



# 2023-24 Season

## **Curtis Symphony Orchestra Presents "Beethoven, Ortiz, and Barber" on January 27 at Verizon Hall, Kimmel Center**

**Michael Stern ('86) and Benoit Gauthier, Curtis's Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow, lead the Curtis Symphony Orchestra in a celebration of orchestral splendor, featuring the Philadelphia premiere of Latin GRAMMY-nominated composer Gabriela Ortiz's *Kauyumari* ("The Blue Deer")**

PHILADELPHIA, PA—January 9, 2024—The **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** returns to Verizon Hall on the Kimmel Cultural Campus for its second concert of the 2023–24 season on **Saturday, January 27, at 3 p.m.** with "**Beethoven, Ortiz, and Barber.**" Acclaimed conductor **Michael Stern** ('86) leads Curtis's gifted young musicians in an afternoon of extraordinary emotional contrasts. The program opens with the Philadelphia premiere of Latin GRAMMY®-nominated composer **Gabriela Ortiz**'s kaleidoscopic *Kauyumari* ("The Blue Deer") under the baton of first-year student **Benoit Gauthier**, Curtis's Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow. A rhythmic tour-de-force, this thrilling work follows the hoofed blue spiritual guide of the Huichol people of Mexico on a peyote-fueled journey through the invisible world as they communicate with their ancestors, heal the wounds of the soul, and serve as guardians of the planet.

The concert continues with legendary 20th-century composer and Curtis alumnus **Samuel Barber**'s ('34) soaring **First Symphony (in One Movement)**—a muscular, lyrical piece that packs a powerful wallop within the span of 20 minutes, condensing the dramatic intensity, delicacy, and sweeping grandeur of a traditional four-movement symphony into one. The final piece of the concert, **Ludwig van Beethoven**'s transcendent **Violin Concerto in D major**, features the exquisite artistry of internationally renowned violinist **Pamela Frank** ('89), Herbert R. and Evelyn Axelrod Chair in Violin Studies at Curtis, and winner of the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize. Opening with a quiet whisper, the concerto is one of classical music's most intimate, impassioned masterpieces, a revolutionary work that combines blazing virtuosity with the elegance of a traditional symphonic structure.

Conductor **Michael Stern** has long been devoted to building and leading highly acclaimed orchestras known not only for their impeccable musicianship and creative programming, but also for collaborative, sustainable

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cultures that often include a vision of music as service to the community. Stern currently holds three music director positions: with the Kansas City Symphony, where he concludes his 19-year tenure at the end of this season; with the National Repertory Orchestra, a summer music festival in Breckenridge, Colorado; and with the newly rebranded Orchestra Lumos (formerly the Stamford Symphony). Stern was recently named artistic advisor of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. And, following a 22-year tenure as founding artistic director of Iris Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee, he now serves the newly reimagined Iris Collective as artistic advisor.

As part of his ongoing activities to engage and mentor young musicians, he was asked by Yo-Yo Ma to be the music director of YMCG, Youth Music Culture Guangdong; he was also invited to the National Orchestral Institute, Music Academy of the West, and has been a regular guest at the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Stern's illustrious American conducting engagements have included the Boston, Chicago, and Atlanta Symphonies; the New York Philharmonic; and the Minnesota Orchestra. Stern has also served as guest conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Internationally, he has led major orchestras in London, Stockholm, Paris, Helsinki, Budapest, Israel, Moscow, Taiwan, and Tokyo. He was chief conductor of Germany's Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra and principal guest conductor of the Orchestre National de Lyon and the Orchestre National de Lille, both in France.

Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where his primary teacher was the noted conductor and scholar Max Rudolf.

**Pamela Frank**, a 1989 Curtis graduate, has established an outstanding international reputation across an unusually varied range of performing activity. She has performed regularly with today's most distinguished soloists and ensembles, including the orchestras of Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, New York, San Francisco, and Baltimore; the Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Israel philharmonics; the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields; and the Tonhalle Orchestra of Zürich.

