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LA Philharmonic violinist, TEDx speaker and founder of Street Symphony, Vijay Gupta to receive Leonard Bernstein award at Longy's Sistema Side by Side Celebration

Featuring over 100 students from El Sistema-inspired programs in Massachusetts and members of the Longy Conservatory Orchestra

March 13, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. | Harvard University's Sanders Theatre

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. | On March 13, [Longy School of Music's](#) acclaimed [Sistema Side by Side orchestra](#) will take center stage at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre for the 4th annual gala celebration. Since its kickoff in 2014, the orchestra has performed with renowned conductors and artists including Los Angeles Philharmonic Music Director **Gustavo Dudamel**, members of the **Simón Bolívar String Quartet**, opera legend **Frederica von Stade**, Conductor **Leon Botstein** and the **Boston Cello Quartet**.

For this year's celebration, the orchestra will be joined by [Vijay Gupta](#), Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist, founder of Street Symphony, and a member of Longy's Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) faculty. Gupta will be presented with the **Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society** by **Longy President, Karen Zorn**. The award, endorsed by the Bernstein family, was established by Longy in 2000. Past recipients include Gustavo Dudamel, Mark Morris and Frederica von Stade.

Vijay Gupta—"A master of music and medicine"

A renowned advocate for the regenerative presence of artistic voices in social issues, Gupta joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2007 at the age of 19 after completing his Bachelor of Science in Biology and his Master of Music from the Yale School of Music. A passionate advocate for the dedicated presence of citizen artists in social and civic discourse, he founded and directs [Street Symphony](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging marginalized communities of people experiencing poverty, homelessness and incarceration through music.

Called "a master of music and medicine" by "The TODAY Show," Gupta is a gifted spokesperson for the power of arts to change lives and reconnect us to our shared humanity. He is a TED senior fellow, and in 2015, at the age of 27, he received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the University of La Verne. In 2016, Gupta joined the faculty of the Longy MAT program, which prepares musicians to become agents of social change through the study of music performance and pedagogy. With his guidance, MAT students participated in the Street Symphony Messiah Project on Skid Row in December 2015 and 2016. Gupta oversees Longy MAT music research projects and continues to foster on-going collaboration between MAT students and Street Symphony.

"We're delighted to have Vijay perform with our Sistema Side by Side orchestra and to present him with the Leonard Bernstein Award," said **President Zorn**. "He embodies what we strive to cultivate at Longy—exceptional musicians who combine a passion for creating and performing music with a commitment to using their talent to effect positive change in the world."

Sistema Side by Side Celebration

Longy's Sistema Side by Side Celebration showcases **Longy's social mission to prepare its conservatory students to positively influence the world** and features the **Sistema Side by Side Orchestra**, which pairs students aged 7 to 15 from El Sistema-inspired programs in Massachusetts with [Longy's Conservatory Orchestra](#) musicians and Longy faculty. In 2014, the program served 35 students and has since grown to over 150 students from all over Massachusetts, including the Boston String Academy, Kids 4 Harmony and Boston Conservatory Charter Lab School.

In addition to rehearsals and community- and character-building activities, the program presents unparalleled opportunities to children from diverse, underserved neighborhoods to perform in world-class venues, often accompanied by nationally renowned conductors and guest artists.

From Bach to The Avengers

New this year, the Sistema Side by Side program has launched three ensembles—**Symphony Orchestra, String Orchestra** and **Wind Ensemble**—all of which will perform at the gala. The Symphony Orchestra will perform the first movement of Bach’s Violin Concerto in A minor with Gupta and Pajarillo by Luis Guillermo Perez. The String Orchestra will perform an arrangement of Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Alborada,” and the Wind Ensemble will play music from “The Avengers.”

A celebratory dinner will follow the concert in Annenberg Hall. Tickets to the event are available at Longy.edu/gala. Proceeds from the gala will support Longy’s ongoing work as a leader in the El Sistema-inspired movement in the U.S. as well as scholarships and teaching assistantships and other innovative programs for Longy Conservatory students.

About Longy School of Music of Bard College

Longy School of Music of Bard College is a conservatory whose mission is to prepare musicians to make a difference in the world. World-class faculty and an innovative curriculum encourage students to push their artistic presentation beyond the proscenium model. Longy promotes musical understanding and technical mastery, and inspires imagination and inquiry into the musician’s role in the world. Longy serves graduate and undergraduate students from over 35 states and 16 countries between its Cambridge and Los Angeles campuses, with the latter housing the El Sistema-inspired Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program.

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Tickets:

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