H A N D B O O K
2017-18

Arkansas Symphony Orchestra
Philip Mann | Music Director

Youth Ensembles

Preparatory Prelude Academy Youth

www.facebook.com/ASOYouthEnsembles
Website:
www.arkansassymphony.org/education/youthorchestra
Welcome to another EXCITING year for the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Youth Ensembles. Whether in Preparatory, Prelude, Academy or Youth Orchestra, all of the students should be ready to make great new friends, and have unforgettable memories to share at this time next year. Along the way each group will make music at the highest level, led by our excellent staff of conductors, including Drew Irvin, Kiril Laskarov, concertmasters of the ASO, Tom McDonald, and Casey Buck.

Many of the top members of the ASYO, some of whom will be pursuing a career in music, played in three or four of the ASO youth ensembles. There are a number of alums of the ASO youth ensembles who now, a number of years later, play in the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. One of the great plus that students in our program have is that they can take advantage of all the experience around them and easily stay informed, attend performances of the older groups, and the Arkansas Symphony itself. One of the highlights will be the May Side-by-Side Concert, where all four youth orchestras will play on one program. I will look forward to seeing the members of all four youth orchestras, their families, and the entire Arkansas Symphony Orchestra in one room at once, either on stage or in the audience!

This year, the ASYO will once again spread its wings and perform at the Albert Pike Memorial Temple in downtown Little Rock. I’ll look forward to working with everyone. Thanks already to our wonderful staff of parent volunteers, and let’s get ready to make beautiful music!

Geoffrey Robson
Associate Conductor, ASO
Music Director, ASOYE
ARKANSAS SYMPHONY YOUTH ENSEMBLES HANDBOOK

As a member of the ASOYE (Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Youth Ensembles) you will have numerous opportunities to develop your talents in an atmosphere of musical excellence. We hope you will find it to be a most rewarding and enjoyable experience musically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Like professional musicians, you will be expected to be present and on time for all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and performances. The commitment is a major one, but the benefits can be enormous. We are sure you will find the investment of your time and talent very worthwhile.

**Participation in the ASOYE Program is for students ages 9-20 who are attending school. Please note that the upper age limit for Youth Orchestra participation is now 20 years of age, which means we will accept applications from college woodwind, brass and percussion players.**

Parents and students: Please read the material in this handbook carefully (even if you are an ASOYE veteran). Keep it handy and accessible. You will find it a useful resource throughout the year. Feel free to call the ASOYE offices at (501) 666-1761, ext. 116 for clarification and elaboration of any of the policies listed in this handbook.

**REGISTRATION**

It is imperative that each student is registered by no later than July 30th of each year. An application may be completed at the Youth Orchestra page of the ASO website. It will automatically be forwarded to Barbara Burroughs at the ASO Offices. No need to mail in an application.

**TUITION**

Tuition is $225 per school year and is due by September 30. Make checks payable to the ASOYE and mail to P. O. Box 7328, Little Rock, AR 72217. A student will not be allowed to enroll if tuition remains unpaid from the previous semester.

Please do not give paperwork and/or money to conductors. To the greatest extent possible, payments should be in the form of a check (not cash) and made out to the ASOYE. Checks should be annotated in lower left corner with student’s name and purpose of payment. Please consider your canceled check your receipt.
**SCHOLARSHIPS (new information)**

Full details and application forms for assistance are available on the Youth Orchestra Section of the ASO website. All Scholarship Applications should be completed online. Each application will automatically be sent to Barbara Burroughs at the Arkansas Symphony. There is no need to complete the application and mail to the ASO Offices. Please complete online application no later than September 30th. Scholarships do not carry over from year to year. A new application must be completed each year.

The ASOYE has worked hard to establish and develop scholarship funds to ensure that no qualified student shall be denied membership because of an inability to pay the full tuition fee. Through the generosity of many community entities, funds are available to provide full tuition assistance.

**COMMUNICATION**

It is very important that the ASOYE office and the attendance Moms for each group have current, up-to-date information on each student through the online registration database. **If you are not receiving frequent e-mails from your attendance Mom for your group, there is a problem with your e-mail.** Please notify her of any changes or problems with your e-mail. Each parent and ASOYE student should review all information to make sure it is up to date. In addition, the ASOYE Handbook will provide any program information you might need. Any deviation from what is printed in the Handbook is communicated directly by e-mail. Rehearsal schedules are posted online and updated as needed.

