

SONATA

PHILADELPHIA
SINFONIA

Sinfonia Orchestra News
Fall 2025

A Philadelphia Orchestra Side-by-Side; Chamber Music Side-by-Side; Fabulous Soloists; an End-of-Season Collaboration with the Philly Pops.... We've Quite a Year in Store!



Philadelphia Sinfonia's new Maestro, Linus Ip, conducts the season's extraordinary first concert at the Temple Performing Arts Center, November 23, 2025.

Under the direction of a new Music Director, Sinfonia's four ensembles have begun an amazing, memorable year!

The season opened with a November PS concert, titled "Voices Beyond Barriers" by our new Music Director, Linus Ip, bringing some of his signature ideas for orchestral training to the stage (see "Voices" article p. 3). By winter, all four ensembles will be on stage for one or two performances a piece,

and PS will be treated to a long-awaited side-by-side rehearsal with our friends at The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Later in the year, PSCO will share a side-by-side rehearsal with the adventurous chamber group, Ensemble 132, in town for a concert with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society; each of our Sinfonia ensembles will perform with a very special soloist, and a season-capping collaboration with the Philly Pops celebrating the

nation's semi-quincentennial will bring the season to a close.

In addition, throughout the year, sectionals, masterclasses, side-by-side rehearsals between our various Sinfonia ensembles will provide intensive work in the various sectionals, new ideas in masterclasses, and the side-by-side rehearsals between our various groups will give our more experienced members a chance to mentor, and the less-experienced some insight into repertoire that stretches and challenges them; good stuff for everyone!

And shall we reveal the soloists? Why not.... In the spring, PSP will perform Koussevitzky's *Concerto for Double Bass, Op. 3*, featuring Philadelphia Orchestra's Michael Franz, on the bass.

PS in its Festival concert with the Philly Pops will showcase saxophone soloist Ron Kerber, in — among other pieces — his own commissioned composition; and PSS will be joined in its spring concert by our own former Maestro, Gary White, on recorder. Wow, what a treat for our elementary ensemble, and I dare say that might be one performance not to miss!

So, here's to 2025 – 26 and all its many wonderful highlights!

Fall PSP/PSS Side-by-Side Rehearsal

Every year, each of our ensembles meets together with another of our ensembles wherein one group

is less experienced and is mentored for the day by the other more-experienced group. This Fall, PSP and PSS (our elementary

strings-only group) came together on the morning of November 8 to rehearse *Continued on page 4.*

From the Podium

As I begin my first season as Music Director of Philadelphia Sinfonia, I have witnessed the passion and discipline of this orchestra. From our students' dedication in rehearsal to support from families, teachers, and alumni, Sinfonia is a place where young artists discover not only musical excellence, but also confidence, curiosity, and a sense of belonging.

One of the things that immediately drew me to Sinfonia was our history of making music with intention. This is an ensemble that embraces challenges, values growth, and understands that the work we do is about much more than preparing notes on a page. Our approach to music education goes beyond only technical accuracy, but to think beyond, listen deeply to one another, respond with sensitivity, and collaborate to shape a unified musical voice. At Philadelphia Sinfonia, we shape our next generation of creative thinkers. Our young musicians carry forward the empathy, discipline, and imagination that the music cultivates. All of these habits translate directly into how our students navigate school, careers, and society. And I am deeply honored to contribute to this legacy.

As I step into this role, I am guided by my artistic vision that music tells meaningful stories. This season we programmed music

that tells stories. I would like to invite our young musicians and audiences to experience the world through different lenses. We start with our first concert Voices Beyond Barriers, which brings forward composers whose experiences and identities have historically been overlooked.

In building leadership training into our program, I have also introduced a Conducting Apprentice program. I believe that developing leadership skills in young musicians is just as important as developing their instrumental abilities. Conducting teaches students to communicate clearly, to think about the ensemble as a whole, and to make artistic decisions with confidence and responsibility. This year, we will also offer our students the highest level of professional musical opportunities. Our side-by-side rehearsal with The Philadelphia Orchestra will give our students an excellent opportunity to rehearse side by side with world-class musicians, and our season finale collaboration with Philly Pops will bring them into a professional concert working environment.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to all of you who have welcomed me so warmly. Your enthusiasm, your trust, and your commitment to these students



Linus Ip, Music Director & Conductor

have made the transition into this role inspiring. I look forward to discovering the possibilities with this orchestra and with you in rehearsal, in performance, and in the community.

