

Juilliard



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**The Juilliard Preparatory Division and New York Philharmonic
Premiere Five Works Side-by-Side in Second Year of Composing
Inclusion, A Partnership of Juilliard, the New York Philharmonic, and
American Composers Forum**

**Juilliard Pre-College Students Join NY Phil for Young People's
Concert Saturday, April 20, Premieres Continue Sunday, May 12 With
Wind, Brass, and Percussion Ensembles**



*NY Phil musicians and Juilliard students performing side-by-side at a
Young People's Concert on May 6, 2023 (Photo by Chris Lee)*

NEW YORK, March 25, 2024—**For the first time, students from Juilliard's Pre-College Orchestra will perform side-by-side with the New York Philharmonic. The concert, which takes place Saturday, April 20, at Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall, is the second orchestral performance of the two-year *Composing Inclusion* program, a partnership between Juilliard, the Philharmonic, and the American Composers Forum (ACF), powered by the Sphinx Venture Fund.**

Composing Inclusion was initiated in 2022 to build a more diverse and inclusive repertoire for young musicians by commissioning composers from backgrounds historically underrepresented in classical music. It also brings together intergenerational ensembles to co-create new works with living composers, providing a range of musical approaches, experiences, and techniques that

relate to and expand the various experiences of the performers. The program is a unique partnership between the three organizations that results in “flexible” or adaptable new scores that can be performed by musicians with different skill levels.

The April 20 program includes **world premieres by Nicolás Lell Benavides** and **Andrés Soto** as well as the second movement of *Negro Folk Symphony*, by 20th-century African American composer **William Dawson**. This performance is part of the NY Phil’s Young People’s Concerts series for children and their families, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this season.

The two new works for orchestra—*Querencia* by Benavides and *Fantasia en la Plaza* by Soto—will be performed by NY Phil musicians alongside 85 to 90 Pre-College Orchestra students, whose ages range from 16 to 18, under the baton of Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, who also serves as the concert’s host. Several members of the NY Phil are also Pre-College faculty members, presenting a special opportunity for Pre-College students to perform with their teachers. All the composers in the program were invited to include themes about New York City in their works. The resulting works were also informed by their workshops with the students. Soto’s piece depicts a musical tour around Lincoln Center while Benavides’ piece is an homage to his grandfather.

“My grandfather, Eduardo (Eddie) Garcia, was my first music teacher and mentor,” Nicolás Lell Benavides said. “He was an accordionist who played *música norteña*, including *rancheras* and *corridos* popular in New Mexico. Soon after I was asked to write a work for the New York Philharmonic and Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra, he passed away at age 90. It seemed right to compose a work that explored the idea of mentorship, passing down knowledge by showing rather than telling. I hope the audience reflects on mentors in their own lives, especially those no longer with us, and how we all learned through the beautiful grace of patience, kindness, and generosity when we were young.”

“I remember the excitement of going to hear a live orchestra perform some of the world’s greatest masterpieces at Lincoln Center,” Andrés Soto said. “This was the starting point for my commission, which is written from the point of view of a young musician who is just getting started in their career, those who are just starting their journey into a life devoted to music. The blissful innocence of youth enables a sense of joy as you discover the beauty of dedicating yourself to your craft. Everything seems possible, everything is new and exciting, and the sky’s the limit. This is an emotion that is more prevalent in youth than in maturity, one I’d like to never stop feeling. My goal for the piece is to encourage the young musicians to always strive to maintain this sense of wonder in their lives, and for the more mature veterans at the New York Philharmonic to look back fondly, or perhaps even recover, some of these emotions from their past.”

At the **Composing Inclusion Chamber Recital on May 12**, students from Juilliard’s Preparatory Division and Musicians from the New York Philharmonic will premiere new works for woodwind, brass, and percussion ensembles by **Jasmine Barnes (performed by Pre-**

College), Elijah J. Thomas (performed by MAP), and Lauren McCall (performed by Pre-College and MAP), as well as a piano work by Patricia Martinez.