**YOUTH ORCHESTRA CONTACTS**

**Attendance:** Nancy Shepard  
*Asoye.attendance@gmail.com*  
(501) 837-5040

**Assistants**

Stacy Asher  
*Stacy.asher@icloud.com*  
(501) 658-1003

Annelle King  
*tdking@sbcglobal.net*  
(501) 681-0954

**Librarian:** Nancy Shepard
Asove.attendance@gmail.com
(501) 837-5040

Set-Up: Mary & Lirong Yu (501-413-4317, Mary’s); Ina Kim, Sophie Li, Miseon Kim.

Conductor: Geoffrey Robson
203- 314-8459
geoffrobson@gmail.com

ACADEMY ORCHESTRA CONTACTS

Attendance: Valerie Stearns
Valerie.stearns@littlerockchristian.com
(501) 650-5958

Librarian: Joseph DePrez
jde_perez@yahoo.com

Set-Up: Oksana Pavilionis (chair)
oksanasmusic@hotmail.com
(870) 405-6856

Conductor: Tom McDonald
(50) 580-5601
Tommcdonald5506@comcast.net

PRELUDE ORCHESTRA CONTACTS

Attendance: Christi Lemery
Christine.lemery@gmail.com
(314) 223-5039

Set-Up: Allison Ellsworth
a.ellsworth0429@comcast.net
(501) 612-2568

Conductors: Kiril Laskarov
laskarov@hotmail.com
(501)944-6557

Drew Irvin
drewirvin@gmail.com
(501) 960-0396
PREPARATORY ORCHESTRA CONTACTS

Attendance: Maria Craig
Mariacraig112482@yahoo.com
(501) 960-2083

Set-Up: Open

Conductor: Casey Buck
cabuck@gmail.com
(501) 499-2212

ASO YOUTH ENSEMBLES

All students are required to take private lessons and to participate in their school music programs.

It is recommended that students audition to move up after their second year in a group, and no later than their third year in any group.

Youth Orchestra – Geoffrey Robson, Conductor

The Youth ensemble consists of the most advanced string, woodwind, brass and percussion players from around the state. Entrance is by audition only and those who audition should be familiar with advanced techniques to perform the standard orchestral repertoire. All students should be in the 8th through college or 20 years of age, whichever comes first. The ASYO rehearses most Sundays at the ASO Offices.

Academy Orchestra – Tom McDonald, Conductor

Academy is the intermediate-level ensemble with a full complement of strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. An audition is required for entrance. String players must demonstrate facility above 1st position and in keys up to 4 sharps and 4 flats. Woodwinds and Brass players should be at the proficiency level to make All-Region Band. Academy meets on selected Saturdays throughout the semester at Byrne Hall, the ASO Offices.
Prelude Orchestra – Kiril Laskarov and Drew Irvin, Conductors  
(Recommended for students 4\textsuperscript{th} through 8 grades)

The Prelude Orchestra is for those more advanced beginning string players. Students need to have studied their instruments for at least 2 years, and to have learned at least two sharps and two flats in first position. Students in this group MUST be able to read music. Students must be familiar with the concept of, and received an introduction to, shifting. Entrance is by audition only. Rehearsal is at the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Woolly Auditorium.

Preparatory Orchestra – Casey Buck, Conductor

Students need to have studied their instruments for at least 1 year, to have learned at least two sharps in first position, and be reading music. A written recommendation from a teacher is required. For students in 3\textsuperscript{rd} through 8\textsuperscript{th} grade. This ensemble meets twice monthly at Byrne Hall, the ASO Offices.

**REHEARSALS**

Rehearsals are generally held twice monthly on Saturdays, except for the Youth Orchestra which meets most Sunday afternoons. The Prelude Orchestra meets at the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Woolly Auditorium, and the Preparatory, Academy and Youth Orchestras meet at the ASO Rehearsal Hall. A published schedule of all rehearsals is on the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra website [www.ArkansasSymphony.org](http://www.ArkansasSymphony.org).

**REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE**

Preparatory, Prelude, Academy, and Youth Orchestra members are expected to be in their seats and ready to play at least 15 minutes prior to rehearsal. If you are on-time, you are late.

You should have your instrument and all proper accessories including mutes, rockstops, extra strings, reeds, percussion mallets and a pencil with an eraser, as well as your music in the proper folder. Do not rely on your stand partner.