I cannot wait to share this season with you and see you all soon.

Linus Ip
Music Director & Conductor



The first of two sectionals to work on Dvorak's 8th symphony were held on October 25. Here, Mr. Linus and Ms. Evans (Board President, a professional oboe player) were working with PS clarinets and oboes while other sections were engaged with coaches throughout our rehearsal venue at the Howard Center.

We Welcome Our New Music Director!

It is my pleasure to welcome Linus Ip as the new Philadelphia Sinfonia Music Director and Conductor. Linus comes to us from the Mannes School of Music and the Peabody Conservatory of Music. His belief that “youth orchestras thrive when they embrace new ideas, fresh perspectives, and a deep commitment to diversity—and that they flourish when artistic excellence is supported by clear communication, collaborative leadership, and an inclusive vision” made him a perfect fit for Sinfonia. Linus’ deep commitment to music education aligns well with our commitment to “musicianship, scholarship, and leadership” which has been well-established by Gary White. We are so excited to have you as part of the Sinfonia family, Mr. Linus!

I would also like to take this moment to thank Gary White for his dedication to educating students, to excellent musical performance, and to this wonderful organization. For more than twenty years Gary worked tirelessly molding Sinfonia into an organization that cares, nurtures and gives young musicians the space to be the best musicians they can be. We are so grateful for the foundation Gary has established, and we look forward to a successful future with Linus Ip. Thank you Maestro White, for all you have accomplished, for your time and energy, for the laughter and friendships, and for the music.

Dawn Evans
President, Board of Directors

Voices Beyond Barriers: A Vision for Orchestral Training

Sinfonia’s new Music Director, Linus Ip, has brought ideas and concepts for a vibrant orchestral training program, some of which were signaled by his very first PS concert performed on November 23 titled “Voices Beyond Barriers.”

The repertoire included a piece from the classical cannon, Dvořák’s 8th Symphony; two works by women composers that are rarely performed; and the “Sound of Music Medley” from the beloved stage and screen productions of the 20th Century theater-writing team, Rodgers and Hammerstein.

So what does Mr. Linus mean by “Voices Beyond Barriers”?

It is his belief that good orchestral training for young musicians must provide a balance between major works of the classical cannon and music from a variety of other genres, like Broadway, jazz, etc. *and also* work of under-represented composers, those who were rejected — or hidden — in their time due to gender, race or an unfamiliar style.

The two women composers featured on this November program were Fanny Mendelssohn, sister of the more famous

Felix Mendelssohn, and Lili Boulanger, the sister of Nadia Boulanger, a 20th Century musician, known primarily for teaching many accomplished composers, including. Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, and Philip Glass among others.

“Under-represented” barely explains the barriers that each of these two women composers faced. Although separated by most of a century, each received little recognition due to gender, with, for instance, much of Fanny Mendelssohn’s work being published under the name of her brother Felix – a fact musicologists have uncovered over time.

It is striking, but welcome, this demonstration of Mr. Linus’ conviction early in his tenure. While Sinfonia conductors have performed works in the past from genres beyond the orchestral cannon, and — with similar views about representation — programmed work by women, non-white, ethnically different, or otherwise new and unfamiliar artists, *this*, Mr. Linus’ first concert program featuring several representative examples was a statement.

Welcome, Mr. Linus!

