BAY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS *of* VIRGINIA

Hampton Roads' Premier Youth Ensembles

Musician's Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contact Information.....3

Welcome, Mission, & EDI Statement.....4

Our History.....5

Your Musical Development.....6

Our Expectations.....7

Probationary Status and Dismissal.....9

Attendance & Policies.....10

Inclement Weather and Emergencies.....11

Special Rehearsals:
Dress Rehearsals, Sectionals, Seating
Auditions/Evaluations.....12

Concert Dress Code.....13

Concerts, Tickets, and Recordings.....14

Parent Involvement and Volunteering.....15

Fundraising, Grants & Financials.....16

CONTACT INFORMATION

MAILING ADDRESS:
Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia
P.O. Box 10897
Norfolk, VA 23513

You may also deliver mail to the information desk at rehearsals.

WEBSITE: www.bayyouth.org
PHONE: (757)618-1800
EMAIL: executive_director@bayyouth.org
Dr. Elizabeth Meszaros, Executive Director

BYOV relies heavily on email communication. It is the best way to reach us and is our preferred method of communication for sending information to you. Be sure to provide us with a frequently checked email address(es) at registration. Regularly check your spam inbox and add us to your address book. If your email address changes or you are not receiving BYOV emails, notify us immediately. Refer to our website regularly for information about our season.

“Like” us on Facebook and check our feed for the latest announcements and schedule information. This may be updated more frequently than our website.

REACHING US BY PHONE:

MEMBERS and GENERAL PUBLIC **(757)618-1800**
JUNIOR STRINGS & STRING ORCHESTRA (**757)713-4035**
ALL OTHER ENSEMBLES **(757) 618-1800**

BYOV staff members work part time and from home offices. We appreciate your understanding and patience as they work to respond to your questions.

WELCOME TO
BAY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS OF VIRGINIA!

Mission Statement: The mission of Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia is to provide the highest level of symphonic ensemble training and performance opportunities to the young musicians of Hampton Roads.

Membership in any Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia ensemble is an honor only to those who have demonstrated proficiency on their chosen instrument through our audition process. Members should be proud of their musical accomplishments in attaining membership.

STATEMENT OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia (BYOV) makes a pledge to engage in equitable practices to provide the highest level of ensemble training to the diverse population of Hampton Roads. As an established cultural organization in our community, BYOV recognizes that we have a unique responsibility to create an environment where our young musicians, families, audiences, and staff are able to participate fully regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, sexual orientation, or physical and cognitive ability. We acknowledge the history of systemic racism, marginalization, socio-economic inequities, and under-representation of Black, Indigenous, and people of color in classical music. BYOV is committed to operating with the maximum degree of action, competency, intentionality, accountability, and dedication to equity, diversity, and inclusion in the following areas which include, but are not limited to:

- Artistic programming and repertoire selection
- Reaching musicians and audience members of all backgrounds
- Sharing our resources with the underserved members of our community.
- Recruiting and selecting staff, board, and guest artists
- Identifying, auditioning, and selecting underrepresented young musicians
- Supporting underserved community events
- Presenting performances in culturally diverse venues
- Expanding marketing and advertising opportunities
- Cultivating diverse donors and sponsors
- Continuing education in equity, diversity and inclusion

OUR HISTORY

Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia celebrates 50 years of orchestral training during our 2022-2023 Season! Our history began with the founding of Tidewater Youth Orchestras in 1972 by four community leaders: Russell Stanger, former director of the Norfolk Symphony (now the Virginia Symphony Orchestra), local businessman Meier "Easy" Birshtein, and two Symphony musicians who were also public school teachers, Greg Barnes and Linda Althoff. They auditioned over 200 high school musicians at Northside Junior High School. C. Sidney Berg, Symphony percussionist and Supervisor of Music for Norfolk Public Schools, was chosen to be the first conductor. In 1991, Tidewater Youth Orchestras became Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia.