- Bring your music to every rehearsal.
- No hats shall be worn during rehearsals.
- Cell phones shall be turned off and not used during rehearsals
- No one is excused early from any rehearsal
- Feet flat on the floor while playing
• Breaks are scheduled so that all personal matters can be taken care of. Leaving during a rehearsal for whatever reason is discouraged. In Youth Orchestra no one is allowed to leave during rehearsal time.
• Parents please pick up your children promptly at the end of rehearsal
• No chewing gum

The rehearsal schedules will be posted on the ASO website: www.ArkansasSymphony.org/Education/Youth Orchestra

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at all rehearsals, dress rehearsals and concerts is mandatory, but we know that under certain circumstances, your child may need to miss a rehearsal.

In case of illness or emergency, the member or member’s parent/guardian must e-mail or call the Attendance Mom a minimum of one hour prior to rehearsal. Any extenuating circumstances that affect attendance should be discussed in a timely manner with the Music Director.

All participating students must follow the ASOYE rehearsal schedule regardless of individual school schedules, such as school vacations and holidays. Please refer to our ASOYE schedules before making travel or vacation plans and/or work schedule for older students. In most cases, special considerations can be made with employers and other school ensembles. Please discuss any conflicts with the Attendance Mom of your particular orchestra.

Below are the maximum allowable absences per orchestra per concert cycle:

Attendance for Preparatory and Prelude Orchestras
Students in the Preparatory and Prelude Orchestra will be allowed a maximum of 2 absences the first semester (prior to Mid-Winter Concert) and 2 absences prior to the spring concert in May. Those students missing more than the allowed maximum will not be allowed to play the concert for that semester. Dress Rehearsals are required attendance and not included in this absence policy.

Attendance for Academy Orchestra
Academy Orchestra string students will be allowed a maximum of 3 absences for the first semester (prior to the Mid-Winter Concert) and a maximum of 3 absences prior to the spring concert in May. Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion players will be allowed a maximum of 2 absences for the first semester and 2 absences the second semester. Those students missing more than the allowed maximum will not be allowed to play the concert for that semester. Dress Rehearsals are required and are not included in this attendance policy.
**Attendance for Youth Orchestra**

Students will be allowed five (5) absences for the 2017-2018 season. All concerts are required and are not included in this attendance policy. Missing a required event may result in re-seating, suspension or removal from the ASYO for the 2016-2017 season at the discretion of the conductor and the ASOYE administrative staff. Please notify the ASYO Attendance Mom by e-mail as soon as an unavoidable absence becomes apparent.

**L A T E  A R R I V A L S**

All ASOYE members must be seated at least 15 minutes prior to each rehearsal, sectional or workshop. Members are expected to return to their seats, ready to play at the end of break. Leaving one’s seat before break should be reserved only for emergencies.

If an ASOYE member is repeatedly late or absent, or displays inappropriate etiquette, he or she may face one or more of the following consequences:

- Re-seating within the section
- Loss of solo opportunities
- Restriction from participating in master classes or the ensemble concerts
- Removal from the orchestra

**Please be responsible to notify the Attendance Mom of your orchestra as soon as you know you will be unavoidably absent or late for rehearsals.**

ASOYE MEMBERS are required to attend all rehearsals and concerts. It is impossible for those who do attend to rehearse effectively when people are missing. It hurts the ensemble as a whole, and is disrespectful to one’s fellow members.

If a student knows well in advance of an unavoidable schedule conflict, and notifies the attendance chairman for your group, it is much easier to plan a rehearsal.

No shows are considered absences. Leaving early is considered an absence.

**SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

All ASOYE members attending a junior or Senior High School are required to participate in their school instrumental music program.

**It is critical that Youth Orchestra members participate in their school Band and Orchestra Programs. Our student participation in these school ensembles strengthens the school’s music program, and as a result**
strengthens music programs district and statewide. Part of the ASO’s mission is to promote music education throughout the state. Critical to this effort is our students’ participation in those programs that DO exist in order to perpetuate their existence and make them stronger.

Be advised that all attendance policies apply regardless of extra-curricular involvement or commitment to a school music program. Each ASOY member is solely responsible for managing his or her schedule and negotiating terms of involvement with other ensembles.