2025 – 2026 Concert Schedule

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA (PS)

Sunday, November 23, 2025; 3 PM

Temple Performing Arts Center

Sunday, March 1, 2026; 3 PM

with PSCO

Temple Performing Arts Center

Friday, May 22, 2026; 8 PM

Marian Anderson Hall, The Kimmel Center

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (PSCO)

Sunday, March 8, 2026; 3 PM

Shannondell; Audubon, PA

Tuesday, May 12, 2026; 7 PM

Foulkeways; Gwynedd, PA

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS (PSP)

Sunday, February 15, 2026; 4 PM

with PSS

Trinity Center for Urban Life

Sunday, May 17, 2026; 3 PM

Temple Performing Arts Center

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA STRINGS (PSS)

Saturday, January 17, 2026; 7 PM

Howard Center for the Arts

Sunday, February 15, 2026; 4 PM

Trinity Center for Urban Life

Saturday, May 2, 2026; 7 PM

Howard Center for the Arts

Season Repertoire

The repertoire listed below for each orchestra is a sampling of what our ensembles will be performing in 2025 – 2026. This is a partial listing and subject to change.

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA:

Concert #1: Voices Beyond Barriers

Overture in C (1832) – Fanny Mendelssohn (1805 – 1847)

D'un Soir Triste (1918) – Lili Boulanger (1893 – 1918)

The Sound of Music Medley (1959) – Richard Rodgers (1902 – 1979)

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88 (1889) – Antonin Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

The Wreckers – Overture (1906) – Ethel Smyth (1858 – 1944)

Tragic Overture (1880) – Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)

Fate Now Conquers (2020) – Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

Symphony No. 5 (1888) – P.I. Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893) (for sight reading session)

Symphony No. 5 (1808) – Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Raiders March (from Raiders of the Lost Ark) (1981) – John Williams (b. 1932)

Danzon No. 2 (1944) – Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)

Folk Song for Orchestra – Huang Ruo (b. 1976)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS

Los Esclavos Felices Overture (1820) – Juan Cristóstoma Arriaga (1806 – 1826)

Brook Green Suite (1933) – Gustave Holst (1874 – 1934)

Pavanne, Op. 50 (1887) – Gabriel Faure (1845 – 1924)

Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major D. 485 (1816) – Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)

Bal Masqué for Chamber Orchestra Op. 22 (1893) – Amy Beach (1867 – 1944)

The Abduction from the Seraglio Overture K. 384 (1782) – W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Concerto for Double Bass, Op. 3 (1902) – Serge Koussevitzky (1874 – 1951)

featuring Michael Franz, double bass

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sinfonia No. 3 in C Major (1773) – Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714 – 1788)

Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K 546 (1788) – W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Serenade in E minor, Op 20 (1892) – Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

III. Juba from String Quartet No. 2 in A minor (1935) – Florence Price (1887 – 1953)

Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a (1894) – Anton Arensky (1861 – 1906)

Bal Masqué, Op. 22 (string orchestra version) (1893) – Amy Beach (1867 – 1944)

Simple Symphony IV. Frolicsome Finale (1933–34) – Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA STRINGS

Finale from Overture #5 (1770) – William Boyce (1711 – 1779)

The Deserted Garden (1933) – Florence Price (1887 – 1953)

Concerto in A minor for violin (1730) – J.S. Bach ((1685 – 1750) 1st movement with soloist Lucia Nasrallah



Noah Shannon, PSP cellist, with his PSS stand partner Eva Buckley during the PSP-PSS Side-by-side rehearsal, November 8, 2025.

Fall PSP/PSS Side-by-Side Rehearsal

Continued from page 1.

Amy Beach's *Bal Masqué* for Chamber Orchestra. PSP student, Noah Shannon, willingly provided an overview of the experience:

"The PSS-PSP side-by-side is a very special and important thing that we do at Sinfonia each year. It gives the PSS

members a chance to see what playing in a full orchestra is like and to experience the ensemble some of them may be part of in the future. Getting to play with the PSP cellists when I was in PSS last year inspired me to work hard and audition for PSP. I was glad to provide the opportunity for the PSS members this year."

2025 – 2026 Season: First Rehearsal on September 13, 2025

Philadelphia Sinfonia opened a new era at the Howard Center on September 13, 2025 as we welcomed our New Music Director, Linus Ip. Students were eager to see old friends, meet new ones, get started rehearsing their first concert repertoire, and to meet their new artistic leader. And for PS, the advanced orchestra, this was a first rehearsal with their new conductor – and his first opportunity to engage with them.



