



## Flourishing at 70

### Worcester Youth Orchestras celebrate with two commissions and performances from six decades of alumni

Mechanics Hall | May 20, 4 p.m.

WORCESTER, MASS. — [Worcester Youth Orchestras'](http://www.worcesteryouthorchestras.org) anniversary season under the direction of [Jonathan Edward Brennand](#) continues on May 20 at Mechanics Hall with a **70th Anniversary Alumni Concert**. The evening will feature the Worcester Youth Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestra's Alumni Orchestra, as well as the Worcester Chorus, Nashoba Valley Chorale and Auburn High School Choirs. Alumni of the WYO's prestigious programs from as far back as 1947 will join the ensembles and be in the audience. The concert will include the **world premiere of two works** commissioned by WYO to commemorate this anniversary: **"Fanfare"** by **Hansani Archibald** and **"Spiral Labyrinth"** by composer, arranger and performer [Josh Oxford](#). The program will also include **Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 "Ode to Joy"** and works by Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius. **Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito** will be in attendance to present the inaugural **Robert Kennedy Community Service Award** to Robert Kennedy, executive director of Mechanics Hall. Tickets are on sale now at [www.worcesteryouthorchestras.org](http://www.worcesteryouthorchestras.org).

The **Robert Kennedy Community Service Award** recognizes individuals who provide outstanding opportunities and support for young people in Central Massachusetts," said Brennand. "Bob Kennedy's unwavering support and mentorship has enabled WYO to flourish. It is the perfect time, as our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary coincides with his year of retirement, that we honor him and his service to the Greater Worcester community. We will present this award annually to an individual in the community that upholds these values."

Performing 30 concerts each season to audiences over 8,000 strong, the WYO has become a cherished institution in Massachusetts. It has been and continues to be a source of hope and inspiration to the nearly 4,500 student musicians who have performed in the various ensembles over the decades.

Born and raised in England, Brennand is in his sixth season with WYO and serves as both the artistic director and conductor of the 70-member Worcester Youth Symphony Orchestra. He also directs the elite chamber Baroque Orchestra and oversees the Preparatory Division and Orchestras and Honors Chamber Music Program. **In six years he has grown the WYO from one ensemble to ten:** Worcester Youth Orchestra, Worcester Youth Sinfonia, Worcester Youth Preparatory Orchestra, Worcester Youth Symphony Orchestra, Worcester Youth Junior Philharmonic, Baroque Orchestra, Clarinet & Flute Choirs, Honors Chamber Music (String Quartet & Woodwind Quintet) and the Wind Ensemble and Jazz Program.

"It's fitting for us to perform 'Ode to Joy' from Beethoven's Ninth because joy is what this concert brings to us," said Brennand. "Having so many alumni artists back on our stage and in our audience really brings home how many lives WYO has touched over the years, and with the expansion of our ensembles, how many more we will be able to impact in the future."



**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Dance of the Tumblers**

Jack Corbett, Conductor

Symphony, Philharmonic & Alumni/ae Orchestras

**TCHAIKOVSKY Romeo & Juliet Fantasy**

Bradford Chase, Guest Conductor

Worcester Youth Symphony Orchestra & Alumni/ae

**SIBELIUS Finlandia**

Jack Corbett, Conductor

Worcester Youth Philharmonic

**OXFORD Spiral Labyrinth (World Premiere)**

Commissioned by the WY Philharmonic for the 70th Anniversary

Jack Corbett, Conductor

Worcester Youth Philharmonic

**BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9 “Ode to Joy”**

**Mvt. IV: Choral Finale**

Jonathan Edward Brennand, Conductor

[Dana Varga](#), soprano

[Emily Harmon](#), mezzo-soprano

[Omar Najmi](#), tenor

[Ryne Cherry](#), bass

Worcester Youth Symphony Orchestra

[The Worcester Chorus](#), Chris Shepherd, Artistic Director

[Nashoba Valley Chorale](#), Anne Watson Born, Artistic Director

[Auburn High School Concert Choir](#), Nick LaPete, Director

**About the Worcester Youth Orchestra**

Founded in 1947, the WYO have maintained a presence in Central Massachusetts for more than 60 years, offering musical training, orchestral experiences and fostering life-long friendships for aspiring young musicians.

The orchestras' membership draws from over 60 towns and 72 schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, representing the finest talent from public, private and community music school programs. WYO is the third-oldest youth orchestra in the country and has a long history of masterful performances at Mechanics Hall, The Aud, The DCU, Tuckerman Hall, Alden Hall, The Hanover Theatre, Anna Maria College, Warner Theatre (Worcester Academy) and Holy Cross. They have appeared as guest performers at The Academy of Music in Northampton, Boston University's Tsai Center, Pickman Hall at Longy Conservatory, The Paramount Theatre in Boston, Dorothy



Young Center for the Arts at Drew University, home of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Notre Dame Basilica in Montreal, Franklin Opera House and will travel to the Czech Republic in February 2019 for a 9-day tour

All its students are actively involved in their school music programs as well as all-state and regional district music festivals. Under the artistic direction of Brennand for the past six seasons, WYO has grown to four orchestras, a wind ensemble, their Jazz Program, honors chamber music program, and a flute and clarinet choir. It serves more than 200 students and draws an annual audience of more than 8,000 concertgoers each season. Brennand founded the popular and beloved “Annual Family Holiday Concert,” which draws more than a 1,000 families each year to celebrate the festive season. WYO presents a number of community outreach concerts each year at various places throughout greater Worcester, bringing music and joy to all. Recent appearances include St. Vincent’s Hospital and Briarwood Retirement Community.

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Mechanics Hall

May 20, 4 p.m.

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For Tickets & More Information

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