** and **Micah Gleason**, Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow, lead the Curtis Symphony Orchestra and rising stars of the Curtis Opera Theatre in a tribute to Richard Strauss. A celebration of the German Romantic composer’s life and legacy, the program features highlights from some of his most popular operas, and it scales the spectacular heights of his final tone poem, *An Alpine Symphony (Eine Alpensinfonie)*, Op. 64.
- **January 27:** Acclaimed conductor **Michael Stern** (’86) leads the Curtis Symphony Orchestra in an evening of extraordinary emotional contrasts. The program opens with the quiet whisper of one of classical music’s most intimate, impassioned works, Ludwig van Beethoven’s transcendent Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61, featuring internationally renowned violinist **Pamela Frank** (’89). The concert concludes with another classical music masterpiece to be revealed in the coming months.
- **March 9:** The 2023–24 orchestra season concludes with a remarkable program featuring two exhilarating world premieres and a late-Romantic era classic under the baton of renowned conductor **Robert Spano** (’85). The concert opens with a newly commissioned work by **James Ra** (’04), followed by the world premiere of GRAMMY Award-winning Curtis composition faculty member **Steven Mackey**’s Concerto for Electric Guitar, featuring the jaw-dropping virtuosity of guitarist **JJJI** (’15). The program concludes with Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s impassioned, intensely personal Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 (“Pathétique”).

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Curtis Opera Theatre

Through imaginative productions, bold concepts, and engrossing narratives, the artists of the Curtis Opera Theatre prepare to become stars of the world stage. The combination of key elements of artistry—music, acting, singing, and costumes—allows these student-artists to create a lasting connection with audiences.

- **November 10, 12:** Inspired by the poetry of 17th-century English writer John Milton, author of the epic *Paradise Lost*, George Frideric Handel’s magnificent pastoral ode, *L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, launches the Curtis Opera Theatre season at the Philadelphia Film Center with a stunning theatrical oratorio led by conductor Nicholas McGegan and acclaimed director Chas Rader-Shieber. Performed in English with English supertitles.
- **March 15, 17:** The Curtis Opera Theatre’s season continues with an exciting double bill featuring Francis Poulenc’s outrageously funny farce, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, alongside Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht’s darkly satirical “ballet chanté,” *The Seven Deadly Sins*, at the Philadelphia Film Center, directed by Eve Summer under the baton of Michelle Rofrano. Performed in French and German with English supertitles.
- **May 2–5:** The Curtis Opera Theatre’s 2023–24 season concludes with Leoš Janáček’s *The Cunning Little Vixen*, one of the most powerful operatic works of the twentieth century. Led by a plucky heroine, this charming poetic parable celebrates the cyclical nature of life and death as it spins a comical yet bittersweet tale of Vixen Sharp Ears. Led by stage director John Giampietro and conductor Vinay Parameswaran (’13), this adaptation of the beloved Czech novella features a lushly orchestrated, folk-infused score bursting with boundless energy and an imaginative array of dazzling colors. Performed in Czech with English supertitles.

Ensemble 20/21

Ensemble 20/21’s repertoire features works from the 20th and 21st centuries. With a rich legacy of bold collaborations and striking productions, Ensemble 20/21 embraces the cutting edge of contemporary classical music through the highest level of artistry. In the 2023–24 season, Ensemble 20/21 presents three concerts in Curtis’s Gould Rehearsal Hall.

- **November 18:** The first concert of the Ensemble 20/21 season, “Music of the Earth,” highlights compositions inspired by the beauty and wonder of the natural world. The program features “eco-composer” **John Luther Adams**’s captivating solo violin ode to Alaska, *Three High Places*, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Raven Chacon**’s haunting string quartet piece, *The Journey of the Horizontal People*, and composer **Allison Loggins-Hull**’s exploration of “home,” the poignant *Homeland*. The second half of the program features Curtis alumna **Gabriella Smith**’s (’13) imaginative, coral reef-inspired work, *Anthozoa*, Icelandic composer and guitarist **Gulli Bjornsson**’s striking pieces for solo electric guitar, *Landslög*, and pioneering electronic music composer **Luciano Berio**’s 1964 anthology of eleven songs from eight countries, *Folk Songs*, for voice and chamber ensemble.

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- **March 30:** Ensemble 20/21's "Intersection" explores the intersection of genres with an evening of unexpected sound collages. The program features **Anna Meredith**'s astonishing 1980s electronica meets '90s clubland composition *Tuggemo*, the first movement of **Edgar Meyer**'s virtuosic Concert Duo for Violin and Bass, **Courtney Bryan**'s gospel and jazz-flavored fusion of the sacred and secular, *Soli Deo Gloria* for two guitars, and the world premiere of **Dmitri Tymoczko**'s *Nerds*, for chamber ensemble. The evening concludes with **Angélica Negrón**'s *dóabin*, inspired by the invented language of a pair of twins; acclaimed composer **Tyshawn Sorey**'s shimmering, lyrical work, *For Fred Lerdahl*; and avant-garde icon **György Ligeti**'s minimalist composition, *Six Bagatelles*, for woodwind quintet.
- **April 13:** Ensemble 20/21 celebrates this year's composer in residence with a "Portrait of **George Lewis**," featuring works by the award-winning composer, musicologist, author, computer-installation artist, and trombonist. Since the early 1970s, Mr. Lewis has expanded the frontiers of experimental music with wildly inventive works that bridge traditions of acoustic and electric, American and European, rhythmic and free form. This final concert of the season honors the MacArthur Fellow and pioneering legend who continues to sit at the vanguard of contemporary musical expression.

