

Curtis Symphony Orchestra Launches 2026–27 Series with “Teddy Leads Adams & Beethoven” on Sunday, October 11

Grammy Award-winning conductor-composer Teddy Abrams ('08) leads the Curtis Symphony Orchestra in a dynamic program featuring Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 and John Adams' Harmonielehre—as well as Tania León's Pulitzer Prize-winning Stride, conducted by Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow Mariana Corichi Gómez.

Philadelphia, PA—September 29, 2026—The **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** presents the first concert of its 2026–27 series on **Sunday, October 11 at 3:00 p.m.** in **Marian Anderson Hall, Kimmel Center**, featuring Beethoven's playful Symphony No. 8, led by Grammy Award-winning conductor-composer **Teddy Abrams** ('08). This dynamic program also features **John Adams' Harmonielehre**, a modern symphonic classic that melds minimalism with the expressiveness of romanticism—as well as **Tania León's** Pulitzer Prize-winning *Stride*, conducted by Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow **Mariana Corichi Gómez**.

The program opens with **Beethoven's** Symphony No. 8, conducted by Mr. Abrams. Described by Beethoven as reflective of his “unbuttoned spirit,” the F major symphony is underscored by playful outbursts, surprise notes, and unprepared gestures. Its second movement is especially curious: Beethoven composed it as a nod to his friend Johann Maelzel, the inventor of the metronome, which he honors with ticking chords throughout. The symphony premiered in Vienna in 1814 on a program that also featured Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and *Wellington's Victory*, placing its intimate humor alongside two of the composer's most immediately celebrated works.

Tania León's *Stride*, written in honor of suffragist Susan B. Anthony, follows, channeling León's Cuban American heritage into a work of dark, restless energy, with bluesy trumpet fanfares, timpani rumbles, and growling brass. Commissioned by the New York Philharmonic as part of Project 19, an initiative commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and its guarantee of women's right to vote, *Stride* has emerged as one of the project's standout works. In 2021, León won the Pulitzer Prize for Music for the piece.

The concert culminates with **John Adams' Harmonielehre**, a modern symphonic classic whose title roughly translates to “book of harmony.” The 40-minute work fuses the developmental techniques of minimalism with the rhetorical freedom of late-Romantic composers including Wagner, Mahler, and Sibelius. Adams composed the piece after a vivid dream and described it as “a statement of belief in the power of tonality at a time when I was uncertain about its future.” It also marked a personal breakthrough for the composer, ending an 18-month period of writer's block and paving the way for *Nixon in China*, his first opera.

—continued—

This season, Curtis also launches **Curtis Symphony Orchestra: Project CSO**, a rehearsal broadcast series offering viewers a front-row seat to students' learning process and development. In these livestream/broadcast events, students will perform a culminating, final reading following weeks of study, collaboration, and discovery. Performances provide insight into Curtis' learn-by-doing philosophy, highlighting milestone moments in students' artistic growth.

The next session is Friday, December 5 at 5:00 p.m. ET, featuring **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's** Symphony No. 5. Additional dates and repertoire will be announced later in the season. The livestream broadcasts will be accessible on Curtis' YouTube channel, and on-demand recordings will be available up to 90 days after performance.

Tickets

Single tickets for "Teddy Leads Adams & Beethoven" at Marian Anderson Hall start at \$24 and are available through curtis.edu. Curtis' flexible Choose Your Own subscription option offers 25% off single ticket prices when purchasing tickets to two or more events. To order a subscription, visit curtis.edu/subscribe, call (215) 893-7902, or email tickets@curtis.edu.

To learn more about performances in Curtis' 2026–27 season, including the Curtis Opera Theatre, Curtis New Music Ensemble concerts, Curtis Recital Series, and more, visit curtis.edu/calendar.

Teddy Leads Adams & Beethoven

Sunday, October 11, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

Marian Anderson Hall at the Kimmel Center

Ludwig van Beethoven

Tania León

John Adams

Symphony No. 8

Stride

Harmonielehre

Teddy Abrams ('08), conductor

Mariana Corichi Gómez, conducting fellow

Curtis Symphony Orchestra

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

Curtis received funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts.

—continued—

About the Curtis Institute of Music

At Curtis, the world's great 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 an historic campus in the heart of culturally rich Philadelphia. In this diverse, collaborative community, Curtis' extraordinary artists challenge, support, and inspire one another—continuing an unparalleled 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).

#