

PHOENIX YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

# PYSO

grace notes

VOLUME 3 | MAY 2022

**Artistic & General Director** 21|22 Season

**Young Musicians Competition** Results

**PYSO Officers** New Board Members

**Dr. Walter Temme** 33 Years of Music

YMC Grand Prize Winner

**Jonathan Okseniuk**





# 21 | 22 Season Recap

**Matthew Kasper**  
Artistic and General Director  
Symphony Orchestra Conductor





As I look back upon this 21/22 Season, the theme that keeps sticking with me is one of adapting to change. There have been many changes to the organization over the past two years and yet PYSO still forges ahead with our mission of expanding horizons through music and developing the next generation of artists, patrons and leaders. It would be an understatement to say the Covid-19 pandemic has had an adverse effect on the arts. In spite of the difficulties, I am happy to say PYSO has been able to continue its mission in full and poise itself for future growth.

In August, we saw the return of our annual Prescott retreat to kick off the season for all of our ensembles. These retreats are so vital to the social and musical connections between our young musicians and we were so thrilled to be able to continue the tradition after a year's absence. The season's performance schedule began with a beautiful all-ensembles concert at the Mesa Arts Center on October 17th. All of the young musicians performed extremely well and were noticeably energized by the return to the concert hall after over a year's absence.

The Symphony Orchestra had its Fall Concert on Halloween at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts and featured works by Khachaturian, Korngold, and Kurt Weill. The concert was made possible by a generous grant from the Kurt Weill Foundation and featured the return of a beloved guest artist Steven Moeckel who beautifully portrayed the Korngold Violin Concerto.

Our Music Memory and Side-by-Side concerts were supposed to take place in February, however due to the spike in Covid numbers in January, both were initially postponed to April with the Side-by-Side eventually being cancelled altogether. Although this was a terrible disappointment for all of us, we worked with the TPS Education Department and had nineteen musicians from TPS have sectionals and perform with our students on the Music Memory concert on April 19th at Symphony Hall. This was a wonderful experience for the attending students and exciting for our young musicians.

The season finale concert on May 1 was one of joy and sadness as we celebrated the end of the 70th anniversary season for PYSO, but also said goodbye to two of our beloved conductors. Dr. Walter Temme has decided to retire after 33 years at the helm of the Philharmonic Orchestra and Brian Maurer has also decided to step down in order to pursue other career goals. We are thankful for all they have done for our young musicians and wish them well.

Our season officially ends with a second installment of our collaboration with the School of Ballet Arizona. We will present three performances of Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Madison Center for the Arts from June 3-5. I want to thank all of our students, parents, staff volunteers and partners for a wonderful season and we look forward to seeing you again in the Fall!

21 | 22 PYSO

# Season

Partial funding for the PYSO 21|22 season is provided by the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council.

## **Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty***

June 3, 4, and 5, 2022  
Symphony Orchestra  
& The School of  
Ballet Arizona

Madison Center  
for the Arts

A performance  
partnership between  
PYSO's Symphony  
Orchestra and the  
School of Ballet Arizona



Phoenix Youth  
Symphony Orchestras

2009 North 7th Street, Suite 9  
Phoenix, AZ 85006  
602-935-9003  
[pysorchestras.org](http://pysorchestras.org)



## Event Administration

President

**Thomas Waite**

Competition Chairman

**Matthew Kasper**

Scholarship Co-Chairman

**Corinn Moreno**

## Scholarship Donations

**Janet Cotton**

**Marilene Berry**

**Joni & Jim Weathers**

**Fred Hanley**

**Kathleen Duyck**

The Phoenix Youth Symphony donated \$2,500 to Mesa Community College Music Department benefiting students in their music program.