PS cellos warming up before rehearsal.



PS clarinets in rehearsal.



Mr. Linus chatted with PS students during their rehearsal break.

ALUM PROFILE:

Jake Heil: From Performer to Leader!

When Jacob (Jake) Heil first began playing violin in third grade, he had no idea that it would lead to a varied and exciting career in music administration. His story is one of taking on challenges—from trying a new instrument to pursuing entirely new opportunities.

Jake's first adventure, after starting to play violin as a young child, was when his school invited students to join the orchestra, and he thought — “Why not!” The first time he picked up a violin at a school orchestra rehearsal — he was both excited and nervous. He shares: “My mom loves to recall me sobbing in bed the night before the first rehearsal, saying that I wanted to quit (before I even began!) because I was nervous – but, of course, she encouraged me to do it, and I am so glad that I did.” Eventually, Jake’s private violin teacher recommended that he switch to the viola, and what happened? Jake “fell in love” with the viola and “never looked back.”

Jake played viola with Sinfonia for three years, including his freshman year at Rowan University where he majored in Music Administration with an Honors concentration and immersed himself fully in music. He performed with Rowan’s University Orchestra, String Ensemble, and the Philharmonic of Southern New Jersey (PSNJ), all while managing a full-time course load and two part-time jobs.

His favorite Sinfonia memory is a side-by-side rehearsal with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Yannick Nézet-

Séguin. “I believe we were playing Dvořák 8, and it was such a joyous moment. I sat next to Marvin Moon of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and I feel as if that moment gave rise to some of the strongest playing of my life—being surrounded by greatness pushes one to be better.”

At Rowan, Jake’s passion for arts administration was driven by a goal of making music and the arts accessible to as many people as possible. He began as an intern with the Philadelphia International Music Festival (PIMF), a role that grew into a full-time position after graduation. He was promoted to Operations Director, taking over all day-to-day operations for PIMF’s summer camp locations in Philadelphia, Miami.... and Cremona, Italy.

In recent years, Jake also became General Manager of PSNJ (where he continues to play viola) and has consulted for numerous arts organizations, including the New Jersey Chamber Orchestra, Music at Bunker Hill, the Philly Pops, and the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. He also owned and operated The Music Barn, an outdoor venue that made live music accessible during the pandemic – becoming one of the first venues in the country to operate safely outdoors during the pandemic.

Reflecting on his time with Sinfonia, Jake says, “Sinfonia holds a special place in my heart—it always has and always will. Even when I am not there on Saturdays, I am cheering on Sinfonia from the sidelines. It played such a critical role in my



Jake Heil, music administrator

development as a musician and as an adult that I owe it to them to remain involved however they see fit.” It is no wonder that keeping music in his life and connecting with others through it remains among Jake’s greatest joys.

Jake thanks his wife, parents, and mentors for their support throughout his musical journey. And Jake — we thank you for sharing your passion for Sinfonia and all things musical!

~ Diane Penneys Edelman

Sinfonia musicians and families are welcome to contact Jake at jacobheil62@gmail.com.

Four Sinfonia Alums join the Stage for November Concert

Drawn from as far back as 2003 (Rachel Murray, flute) and as recently as the 2025 graduating class (Concertmaster

Derek Hou), four alums played our November concert. Two provided needed instruments, and two simply offered to play, joining the first violins. Besides

Rachel and Derek, we were pleased to welcome Matthew Salazer, trumpet, and Ethan Frankel, violin. All four contributed to a very impressive concert!

ALUM PROFILE:

Nazir Ebo: Award-Winning Jazz Drummer

From *pre-school to adulthood around the world* – that describes Sinfonia alum Nazir Ebo’s musical journey!

Nazir grew up in a house filled with music, following his brother, Justin Faulkner, a drummer, whom he watched and from whom he first learned to love drums. And — at the tender age of 6, Nazir began to study drums at the Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts, under the direction of Lovett Hines. Mr. Hines gave his students the opportunity to learn the history of jazz, play in large ensembles, and receive private lessons. At age 10, Nazir was profiled on the All About Jazz website and some years later, on the Clef Club website as well.

