

NEWS

Media Contact:

Brenda Fox
Director of Marketing and Patron Services
707-546-7097 ext. 218
bfox@srsymphony.org

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Santa Rosa Symphony Welcomes Julio Reyes as the New Aspirante Youth Orchestra Conductor

(Santa Rosa, Calif.) — The Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Julio Reyes as the new SRS Aspirante Youth Orchestra (AYO) conductor. AYO is a full orchestra experience designed for intermediate players 9 years to 18 years of age. Reyes began as interim conductor on September 9, 2023, and was offered the position soon thereafter.

The Santa Rosa Symphony Aspirante Youth Orchestra provides intermediate to advanced students an opportunity to learn a wide variety of full orchestra repertoire. The ensemble meets weekly, September through May, performing two concerts open to the public, school assemblies at two Sonoma County elementary schools, and Free Concerts for Youth at Weill Hall, Green Music Center.

Luis Zuniga, the previous Aspirante Youth Orchestra conductor has accepted a full-time tenure track position as director of bands at Skyline College in San Francisco. The Symphony wishes him all the best.

“Being a youth orchestra member is an experience that stays in the minds of all that have played in one. I fondly remember being a cellist in the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra (OSYO) in the early 1980s. I’m still friends with countless other former OSYO members as well as Maestro Nagano to this day. I’m proud to help shape these experiences for our young musicians as the Conductor of the Aspirante Youth Orchestra and maintaining the high musical standards of the Santa Rosa Symphony.”

Julio Reyes, incoming SRS Aspirante Youth Orchestra Conductor

“Julio is a great addition to our conducting staff. He worked with us at Summer Music Academy and is also on our faculty at Simply Strings, our El Sistema-inspired social action music program. Julio is nationally recognized as an outstanding guitarist and is an excellent music educator.”

Wendy Cilman, SRS Director of Education

Biography:

Julio Reyes started his musical training on the classical guitar at the age of five, by the time he was 18, he had learned to play the cello, and electric bass, and was appointed Assistant Conductor to a young Kent Nagano for the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra. His guitar recital debut was at the age of 12. Reyes placed 4th in an International Agustin Barrios Competition in Mexico City at the age of 13 and gave a 3-week concert tour of Paraguay the following year. He performed Rodrigo’s “Concierto de Aranjuez” with Calvin Simmons and the Oakland Symphony Orchestra as a senior in High School. Since then, he has conducted youth and adult orchestras in the US, Europe, South America, and Cuba. He conducted Prince Albert of Monaco’s private orchestra in the opera, “Fay Yen Fah” at the Monaco Opera in 2010. Reyes made his Carnegie Hall debut as a winner in the “Progressive Musicians” competition in February of 2022 and has been asked by the directors of the competition to conduct a 20-piece guitar orchestra on July 1, 2024, once again in Carnegie Hall. He has been an educator for many years and has given lectures and masterclasses on the life and music of Agustin Barrios at various conservatories of music, colleges, and guitar societies in the US, South America, and Canada. Reyes is excited to be working for the education department of the Santa Rosa Symphony in their “Simply Strings” program and is looking forward to

conducting the Aspirante Youth Orchestra.

Photos are available upon request.

ABOUT SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY

Santa Rosa Symphony, the Resident Orchestra of the Green Music Center, is the third-oldest professional orchestra in California, and the largest regional symphony north of Los Angeles. Francesco Lecce-Chong, the Symphony's fifth music director in its 96 years, began his tenure in 2018. The Symphony is committed to the core values of artistic excellence, innovative programming, comprehensive music education and community service.

The Symphony's performance schedule includes 21 Classical Series concerts (seven sets), Seven Discovery Rehearsal concerts, a three-concert Family Series and a four-concert Pops Series, as well as special concerts.

Awards include an American Symphony Orchestra League MetLife Award for Community Engagement and a first-place award for adventurous programming in the 2012-2013 season from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

The Symphony is recognized for having one of the most comprehensive music education programs in California, serving nearly 20,000 youth annually. Collaborations with schools and organizations across Sonoma County have gained the Santa Rosa Symphony national attention and support.

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