As a recitalist, she has performed in the major cities of the world. A sought-after chamber musician, she has appeared at many international festivals, including Aldeburgh, Verbier, Edinburgh, Salzburg, Tanglewood, Marlboro, and Ravinia. Her chamber music projects include performances with such artists as Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, the late Peter Serkin, and her father, the late pianist Claude Frank; and frequent appearances with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and Musicians from Marlboro. In 1999 she was awarded a coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

With Claude Frank, she recorded the complete Beethoven sonata cycle for Music Masters Classics and an all-Schubert disc. For Sony Classical, Ms. Frank recorded the Chopin Piano Trio and Schubert Trout Quintet with Mr. Ax and Mr. Ma. On Decca she has recorded all of the Mozart violin concertos, the Dvorak concerto, and, with Peter Serkin, the complete Brahms sonata cycle.

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Since 2008 Ms. Frank has been the artistic director of the Evnin Rising Stars, a mentoring program for young artists at Caramoor Center for the Arts. Her newest venture is the formation of Fit as a Fiddle Inc., a collaboration with physical therapist Howard Nelson in which they use both their expertise for injury prevention and treatment of musicians. Ms. Frank joined the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music in 1996.

Acclaimed for its “otherworldly ensemble and professional level of sophistication” (*The New York Times*), the **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** offers a dynamic showcase of tomorrow’s exceptional young talent. Each year the 100 extraordinary musicians of the orchestra work with internationally renowned conductors, including Osmo Vänskä, Vladimir Jurowski, Marin Alsop, Simon Rattle, Robert Spano, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, who also mentors the early-career conductors who hold Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellowships. This professional training has enabled Curtis alumni to assume prominent positions in America’s leading orchestras, as well as esteemed orchestral, opera, and chamber ensembles around the world.

The Curtis Symphony Orchestra returns to Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Cultural Campus on Saturday, March 9, at 3 p.m., with “Ra, Mackey, Tchaikovsky,” with conductor Robert Spano (’85). The concert includes two world premieres, *Te Deum* by James Ra (’04) and Steven Mackey’s *Aluminum Flowers* for solo electric guitar and orchestra, featuring the jaw-dropping virtuosity of guitarist Jiji (’15). To learn more about these performances, as well as the Curtis Opera Theatre, Ensemble 20/21 concerts, Curtis Recital Series, and more, visit [Curtis.edu/Calendar](https://www.curtis.edu/Calendar).

Single tickets for “**Beethoven, Ortiz, and Barber**” start at \$19 and are available for purchase at [Curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu). The flexible Choose Your Own subscription option offers 25% off ticket prices when purchasing tickets to two or more performances. To order a subscription, visit [Curtis.edu/Subscribe](https://www.curtis.edu/Subscribe), call (215) 893-7902, or email [tickets@curtis.edu](mailto:tickets@curtis.edu).

### **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** *The Jack Wolgin Orchestral Concerts*

#### **Beethoven, Ortiz, and Barber** **Saturday, January 27 at 3:00 p.m.**

Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center; Broad and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia

Michael Stern (’86), conductor  
Benoit Gauthier, Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow  
Pamela Frank (’89), violin  
Curtis Symphony Orchestra

GABRIELA ORTIZ	<i>Kaayumari</i>
SAMUEL BARBER (’34)	First Symphony (in One Movement), Op. 9
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN	Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61

*Orchestral concerts are supported by the Jack Wolgin Curtis Orchestral Concerts Endowment Fund.*

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## About the Curtis Institute of Music

At Curtis, the world's most talented young musicians develop into exceptional artists, creators, and innovators. With a tuition-free foundation, Curtis is a unique environment for teaching and learning. A small school by design, students realize their artistic potential through intensive, individualized study with the most renowned, sought-after faculty. Animated by a learn-by-doing philosophy, Curtis students share their music with audiences through more than 100 performances each year, including solo and chamber recitals, orchestral concerts, and opera—all free or at an affordable cost—offering audiences unique opportunities to participate in pivotal moments in these young musicians' careers. Curtis students experience a close connection to the greatest artists and organizations in classical music, and innovative initiatives that integrate new technologies and encourage entrepreneurship—all within a historic campus in the heart of culturally rich Philadelphia. In this diverse, collaborative community, Curtis's extraordinary artists challenge, support, and inspire one another—continuing an unparalleled 100-year legacy of musicians who have led, and will lead, classical music into a thriving, equitable, and multidimensional future. Learn more at [Curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu).

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