The two-year *Composing Inclusion* program was initiated by Weston Sprott, dean and director of Juilliard's Preparatory Division, and commissions new repertoire by composers from diverse gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural heritages to expand understanding and appreciation of various cultures and perspectives. Sprott developed the program with Gary Padmore, the New York Philharmonic's vice president of education and community engagement, and Vanessa Rose, ACF's executive director, who have been active in overseeing the program's implementation. Trevor Weston, a composer and Juilliard Preparatory Division faculty member, serves as advisor to the project's partners and composers, and ACF's director of programs, Carolina Heredia, has worked closely with the composers on the development of their projects.

Composers Jasmine Barnes, Nicolás Lell Benavides, Jordyn Davis, James Díaz, Thomas Flippin, Lauren McCall, Patricia Martinez, Andrés Soto, and Elijah J. Thomas were invited to develop new works for orchestra or chamber ensembles over the course of a year through workshops and rehearsals that engaged Preparatory Division students and members of the New York musical community. ACF oversaw the *Composing Inclusion* composer selection, which attracted 71 applicants, and has actively supported them throughout the collaborative process. The nine composers who were selected for the *Composing Inclusion*, identify as Black or Latina/e/o/x. The entire two-year project has offered more than 150 Preparatory Division students the opportunity to collaborate with the nine composers and play side-by-side with New York Philharmonic musicians.

PROGRAM DETAILS:

Saturday, April 20 at 2pm
New York Philharmonic
David Geffen Hall

Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra
Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, Conductor
Doug Fitch, Director/Designer

Nicolás Lell BENAVIDES *Querencia*
World premiere, New York Philharmonic Co-Commission with
Juilliard's Preparatory Division and the American Composers
Forum

Andrés SOTO *Fantasia en la Plaza*

World premiere, New York Philharmonic Co-Commission with Juilliard's Preparatory Division and the American Composers Forum

William DAWSON
(1899-1990)

From *Negro Folk Symphony*
II. Hope in the Night

Sunday, May 12, at 3pm
Preparatory Division
***Composing Inclusion* Chamber Recital**
Room 309, Bruno Walter Orchestral Studio

Program to include new works:

Jasmine Barnes *The Boroughs*
Double brass quintet

Elijah J. Thomas *Detect: an antiphon for all times*
Double wind quintet and voices

Lauren McCall *Rails Beneath the Skylines*
Percussion ensemble

Patricia Martinez *Suite dedo afónica*
Solo piano

Commissioned by *Composing Inclusion*, a partnership between Juilliard's Preparatory Division, the New York Philharmonic, and the American Composers Forum (ACF), powered by the Sphinx Venture Fund.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Nicolás Lell Benavides' music frequently explores the intersection of place and cultural themes of Latinidad in the Southwest. He has worked with groups including the Washington National Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, West Edge Opera, Nashville Opera, MassOpera, Friction Quartet, Khemia Ensemble, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble. Upcoming projects include an opera with librettist Laura Barati as part of MassOpera's New Opera Workshop with support from Opera America, a premiere of *Tres minutos* with librettist Marella Martin Koch through Music of Remembrance and support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Clovis Foundation, and a new commission through West Edge Opera's Aperture to develop a full-length work about civil rights icon Dolores Huerta. His upcoming album, *Canto Caló*, will feature Friction Quartet and mezzo-soprano Melinda Martinez Becker, with support from ACF's Innova Recordings, the Alice M. Ditson Fund, and New Music USA.

Andrés Soto is a Costa Rican composer with an active career both in the world of concert music and in the entertainment industry. He has written music for several feature films, documentaries, shorts, and video games, while also maintaining a prolific output of orchestral works commissioned by many ensembles around the world. In 2022, the Nashville Symphony gave the North American premiere of his piece *Heredia por Media Calle*, and in 2021, the Florida Orchestra played his orchestral tone poem *Bailongo*, both conducted by Enrico López-Yáñez. Other projects include an album recorded at Capitol Records for Universal Music, an upcoming video game with an ecological message, and music for the prestigious Pageant of the Masters, in Laguna Beach, California. His interest in education has led him to give guest lectures and master classes at universities and institutions in the U.S., Latin America, and Spain. His orchestral music is published by Symphonica Productions.