BYOV has grown to include six ensembles, accommodating students from the elementary grades to junior college. We have rehearsed over the years at Norfolk State University, and at public schools in Norfolk and Chesapeake. In August 2006, a group from Bay Youth toured internationally for the first time, performing in London and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. The Bay Youth Symphony presented a concert as part of the Jamestown 400th Anniversary Celebration in May, 2007. In June 2009, a tour group from BYOV visited Austria, and had the honor of performing at the Konzerthaus of the Vienna Philharmonic, as part of the Haydn 200-Year Celebration. In the summers of 2010-2013, BYOV held a one-week summer camp, BYOV@ the Academy, in partnership with Norfolk Academy and The Virginia Symphony. In June of 2015, Bay Youth Orchestras sent a small chamber orchestra on tour to Germany and the Czech Republic. They performed in Bad Schmiedeberg, Germany at Art Nouveau Spa Hall and in Prague, Czech Republic at the Emauzy Benedictine Monastery. In June of 2018, we toured Ireland!

Many fine musicians and educators have worked with BYOV, including Jorge Aguirre, Beth Argiro, Vince Brown, Peter Dundon, Dean Englert (Wind Symphony), Martin Glasco, Michael Hodgis, Dr. William LaRue Jones, Judy Meister, Walter Noona, Todd Parrish, Doug Earlenbaugh, Aaron Hardwick, Grant Gilman, Dennis Zeisler, and Christina Morton. In 1997, co-founder Greg Barnes retired after many years as the organization's Music Director and Symphony Conductor. He was succeeded in these posts by Leslie Stewart (1998), Jean Montes (2006), and Helen Martell (2007). In 2006, Greg Barnes returned to help lead Bay Youth's first international tour. Co-founder Linda Althoff, who also served as a BYOV conductor for many years, is still a member of the Bay Youth Advisory Board. In 2012, Bay Youth celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a new commission: "Symphony for Youth Orchestra: Rivers of the Chesapeake" by Alumnus James Hosay. In 2013, BYOV collaborated with the Virginia Children's Chorus to present a new version of Adolphus

Hailstork's *The Gift of the Magi*. Because of the leadership and support of BYOV board member and ODU's Professor of Bands, Dennis Zeisler, BYOV expanded its programming to include band ensembles, the Bay Youth Concert Band and Wind Symphony. To celebrate BYOV's 50th anniversary, the Concert Band Director, Mike Oare composed and performed a piece for the Concert Band titled: "Ebullient Energy."

YOUR MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

To help you improve your musical skills, and make the most of your experience in BYOV, we highly recommend:

• Honoring your commitment to BYOV and your ensemble. Our ensembles have waiting lists for members eager to participate. By accepting your position in BYOV, you are making a promise to your ensemble, conductor, and yourself. By all means necessary, maintain your commitment and complete the season with BYOV. **Members may not "audition up" to another ensemble mid-season.**

"AUDITIONING UP"

Members auditioning in the spring who have "aged out" of their ensemble will be granted another audition in late summer if they are unable to successfully audition up to the next ensemble. This courtesy is only extended to existing BYOV members in good standing, who have demonstrated commitment to the organization.

• *Taking regular private lessons*. Good private teaching does more than any other single factor to help students progress to a higher level.
• *Listening to classical music* on stations WFOS 88.9 and WHRO 90.3, as well as on recordings and on the internet.
• *Attending live concerts* by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Symphonicity, the Williamsburg Symphony, and other area groups. The Virginia Arts Festival in April/May brings many world-famous performing groups to Hampton Roads.
• *Attending other BYOV events*. We encourage all our members to support each other, and especially invite our beginning and intermediate students to attend performances by the more advanced groups. Remain at concerts to hear the other ensembles perform.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

BYOV members are expected to...

Demonstrate self-discipline while rehearsing and performing:

- Listen and concentrate throughout rehearsals and performances.
- Refrain from talking, texting, and making disruptive noises.
- Put away cell phones and other electronic devices before and during rehearsal.
- Leave hats, sunglasses and headphones at home.
- Observe performance etiquette, as instructed by the conductor.
- Show respect for staff and fellow students, and their property.