Curtis Presents

Past and future meet through Curtis Presents, which features a diverse collection of artists—alumni, faculty, students, and contemporary creators—whose musical foundations are rooted in the Curtis community. This series of intimate and innovative recitals offers a unique experience with exceptional artistry and one-of-a-kind programs.

- **January 30:** The 2023–24 Curtis Presents season kicks off with the return of acclaimed alumnus **Nathan Farrington** ('06), principal bassist for LA Opera Orchestra, as he takes listeners on an adventurous musical safari through "**Nate's World**." He is joined by composer, pianist, and clarinetist **Teddy Abrams** (Conducting '08), music director of the Louisville Orchestra and the Britt Festival, and **Gabriel Kovach** ('99), principal horn of the Phoenix Symphony, for an evening of unexpected surprises. This genre-hopping concert features a diverse landscape of styles, with a program written, arranged, and performed according to the trio's current musical passions, from classical to country and everything in between.
- **February 27:** Curtis on Tour presents an evening with acclaimed violinist and Curtis faculty member **Benjamin Beilman** ('12), former Dover Quartet violist **Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt** ('10, '11, '14), award-winning cellist **Oliver Herbert** ('19), and emerging professional artists from Curtis for the memorable evening of chamber music. This phenomenal group presents Richard Strauss's richly scored Sextet from his luminous final opera *Capriccio*, Alban Berg's colorful and chromatic transcription of his Piano Sonata in B minor, Johannes Brahms's ethereal String Sextet No. 2 in G major, and a newly commissioned work composed by Curtis alumna Alyssa Weinberg ('16).

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- **April 23:** The third concert of the Curtis Presents season builds upon the school's longstanding tradition of innovation, inspiration, and artistic excellence as it celebrates eight of its iconic composition alumni: **George Walker** ('45), **Jennifer Higdon** ('88), **Leonard Bernstein** (Conducting '41), **David Serkin Ludwig** ('01), **Samuel Barber** ('34), **Ned Rorem** ('44), **Julius Eastman** ('63), and recently appointed composition faculty member, **Jonathan Bailey Holland** ('96), in an evening of boundary-pushing chamber works and early-career-classics that shaped the landscape of contemporary classical music.
- The Curtis Institute of Music honors the life, legacy, and genius of alumnus, longtime faculty member, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and prolific writer **Ned Rorem** ('44) with a concert at Field Concert Hall. Distinguished faculty members, rising stars of the Curtis Opera Theatre, and some of the school's gifted musicians pay tribute to one of the greatest American composers of the twentieth century and a cultural luminary who inspired generations of young artists and composers. This concert will be presented in the spring of 2024.

Curtis Recital Series

Curtis's promise of "learn by doing" is on full display in the Curtis Recital Series. From young student artists experiencing their first professional performance to faculty who've played on stages across the globe, this series showcases all that Curtis has to offer as musicians and educators. Recitals are free, but advance registration is required.

- **Student Recitals:** Over 100 free recitals are on offer throughout the school year on most Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings starting in mid-October.
- **Graduation Recitals:** During the spring semester, Curtis students on the cusp of their professional careers display their skill and passion in a culminating recital.
- **Faculty and Studio Recitals:** Curtis's world-renowned faculty are active musicians with years of professional performance experience on international stages. These acclaimed musicians and educators display the depth of their knowledge and abilities during recitals at Curtis.

Curtis on Tour

The 2023–24 season will also feature national and international performances from Curtis on Tour, the Nina von Maltzahn global touring initiative of the Curtis Institute of Music. Grounded in Curtis's "learn by doing" philosophy and steeped in the school's history of artistic excellence, these performances feature extraordinary emerging professional artists alongside celebrated faculty and alumni.

Visit [Curtis.edu/Calendar](https://www.curtis.edu/Calendar) throughout the 2023–24 season to view all upcoming performances and events.

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Ticketing Information

Subscriptions for the 2023–24 season go on sale June 8. The flexible Choose Your Own subscription option offers 25% off ticket prices when purchasing tickets to two or more performances. For the 2023–24 season, Curtis is also offering a Season Pass, with access to all events in 2023–24 for one low rate of \$179. Each Season Pass is valid for one best-available ticket to each paid season performance. To order a subscription, visit [Curtis.edu/Subscribe](https://www.curtis.edu/Subscribe), call (215) 893-7902, or email tickets@curtis.edu.

Single tickets for the 2023–24 season start at \$19 and will be available in early July.

Philanthropic Support for Curtis's 2023-24 Season

Guest conductor appearances for each Curtis Symphony Orchestra performance are made possible by the Rita E. and Gustave M. Hauser Chair in Conducting Studies. Orchestral concerts are supported by the Jack Wolgin Curtis Orchestral Concerts Endowment Fund and the Pennsylvania Tourism Office.

The Curtis Opera Theatre is generously supported by the Ernestine Bacon Cairns Trust, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, and the Wyncote Foundation.

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About the Curtis Institute of Music

The Curtis Institute of Music educates and trains exceptionally gifted young musicians to engage a local and global community through the highest level of artistry. For nearly a century Curtis has provided each member of its small student body with an unparalleled education alongside musical peers, distinguished by a “learn by doing” philosophy and personalized attention from a faculty that includes a high proportion of actively performing musicians. With admissions based solely on artistic promise, no student is turned away due to financial need. Curtis invests in each admitted student, ensuring no tuition is charged for their studies and they enter the profession free from educational debt. Each year Curtis students hone their craft through more than 200 orchestra, opera, and solo and chamber music offerings in Philadelphia and around the world. Learn more at [Curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu).

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