PERFORMANCES

Opus Ball – (Youth Orchestra Only)
Saturday, November 11, 2017 – 5:45 – 7:30 p.m. Robinson Center Music Hall Ballroom (not a public performance)

Arkansas Symphony Youth Orchestra ONLY with Parkview Chorus
Sunday, November 12, 2017 - 3 p.m. Albert Pike Memorial Temple, LR

Mid-Winter Concert – All Orchestras
Sunday, January 14, 2018 –7 p.m. Maumelle High School, Maumelle, AR

Youth Orchestra Concert (Youth orchestra ONLY) with Yoonah Kim, Clarinet
Friday, April 27, 2018 – 7:30 p.m. Location TBD

Side by Side Concert – All orchestras
Sunday, May 6, 2018 – 7 p.m. North Little Rock High School Auditorium

Hot Springs Village Concert – (Youth Orchestra and Academy Orchestra)
Sunday, April 29, 2018 – 3 p.m. Woodlands Auditorium, Hot Springs Village, AR

CONCERT DRESS

The following dress code applies to all Orchestras: Preparatory, Prelude, Academy, and Youth:

GIRLS will wear long, to the ankle, black dresses/skirts or dress black pants and black shirts with ¾ or longer length sleeves. Black Flats (no heels over 1 inch) and black hose must be worn.

Girls not conforming to the dress code will be placed at the back of their sections, or out of view of the audience.
**BOYS** will wear **black** dress pants, **black** shoes and **black** socks with long-sleeve **white** shirts (NO prints or colors), and long ties. Boys not conforming to the dress code will be placed at the back of their sections, or out of view of the audience.

- **Preparatory** and **Prelude** boys will NOT wear coats or jackets.
- **Academy** boys will wear dark coats or jackets.
- **Youth** boys will wear tuxes for the Side-by-Side Concert, dark coats or jackets for all other concerts.

Boys not conforming to the dress code will be placed at the back of their sections, or out of view of the audience.

**Concert Etiquette – All ASOYE Concerts**

ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARKANSAS SYMPHONY YOUTH ENSEMBLES (Preparatory, Prelude, Academy and Youth) WILL BE REQUIRED TO STAY FOR THE ENTIRE PERFORMANCE AT ANY CONCERT OF THE COMBINED GROUPS DURING THE YEAR. Each group will be designated a place in the hall, where the conductor and their fellow students may sit together for the performances.

Leaving the music hall during a performance is very disruptive. Students should use the restrooms prior to entering the hall after their performance. We ask that all members of the audience exhibit appropriate behavior. All members of the preparatory, prelude, academy and youth orchestras are expected to remain in the hall for each of their fellow orchestra’s performances. This is part of the learning experience and is a requirement of the ASOYE program. There will be no running in and out of the performance hall during any performance. Please be considerate of your friends and fellow musicians.

**REFRESHMENTS**

*Except for special occasions, no refreshments will be served at Youth Ensembles rehearsals.*

**FACEBOOK PAGE**

“**ASO Youth Ensembles**”

The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Youth Ensembles has a FACEBOOK Page. We will make announcements and spread good news (competitions, scholarships, awards) about current ASOYE members and former ASOYE members on this page. And......we welcome your additions to the page!

**YOU CAN HELP!**

Anyone who is willing to become involved in projects within the ASOYE Program is encouraged to volunteer. The ASOYE is always in need of parent volunteers to help with many events throughout the year. You may volunteer for any standing committee by e-mailing the ASOYE manager at bburroughs@ArkansasSymphony.org or by calling 666-1761, ext. 116. Please share your talents, interest, ideas and time with the ASOYE!
AUDITIONS

Auditions are held twice yearly in January and May. January auditions are for those string, woodwind brass and percussion students wishing to enter the Prelude, Academy and Youth Orchestras. January auditions will be on Sunday, January 21, 2018, noon until 6 p.m. To ensure the continuity of the program within each group, students are not allowed to move from one orchestra to another mid-year. May auditions will be on Saturday, May 19th all day, and Monday and Tuesday evenings, May 21\textsuperscript{st} and 22\textsuperscript{nd}. These auditions are for all students wishing to audition for entrance into Prelude, Academy or Youth Orchestra, or to move from one orchestra to the next level.

An audition application must be received at least a week in advance of auditions and an audition time reserved prior to the audition weekend. The ASOYE Audition Form is on the ASYO portion of the ASO website, under Audition/Forms. The form will automatically be forwarded to the Youth Orchestra Offices. The $20 audition fee must be sent to the ASOYE offices prior to the audition date. After the audition form is received in the ASOYE offices, you will be contacted to schedule an audition time. It is not necessary for a student to re-audition each year for entrance to the ASOYE program. An audition is required only when a student wishes to move from one level to another.