Respect the rehearsal and performance facilities at all times:

- Smoking, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs are PROHIBITED. Percussion instruments, pianos, and other equipment belonging to the venue may be used or moved only with permission from staff. Property belonging to the venue should be treated with care and respect.
- We are guests of each venue we enter! Students should not enter any part of the building or grounds not authorized for use by BYOV. Siblings of members must be supervised at all times.
- Rehearsal rooms are available for warming up 15 minutes before rehearsal begins. Students arriving earlier should remain in the common areas, unless under the supervision of a staff member.
- Snacks and drinks (except water bottles) may not be brought into the rehearsal rooms or performance venues. Chewing gum is not permitted in rehearsals or performances.

Be well prepared for rehearsals and concerts:

- Regular practice at home is essential to ensure high musical standards. Individuals may be asked to perform alone or in small sections during rehearsals.
- Students should bring their instrument and any supplies such as rosin, extra strings, rock stops, mutes, mallets, valve/key oil and bass stools, to EVERY rehearsal and performance.
- Students should provide a folding music stand when required.
- Rehearsals begin promptly at the stated times. Students should plan to arrive 15 minutes early, to allow time to unpack, set up, and warm up.

Follow BYOV music policy:

- Students are responsible for bringing their own copy of the music and a pencil to each rehearsal and performance.
- Parts should be marked only in #2 pencil (no colored pencils, pens, or markers.)
- Music should be kept in a folder, and not folded, cut, or torn.
- Respect for copyright law is essential. Students may not duplicate their music and must return all parts to BYOV.

- Students who must miss a performance for any reason must ensure that their parts are returned as soon as possible, and before the dress rehearsal.
- Music and folders must be returned by the end of the year.
- A fee of $10 will be charged for a lost folder.

Maintain eligibility for Bay Youth:

- Follow attendance policies as outlined in this handbook. **Participate actively in a school ensemble/music program, when available**. Please note, the reason for this policy is to maintain our good relationship with school music teachers. BYOV is meant to supplement, not supplant, school music programs. If students were to choose to participate in BYOV instead of their school program, school teachers risk losing many of their finest players. Since they support BYOV and send us good players to fill our ensembles, we must support them as well. Participation in KEYS, YMV, etc. for homeschoolers is encouraged. For students in elementary school where ensembles are not yet present, participation in a general music class, if available, is all that is required.
- Plan carefully to avoid scheduling conflicts.
- Achieve satisfactory marks on seating auditions and evaluations. Students with unsatisfactory marks will be asked to play again for their conductor to demonstrate their readiness to perform on the next concert. Students with unsatisfactory marks on the final seating audition of the year may be asked to re-audition in May or June in order to continue their participation in BYOV.
- Fulfill financial obligations and agreements by making tuition payments in a timely fashion.

Respect fellow musicians and BYOV staff.

- Treat all BYOV members with respect, kindness, and compassion. No form of harassment or bullying will be tolerated. Harassment includes but is not limited to sexual harassment and harassment based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, transgender status, national origin, age, disability (physical or mental), medical condition, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law.
- Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to: verbal conduct (such as jokes, threats, slurs, epithets, stereotyping, unwelcome comments about a person's protected characteristics, or offensive or derogatory voicemails); physical conduct; and visual conduct (such as racially offensive, derogatory or obscene videos, emails, texts, photographs, notes or letters, or any other written or graphic material).
- Sexual harassment is inappropriate conduct that warrants separate attention and discussion. Sexual harassment may

include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different genders. It includes harassment that is gender-based, as well as conduct that is sexual in nature. Examples of prohibited sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; leering; blocking normal movement; sending sexually explicit messages; other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or offensive nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature; sexually related jokes and comments or innuendoes; any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature

PROBATIONARY STATUS AND DISMISSAL

Students experiencing difficulty in maintaining the standards of music performance, behavior or eligibility outlined above will first be approached by their conductors to make them aware of the issues that need to be improved. If no improvement is made, or the problem recurs, students will receive a written Probation Notice, warning that a change is necessary. This notice must be returned to the Executive Director with student and parent/guardian signatures, to acknowledge receipt of the notice, understanding of the issue, and desire to correct the problem and continue membership for the season. Failure to return a signed copy may result in dismissal. Probationary status may be lifted by the Executive Director based on improvement. If adjustments are not made, or the problem returns, the student may be dismissed. Students on probationary status at the end of the season may be asked to re-audition for the following year.