Jasmine Barnes is a composer/vocalist who has performed and had her music performed all over the world. She is a multifaceted composer who embraces any writing style of music using a variety of instrumentation and specializes in writing for the voice. A full-time composer, Barnes is managed by UIA talent and is a second-year resident artist for American Lyric Theater. Barnes has held residencies as a composer fellow at Chautauqua Opera (2021 season) and with All Classical Portland. She has had the privilege of being commissioned by organizations including the Washington National Opera, Aspen Summer Music Festival, LA Opera, Bare Opera, CityMusic Cleveland, LyricFest Philadelphia, Baltimore Choral Arts, Resonance Ensemble, Tapestry Choir, Burleigh Music Festival, Symphony Number One, and Baltimore Musicales.

Elijah J. Thomas is a Black Philadelphia-born, Harlem-based multi-instrumentalist, educator, and composer/experimentalist. He has studied improvisation with Dick Oatts, Tim Warfield Jr., and Walter Bell, and composition with Cynthia Folio, Kevin Rodgers, and Maurice Wright. Thomas creates “enuff music”: music for Black healing and spiritual transcendence. He has held numerous teaching positions and led four recorded projects: *enuff music*, vol. i (EP, released with Off Latch Press), *Our Search* (LP), *Three Contemplations* for Jason Moran (EP), and *The Unity of Sound* with the NeW Quintet (LP). **Thomas** is musical director of the global street band performance organization HONK! NYC, whose mission is to “make events that reclaim, reuse, and redefine public space and connect communities through music-making, pageantry, audience participation, and education.”

Lauren McCall is a composer and music educator from Atlanta. She studied for her master’s degree in music composition at the Vermont College of Fine Arts and is a PhD student studying music technology at the Georgia Institute of Technology. McCall has had compositions performed around North America and Europe, among them *Shake the Earth*, which was performed at Morehead (Kentucky) State University’s Contemporary Piano Festival and at the Oregon Bach Festival Composers’ Symposium in Eugene. McCall enjoys collaborating with technologists, musicians, and artists including Maggie Kane, owner of Streetcat.media, and the Alter Ego Chamber Opera, and she was a Fromm Fellow with the Fifth House Ensemble. Along with composing, McCall enjoys playing classical music and jazz on the clarinet and piano,

spending time in nature, spending time with family and friends, and traveling.

Lead support for New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts is provided by Evalyn E. and Stephen E. Milman.

Major support for Young People's Concerts is provided by the Tiger Baron Foundation.

Jasmine Barnes', Nicolás Lell Benavides', Lauren McCall's, Andrés Soto's, and Elijah J. Thomas' commissions are part of Composing Inclusion: a collaboration between the New York Philharmonic, American Composers Forum, and Juilliard's Preparatory Division, made possible with funding from the Sphinx Venture Fund.

The Juilliard Preparatory Division is made possible, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

About Juilliard's Preparatory Division and the Music Advancement Program

The cornerstones of Juilliard's Preparatory Division are two Saturday music programs for students ages 8 to 18, Pre-College and the Music Advancement Program (MAP). Juilliard has an ongoing commitment to the principles and practices of inclusiveness and strongly encourages applications from students of diverse backgrounds. Financial aid, up to and including full-tuition scholarships, is available for both programs.

MAP is a Saturday program for intermediate and advanced music students from New York City's five boroughs and the tristate area who demonstrate a commitment to artistic excellence. The program actively seeks students from diverse backgrounds underrepresented in the classical music field. Through a rigorous curriculum, performance opportunities, and guidance from an accomplished faculty, MAP students gain the necessary skills to pursue advanced music studies while developing their talents as artists, leaders, and global citizens. Approximately 87 students are enrolled in MAP, which is led by Artistic Director Anthony McGill. All MAP students receive full-tuition scholarships.