# Young Musicians Competition 2022

### YMC DIVISION WINNERS

## Junior Division

UPPER STRINGS - **Joshua Lee** *Violin*

LOWER STRINGS - **Sophie Kim** *Cello*

PIANO - **Katheryn Chan** *Piano*

### JUDGES RECOGNITION AWARD

**Noah Edwards** *Double Bass*

## Senior Division

### FINALISTS (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

**Vincent Claes** *Cello*

**Daniel Kang** *Piano*

**Benjamin Landon** *Percussion*

**Yuki Matsui** *Viola*

**Boyoung (Cynthia) Min** *Viola*

**Seungchan (Aiden) Min** *Violin*

**Jonathan Okseniuk** *Violin*

**Charlie Pabst** *Cello*

**Felix Shen** *Flute*

**Daniel Walker** *Flute*

**Brian Yong** *Violin*

**Evan Yoon** *Cello*

### GRAND PRIZE WINNER

## Jonathan Okseniuk | VIOLIN

Violinist Jonathan Okseniuk was named first-place laureate in the Junior Division of the 2022 Sphinx Competition. Since 2017 he has placed first in many national and local competitions such as Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Junior Competition, Phoenix Youth Symphony Orchestras Young Musicians Concerto Competition Junior and Senior Division, Arizona Musicfest Young Musicians String, Harp, and Guitar Division I and II, Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition, and Chandler Symphony Orchestra Youth Competition. He is currently a national finalist in the 2022 MTNA Competition.

As a soloist, Jonathan has been captivating audiences since he was four. At the age of 10, he made his orchestral debut with the West Valley Symphony and returned two years later to perform his first violin concerto. Last year he





## With Gratitude

Mesa Community College Performing Arts  
AZ Piano Company  
Gary Gracey Piano Tuning  
Uta M. Behrens for a Special Competition  
Winners Division



FIRST RUNNER UP

## Vincent Claes | CELLO

performed with the Chandler Symphony Orchestra, and this year he will be performing with The Phoenix Symphony and the Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra. He was also the first place winner of the 2021 National Federation of Music Clubs Stillman Kelley Award.

Over the past five years, Jonathan has played as concertmaster, assistant concertmaster, and principal second violin in various local youth orchestras. Currently he is the assistant concertmaster of the PYSO.

In the past, he has participated in the Morningside Music Bridge program and attended the Heifetz International Music Institute.

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Since the age of three, Jonathan has studied under Jing Zeng.

To share his gift of music, Jonathan donates his talent by playing at community events and participating in the music ministry at his church. Although he aspires to become a professional violinist, Jonathan enjoys mountain biking and playing sports with friends.

Vincent Claes is a cellist from Phoenix, Arizona. He began taking private lessons when he was seven years old. Since the 7th grade, he has been attending Arizona School for the Arts (ASA). He is a part of the Phoenix Youth Symphony Orchestra (PYSO), heading into his eighth year.

In summer 2018, he attended NYO2 for the first time, performing with Carlos Miguel Prieto and Gil Shaham. In January 2019, he won a full merit scholarship from the Young Musicians Competition to attend Interlochen Arts Camp. In January 2020 and 2021, he won first place in the Young Musicians Competition Low Strings Division. He also placed fourth out of all instruments in the Scholarship Round of the Young Musicians Competition. In 2022, he was second place and one of two grand prize winners to have the opportunity to solo with The Phoenix Symphony.

Vincent also loves to play basketball, having played since he was six years old. He has participated in many leagues and played on different teams. He competes on the ASA cross country team, as well as in Model United Nations and Mock Trial competitions.

YMC

## Competition Results

- 1 **Jonathan Okseniuk** *Violin*  
*Will not attend a camp*
- 2 **Vincent Claes** *Cello*  
Boston University Tanglewood Institute
- 3 **Daniel Walker** *Flute*  
Boston University Tanglewood Institute
- 4 **Aiden Min** *Violin*  
Philadelphia International Music Festival
- 5 **Benjamin Landon** *Percussion*  
Interlochen Arts Camp
- 6 **Cynthia Min** *Viola*  
Philadelphia International Music Festival
- 7 **Daniel Kang** *Piano*  
Bowdoin International Music Festival
- 8 **Charlie Pabst** *Cello*  
Madeline Island Chamber Music
- 9 **Evan Yoon** *Cello*  
Meadowmount School of Music
- 10 **Yuki Matsui** *Viola*  
Boston University Tanglewood Institute
- 11 **Felix Shen** *Flute*  
*Will not attend a camp*
- 12 **Brian Yong** *Violin*  
*Will not attend a camp*