BYOV has strict policies on bullying and harassment of all kinds, both in rehearsals and outside of rehearsals among members. Any student found to be in violation of this policy, either by observance or incidents reported by members, will be called to meet with the Executive Director and other pertinent staff members. Meetings may be attended by a member of the Board of Directors. Depending on the nature of the incident, BYOV retains the right to place a member on probation, temporary suspension or dismiss a member permanently.

ATTENDANCE

Each member makes a valuable contribution to their ensemble. Our members and their families help us achieve musical excellence through their commitment to make rehearsals the highest priority.

Report absences as far in advance as possible, using the online form at bayyouth.org/members. Last minute attendance issues can be reported by calling or texting the numbers listed in the Contact Us section of this Handbook. You may also email your Ensemble Manager directly. Submitting the form online is PREFERRED. It is your responsibility to check your schedule and to notify us of any absences in a timely manner. Should you miss a rehearsal without notifying BYOV, you will receive an email or a phone call from your Ensemble Manager to inquire about the reason for your absence.

Students who exceed the allowable number of absences will require permission from their conductor to perform on the concert. The conductor may ask the member to demonstrate that the concert music has been adequately prepared and may alter seating or part assignments. See below for the number of absences permitted for each concert cycle.

Students who have instrument problems (such as repairs being done or instruments left at school) are asked to attend in any case and participate by listening and marking their music. The same is true for injuries that prevent playing your instrument but do not impede your ability to be present at rehearsal.

Rehearsals will begin on time! Members must be in their seats with music and all necessary equipment and warming no less than 5 minutes before start time. Our venues are not available sooner than 30 minutes prior to rehearsal start time. Plan to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early!

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Symphony Orchestra (BYSO), Concert Orchestra (BYCO), & Wind Symphony (BYWS)

- Up to two absences are allowed for any one concert cycle (the rehearsal period between performances).
- **ALL DRESS REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY**
- It is the responsibility of the student to sign in at rehearsal Sign-in procedures will be discussed at the first rehearsal. Students who do not sign in may be counted absent.

Junior Strings (BYJST), String Orchestra (BYST), and Concert Band (BYCB)

- Up to three absences are allowed for any one concert (the rehearsal period between performances).
- **ALL DRESS REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY**
- Attendance will be taken by Ensemble Managers or Conductor Assistants at each rehearsal.

Acceptable Absences

- Contagious illness or any medical problem that could interfere with or be worsened by playing your instrument
- Family emergency
- Unavoidable schedule conflicts, such as mandatory school functions, college auditions, or family travel

Remember to use our online form at www.bayyouth.org/members/ to report your absence as far in advance as possible.

Tardiness

- Two tardy arrivals count as one absence.
- Early departures count the same as late arrivals, unless the student is dismissed by the conductor.
- In case of last-minute delays, call or text (757) 713-4035 (Strings & Jr. Strings), (757) 618-1800 (Concert & Symphony, and BYOV Bands). You may also email your Ensemble Manager.
- Students who may have a recurring problem because of marching band or other school activities should discuss their situation in advance with their conductor and BYOV Executive Director.

INCLEMENT WEATHER & EMERGENCIES

If Old Dominion University, Norfolk or Chesapeake Public Schools close or cancel after-school activities due to severe weather or any other emergency, BYOV must cancel rehearsal. If a concert venue closes, we will reschedule or cancel the concert. Please check public announcements of school and other closings. If circumstances allow, we will also post an update to our web page or Facebook (remember to "like" us on our Facebook page), change our pre-recorded phone message, and send an email announcement.