About The Juilliard School

Founded in 1905, The Juilliard School is a world leader in performing arts education. The school's mission is to provide the highest caliber of artistic education for gifted musicians, dancers, and actors, composers, choreographers, and playwrights from around the world so that they may achieve their fullest potential as artists, leaders, and global citizens. Juilliard is led by Damian Woetzel, seventh president of the school, who has prioritized affordability and access to the highest level of artistic education while championing Juilliard's tradition of excellence.

Located at Lincoln Center in New York City, Juilliard offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in dance, drama (acting and playwriting), and music (classical, jazz, historical performance, and vocal arts). More than 800 artists from 42 states and 50 countries and regions are enrolled in Juilliard's College Division, where they appear in more than 700 annual performances in the

school's five theaters; at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully and David Geffen halls and at Carnegie Hall; as well as at other venues around New York City, the U.S., and the world. The continuum of learning at Juilliard also includes nearly 400 students from elementary through high school enrolled in the Preparatory Division in its Pre-College and Music Advancement Program (MAP); MAP serves students from diverse backgrounds often underrepresented in the classical music field. More than 1,200 students are enrolled in Juilliard Extension, the flagship continuing education program taught both in person and remotely by a dedicated faculty of performers, creators, and scholars. Beyond its New York campus, Juilliard is defining new directions in performing arts education for a range of learners and enthusiasts through a global K-12 educational curricula and preparatory and graduate studies at The Tianjin Juilliard School in China.

About the New York Philharmonic

The New York Philharmonic connects with millions of music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, broadcasts, streaming, education programs, and more. In the 2023–24 season—which builds on the Orchestra's transformation reflected in the new David Geffen Hall—the NY Phil honors Jaap van Zweden in his farewell season as music director, premieres 14 works by a wide range of composers including some whom van Zweden has championed, and marks György Ligeti's centennial. The Orchestra is celebrating the 100th birthday of the beloved Young People's Concerts throughout the year, including at the Spring Gala, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel.

The Philharmonic has commissioned and/or premiered important works, from Dvořák's "New World" Symphony to Tania León's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Stride*. The NY Phil has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, and in 2023 announced a partnership with Apple Music Classical, the new streaming app designed to deliver classical music lovers the optimal listening experience. The orchestra builds on a longstanding commitment to serving its communities — which has led to annual free concerts across New York City and the free online New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives—through a new ticket access program.

Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Jaap van Zweden became music director in 2018–19, following titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler. Gustavo Dudamel will become music and artistic director beginning in 2026 after serving as music director designate in 2025–26.

About American Composers Forum

ACF's mission is to support and advocate for individuals and groups creating music today by demonstrating the vitality and relevance of their art. We do this by empowering the composers, modeling creative partnerships, and advocating for them through storytelling and connections. Working with an ecosystem of artists, programmers, presenters, teachers, funders, and audiences, we frame all of our work with a commitment to racial equity, believing that creating a fairer world for artists benefits all of us.

Founded in 1973 by composers Libby Larsen and Stephen Paulus as the Minnesota Composers Forum, the organization continues to invest in its Minnesota home while connecting artists and advocates across the United States, its territories, and beyond. Visit composersforum.org for more information.

About The Sphinx Organization

The Sphinx Organization is a social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Focused on increasing representation of Black and Latinx artists in classical music and recognizing excellence, Sphinx programs serve beginner students to seasoned classical music professionals, as well as cultural entrepreneurs and administrators. Based in Detroit, Michigan, but with international reach, Sphinx envisions a day where the classical music field looks like our communities: where every young person has the opportunity to express themselves and learn classical music; where audiences reflect the people we see on our streets; and where leadership—on stage and off—includes all deserving voices. With 1,200 alumni, Sphinx reaches 100,000 young people and nearly 100 million through digital and live programming worldwide.

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