## PYSO OFFICERS NEWS

# New Officers & Board Members

This season we welcomed a number of new board members to the PYSO family. Following the departure of our previous Board Chair, **Dr. Thomas Waite** dutifully took on the responsibility and was integral in helping us to rebuild our board. This visionary and supportive board has helped us get through a successful 70th Anniversary season and are continually setting a new standard for organizational integrity.

The additions to the PYSO board this year were:

**Donovan Carman**  
FINANCE CHAIR

**Danny Glass**  
SECRETARY

**Carole Hall**  
DIRECTOR

**Mary Nisbet**  
VICE CHAIR

**Janet Rosenberg**  
DIRECTOR

**Kevin Uliassi**  
DIRECTOR

Each of our new board members brings a distinct set of skills and experiences and a love for the mission and vision of PYSO.

If you are interested in being a candidate for the board of directors or want to help PYSO in any other way please contact the Artistic & General Director, Matthew Kasper at [artisticdirector@pysorchestras.org](mailto:artisticdirector@pysorchestras.org).

## 2022 GRADUATING SENIORS

# Congratulations Seniors

### PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

<b>Aaron Barrett</b> <i>Undecided</i>	CELLO
<b>Raunak Deb</b> <i>Undecided</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Sofia Garcia Roiz Taraskina</b> <i>Arizona State University Computer Engineering / Education</i>	FLUTE
<b>Ryan Grosso</b> <i>Arizona State University Medical Microbiology and Immunology</i>	CELLO
<b>Anthony Jacobs</b> <i>Undecided</i>	TUBA
<b>Emily Knitter</b> <i>Northern Arizona University Communication Science and Disorders</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Kimberly Lundquist</b> <i>Undecided Data Science</i>	VIOLA
<b>Adelaide Martinez</b> <i>Arizona State University Oboe Performance and Film Production</i>	OBOE
<b>Eloise Rank</b> <i>Undecided Animal Science &amp; Statistics</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Michelle Ross</b> <i>Yale University Astrophysics</i>	FRENCH HORN
<b>Megan Scheller</b> <i>Undecided</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Norbu Shastri</b> <i>Undecided Biomedical Engineering</i>	FLUTE
<b>Ethan Wu</b> <i>Undecided Computer Science</i>	CLARINET
<b>Carson Cole</b> <i>Grand Canyon University Computer Science</i>	PERCUSSION

### SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

<b>Feyi Adebekun</b> <i>Undecided</i>	CELLO
<b>Cade Araza</b> <i>Juilliard School Music Performance for French Horn</i>	FRENCH HORN
<b>Thilina Balasooriya</b> <i>Columbia University, Computer Science</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Aiden Bowers</b> <i>Harvard University, Neuroscience</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Vincent Claes</b> <i>University of Michigan, Astrophysics</i>	CELLO
<b>Alexander Drace</b> <i>Georgia Tech, Physics / Astrophysics</i>	VIOLA
<b>Sydney Gibson</b> <i>Northern Arizona University Biomedical Sciences</i>	CELLO
<b>Emma Jahn</b> <i>Undecided</i>	VIOLA
<b>Prem Jain</b> <i>Boston University Rehabilitation Sciences / Kinesiology</i>	CELLO
<b>Kaelan James</b> <i>Arizona State University Clarinet Performance / Engineering</i>	CLARINET
<b>Chase Klein</b> <i>University of Southern California Oboe Performance and Biology</i>	OBOE
<b>Ben Landon</b> <i>Eastman School of Music Percussion Performance</i>	PERCUSSION
<b>Jaehyung Lee</b> <i>Undecided</i>	CLARINET
<b>Michael Meng</b> <i>Carnegie Mellon University Mechanical Engineering and Violin</i>	VIOLIN
<b>Avinash Murlikrishnan</b> <i>University of Southern California Neuroscience</i>	VIOLA