BYOV uses Gmail to send emails. Please be sure to add us to your address books, as these messages sometimes find their way into recipients' spam folder.

BYOV may hold rehearsals when public schools are closed for holidays. Refer to the dates listed on our website's calendar and your ensemble schedules provided at the first rehearsal. In these cases, the above message about cancellations does not apply.

BYOV draws its members from a very wide geographic area, and weather across this area may vary. Use your best judgment if local conditions may make travel unsafe. Call the number for your ensemble or report absence to us online at www.bayyouth.org/members if you are unable to travel to rehearsals/performances.

SPECIAL REHEARSALS

DRESS REHEARSALS (the last rehearsal before each concert) is usually held at the concert venue rather than at the regular rehearsal location. Note, despite the name, concert dress is not required for "dress" rehearsals :)

ALL DRESS REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY. Communicate conflicts with school music programs during BYOV dress rehearsals as soon as possible. Students who cannot attend dress rehearsal due to a school music conflict will only be permitted to perform at the concert with the express permission of the artistic staff. All other conflicts will not be considered (ie: sports events) Extraordinary circumstances such as illness or family emergencies will be considered on a case by case basis, discussed directly with your conductor.

SECTIONAL REHEARSALS, which are usually scheduled in advance of seating auditions, are an irreplaceable opportunity to work at mastering difficult passages under the guidance of a professional coach, who can model the best sound and articulation. Students should make every effort to attend these rehearsals. Students who cannot avoid missing a sectional should check with members of their section who were present to ensure their music is marked correctly and to receive information about excerpts that will be heard for performance evaluations/seating auditions. Conductors and BYOV staff often do not have this information!

SEATING AUDITIONS/PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS are usually held two or three times per season, either during a regular rehearsal or by sending audio recordings by email, for all ensembles except Junior Strings. Students will receive a copy of the judge's comments and scores when available so that they know what skills need improvement.

- Students who must miss a seating audition because of a schedule

conflict may arrange to record their auditions in advance. At least two weeks advance notice is necessary. Students should be aware that a live audition is preferred over a recorded audition.
- In case of illness or emergency on the audition day, students may come in for just the short time required for the audition itself. It is not possible to make up an audition once it has been missed. If you are sick, we ask that you wear a mask.
- Members who miss an audition will be seated in the back of the section for the next concert. In case of unsatisfactory performance on an audition or a missed audition, students will be asked to play for their conductor, in order to demonstrate their preparedness for the concert.

BYOV CONCERT DRESS CODE

Students are permitted to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity and clothing preferences, subject to the dress code adopted below.

Junior Strings, String Orchestra, Concert Band:
Floor length black skirt or full-cut black dress pants; long-sleeved white dress shirt or blouse, black bow tie, black dress shoes, black socks, black tights/hose. No jeans or athletic shoes!

Concert and Symphony Orchestras, Wind Symphony:
Floor length, long-sleeved black dress; or floor-length skirt/full-cut black dress pants with long-sleeved black blouse; black dress shoes and black hose/socks. Knee length (or shorter) skirts are prohibited. Black dress pants and black jacket (for Concert Orchestra); tuxedo or black suit (for Symphony); white dress shirt, black bow tie, black socks, and black dress shoes. No jeans or athletic shoes!

Other considerations:
- We suggest you shop early for your concert outfit and keep it separate, for the most part, from your everyday wardrobe, so it is in good condition for performances.
- All garments should be solid-colored. Jewelry, hair ornaments, and other accessories should be inconspicuous.
- Dress modestly and professionally.
- Students who do not comply with the dress code may be issued a Probation Notice, and may not be allowed on stage without adjustment to concert dress.
- Contact us or ask your conductor for clarification if you are unsure.