Then, in middle school at St. Francis de Sales Catholic School in West Philadelphia, Nazir took a new route on his musical journey. At that time, *Play On, Philly!*, a non-profit providing “intensive music education to K-12 students who would typically lack access, as a vehicle for life skills and academic achievement,” had just started up with a classical music focus — *at Nazir’s school*. Already comfortable playing drums, Nazir was allowed to take up a new instrument — and chose the string bass, which is what he played as a Sinfonia student. Nazir shares: “Through that program (*Play On, Philly!*), my peers and I were encouraged to write our own compositions, perform live regularly around the city, and record together in the studio.

At a young age, this gave us a great sense of community and purpose.”

And Nazir also shares: while “*Play On Philly* was my introduction to classical music, jazz has always held a special place in my heart—it’s how I started.” With drumming and music already in his soul and many great experiences along the way, Nazir has now become a renowned touring performer and music professor as well.

Nazir’s career has continued to blossom. He was recently described in a music festival write-up as “a rising star talent,” whom WRTI-FM called the Philly jazz scene’s “next breakthrough talent.” Nazir so appreciates the station’s praise: “I’m deeply grateful to WRTI for that write-up. I’ve always had a connection to WRTI growing up. One of the first recording sessions and interviews I ever did was actually there—I think I was about 12 or 13 years old at the time. . . . It feels good to be recognized by people who have watched me grow up and followed my career since I was young.” Nazir also recently received one of two 2025 Career Advancement Awards from the Philadelphia Musical Fund Society, and is thrilled to be the Award’s first jazz musician recipient.

For almost three years, Nazir has been touring internationally with a quartet led by world-class saxophonist Joshua Redman, which has been “an amazing experience.” In addition, he has joined the faculty at Temple University’s Boyer College of



Nazir Ebo, jazz drummer

Music, where he teaches drums and works with ensembles.

We are thrilled to watch Nazir along his path as a great performer and teacher, and can’t wait to see – and hear – what’s next on his musical agenda. Please join us in following his career at the Musical Fund Society and Blue Note Records website pages devoted to his work!

~ Diane Penneys Edelman

Please feel free to contact Nazir at nazmusic123@icloud.com.

On the Board

We welcomed a new board member this year. Please meet:

Krystal Bordoni-Cowley, an attorney who specializes in Commercial Real Estate at Saul Ewing LLP. Krystal came to us at the suggestion of former board member and Sinfonia alum, Kevin Levy, who also practices law at Saul Ewing, and she looks to be a great fit for our board.

A *Cum Laude* graduate of Drexel University’s School of Law, Krystal served as Editor of Drexel’s Law Review. In addition to her commercial real estate practice, Krystal provides pro-bono legal services to indigent clients through Philly VIP and has provided pro-bono music copyright services in the past.

Krystal also has a musical background; she is a classical and electric violinist, synth player, and vocalist, and has produced and played in various Philadelphia based bands over the years.

In addition to music, Krystal’s other love and avocation is gardening.



Linus Ip, *Music Director and Conductor*

Robert Hodges, *Managing Director*

Danielle Garrett, *PSP & PSCO Conductor and Librarian*

Beth Dzwil, *PSS Conductor*

Kasey MacAdams, *Program Manager*

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Mission Statement

Philadelphia Sinfonia supports the artistic growth of young musicians in the Delaware Valley by providing high-level ensemble experience in a supportive educational environment.

We believe that the pursuit of excellence requires performers with integrity, working together toward a common goal. Thus our mission is three-fold: to provide ensemble opportunities for young musicians, to achieve the highest level of artistic advancement, and to educate young people broadly to be strong citizens and leaders as well as responsible musicians.

We recruit from a demographically diverse student population to provide an opportunity to anyone who musically qualifies and to enrich the experience of all members of the organization.



2025-26 Highlights, Repertoire, Concert Schedule; We welcome Linus Ip, and more....

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