**Dr. Walter Temme**  
Conductor  
Philharmonic Orchestra



#### CONDUCTORS NEWS

## Walt Temme

**Bethaney Cross**  
STRING ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR

An inspiration for students of all ages over the course of 33 years, Dr. Walter Temme conducted his final concert with the Phoenix Youth Symphony Orchestras on May 1st, 2022. Dr. Temme was afforded the opportunity to conduct the Symphonette Ensemble, as it was once known, in the very early stages of his career. Little did he know at the time that he would grow to love teaching the age level of this ensemble, and that this passion would spark his career in teaching high school students first in Scottsdale, Az and then in Mesa, Az. Dr. Temme has led an incredible career of educating young performers, building music programs, and specializing in a blended high level performance out of high school level students. With the Phoenix Youth Symphony Orchestras, he excited and influenced the program to perform full symphony works that most students would never have been exposed to in their public or private school education. As a former student of his programs, I continuously looked up to Dr. Temme and his excitement for teaching. Wednesday night rehearsals were never complete without the jokes and pun-intended analogies for improving our musical style and performance. High level expectations never ceased and the program thrived for many years under his direction. As he moves into retirement, his commitment to PYSO and the Philharmonic Orchestra will never be forgotten and the organization will continue to be thankful for his dedication and passion he brought to the program.

#### RAISING AWARENESS & DONATIONS

## Practice-a-thon hits the notes



This Fall we started a new tradition of student and family involvement at PYSO with our first annual Practice-a-Thon! Each student had a goal of practicing a set number of hours over a three-month span and raising money for each hour practiced. We had 110 students log over 4,000 practice hours and raise over \$21,000 for PYSO!

A huge thank you to all of our musicians who participated and their family and friends who supported them in this amazing experience. **Congratulations to the String Orchestra who won the contest for largest average donation and were rewarded with an ice cream party after rehearsal on April 19th!**

As our tuition only covers between 40-50% of the cost to run our programs, these events are important to ensure we can keep the financial burden on our musician's families as light as possible. It also gives an impetus for more practicing from our young musicians which is always a fantastic goal!

**Be on the lookout in September** for the announcement of next season's Practice-a-thon as we continue this tradition.

<b>Ian Nussdorfer</b>	<b>DOUBLE BASS</b>
<i>Vanderbilt University Jazz Bass</i>	
<b>Nicholas Raclaw</b>	<b>CELLO</b>
<i>University of Illinois Electrical Engineering</i>	
<b>Sierra Rockey</b>	<b>OBOE</b>
<i>Northern Arizona University Biology, Music, and Spanish Minor</i>	
<b>Maya Shah</b>	<b>FLUTE / PICCOLO</b>
<i>Northern Arizona University Music Education and Performance</i>	
<b>Rakshak Shah</b>	<b>DOUBLE BASS</b>
<i>The University of Michigan, Engineering</i>	
<b>Ethan Times</b>	<b>FRENCH HORN</b>
<i>Arizona State University Music and Automotive Engineering</i>	
<b>Adam Uliassi</b>	<b>TROMBONE</b>
<i>Northwestern Trombone Performance</i>	
<b>Sonya Viquesney</b>	<b>BASSOON</b>
<i>Arizona State University Bassoon Performance</i>	
<b>Sean Waite</b>	<b>CELLO</b>
<i>Aaron Copland School of Music Cello Performance</i>	
<b>Daniel Walker</b>	<b>FLUTE</b>
<i>Undecided Music</i>	
<b>Jasmine Zehn</b>	<b>CELLO</b>
<i>Arizona State University Political Science and Cello Performance</i>	



PHOENIX YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

# PYSO

grace notes

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21 | 22 PYSO SEASON

## music & memories