CONCERTS, TICKETS, AND RECORDINGS

REGULAR CONCERTS: Bay Youth annually presents four regular concerts, each featuring various ensemble combinations.

- The Opening Concert kicks off our season, with the Symphony Orchestra, Concert Orchestra, and String Orchestra. Concert Band will perform their opening concert with the Virginia Wind Symphony in November. Wind Symphony will perform their opening concert with the Virginia Wind Symphony in February.
- The Winter Concert presents Jr. Strings, Concert Band, and String Orchestra.
- The Concerto Concert features the winners of our annual Concerto Competition, performing with the Concert and Symphony Orchestras.
- The Finale Concert includes all six of our ensembles, with a special tribute to our graduating seniors. This concert may be presented in one or two parts depending on scheduling and venue availability.

SPECIAL CONCERTS
In addition to our regularly scheduled concert series, we present other special events:

- The Side-by-Side Concert puts over 140 musicians onstage, as the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and the Bay Youth Symphony Orchestra combine forces for a family-friendly mega-concert of familiar classics.
- The Concerto Competition presents individual members of the Bay Youth Symphony and Concert Orchestra in recital. The competition is free and open to the public.
- Community Engagement Concerts take our musicians into the communities of Hampton Roads for both free and ticketed events. Examples include Lobby Showcase performances before the VSO concerts or other occasions where our ensembles are called upon to present our programming.

CONCERT TICKETS: Family members and anyone interested in attending a performance must purchase tickets. Performing BYOV members do not need tickets to their concerts. Non-performing members of BYOV may receive one complimentary ticket to attend any concert performance.

Tickets will be available online, and links will be posted and emailed before each concert date. Tickets are also available at the door before the performances. These concerts may be recorded and available for

purchase as a Digital Download. CDs may be available upon request. BYOV also holds other fundraisers before concerts and the proceeds support our organization. Copyright laws prohibit unauthorized video recording of all concert performances.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEERING

BYOV depends on volunteers to run smoothly! We encourage all families to make at least one contribution to our volunteer efforts every season. In many cases, younger siblings or BYOV musicians can help.

Volunteer opportunities will be presented by email leading up to events and projects. Check your email for links to our "Sign Up Spot" and sign up online!

Volunteering for BYOV can look like:

- Being a concert usher or greeter
- Helping to prepare for concert activities on performance days
- Serving as proctors and runners at our seating auditions
- Selling concessions at snack tables on Monday nights
- Facilitating fundraisers at concerts
- Chaperoning at concerts by supervising students in green rooms before and during BYOV performances
- Selling T-shirts, recordings, and other BYOV merchandise at rehearsals and concerts

Supporting BYOV can look like:

- Purchasing concert program ads (list of price levels available upon request)
- Making donations
- Securing donations from friends, family, or your place of employment
- Providing meals for staff at all day events

FUNDRAISING, GRANTS, AND FINANCIALS

Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia is a 501(3)c non-profit organization. This designation means your contributions are tax deductible. BYOV earns about 60% of its operating expenses from membership dues. This leaves 40% from other sources. Ticket sales and Grants from the Virginia Arts Commission and local municipalities account for about 25% more. That leaves a considerable sum for us to raise by other means.

Renting concert halls, and even rehearsal space, cost thousands of dollars. Music rental and purchases, instrument rental and storage space, licensing fees, and the like are other expenses necessary to the smooth

running of our organization. Professional staff, including our stellar artistic leadership, administrative staff, set-up crew, library, and recording staff, as well as professional coaches, all come at a price commensurate with the exceptional educational service we provide for your student.

We have various fundraisers throughout the year to help raise funds and keep our membership fees reasonable. We try to raise money from outside the Bay Youth membership by doing outreach concerts, and selling program advertising. Some businesses offer to match employee contributions to nonprofit organizations. Please help us by checking to see if your company has a community support activity or matching funds for donations. We are always open to new ideas. If you have a fundraising suggestion, please contact us.

It is easy to donate to BYOV! https://bayyouth.org/support/sponsor/