Once a student has auditioned, he or she may register for the group assigned on the registration link on the Youth Orchestra webpage.

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS

Preparatory Orchestra
For Beginning String Students: A written recommendation from a teacher is required. All recommendation letters must be sent no later than \textit{August 1\textsuperscript{st} of each year} to the ASOYE offices via e-mail or regular mail. Students need to have studied their instruments for one year and have learned at least two sharps in first position and be reading music. Parents may register their students online after the appropriate recommendation is received in the ASO offices.

Prelude Orchestra – for students 4\textsuperscript{th} through 8\textsuperscript{th} grade
An audition is required for entrance to the Prelude Orchestra. Students need to have studied their instruments for at least 2 years and demonstrate, in their audition, two sharps and two flats in first position. Experience in third position is desired but not required. Students in this group MUST be able to read music and must be familiar with the concept of, and received an introduction to, shifting. Audition must include: one major scale, 2 octaves; two prepared pieces or movements of contrasting style and tempo; and required sight-reading for each audition.
**Academy Orchestra – for students 7th through 12th grade**
The Academy Orchestra is the intermediate level ensemble with a full complement of strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion. Entrance is by audition only. String players must demonstrate facility above 1st position and in keys up to 4 sharps and 4 flats. Woodwind and Brass players must be at the level to make All-Region Band and Orchestra. The audition should include: One major scale, 2-3 octaves; one melodic minor scale, 2-3 octaves; two prepared pieces or movements of contrasting style and tempo; and sight-reading.

**Youth Orchestra**
The Youth Orchestra consists of the most advanced string, woodwind, brass and percussion players from around the state. Entrance is by audition only and for those whose audition demonstrates familiarity with advanced techniques, in order to perform the standard orchestra repertoire. Students should prepare one major scale, 2-3 octaves; one melodic minor scale, 2-3 octaves; two prepared pieces or movements of contrasting style and tempo, unaccompanied; and sight-reading. In addition, students may have opportunities to participate in masterclasses with visiting ASO guest artists, and have opportunities to receive coaching and performance opportunities in smaller chamber ensembles. In some circumstances, students auditioning for the Woodwind and Brass Sections may be replaced in the group on a probationary basis, with the opportunity to audition later for a tenured spot in the orchestra.

*All students should be in the 8th grade through high school. Selected woodwinds and brass students can be up to age 20.*

**Chair Auditions**
Each orchestra has their own process for doing chair auditions within each section. It is up to the conductor of each orchestra to determine if, when and how he will conduct chair auditions within his group.

**Youth Orchestra Chair Auditions Only**
The Youth Orchestra (most advanced group) Seating Process is outlined below:

Seating within the ASYO is determined by several factors. In September, each STRING PLAYER will take a chair audition. This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate how well they are capable of preparing a few short excerpts of orchestral music. Chair audition excerpts will be made available at the annual retreat; they are excerpts from music we will be performing.
Factors that are considered in determining ALL seating (woodwinds, brass and strings) include:

- Musical needs of the entire ensemble (what will make us sound best)
- Physical requirements of each piece performed
- Experience as a player
- Consistency of performance at rehearsals and concerts
- Equitable distribution of opportunities
- Seniority
- Attendance
- Leadership skills
- Auditions
- Consistent level of preparedness (last but certainly not least)

Principal chairs are the 1st chair within each section. These positions will rotate throughout the year. If a wind section doesn’t rotate for a year, it is likely that members are building experience through consistency. All students should expect and be willing to sit in different seats over the course of the year. String seating generally rotates on a per concert basis, whereas wind seating may alternate on a single program. Wind part assignments generally are made for each piece of music.

**CONCERTMASTER AUDITIONS**

It is also likely that the concertmaster position will rotate during the year. A violinist must take the concertmaster audition, however, to be considered for the concertmaster position. This will occur on the same day as chair auditions, but are by sign-up. There will be additional audition excerpts. Members of the Violin 2 section may take the concertmaster audition by preparing the added concertmaster excerpts and the regular violin 2 excerpts. All students who sign up for a concertmaster audition must also take a regular chair audition the same day.

**ASO ENERGY KIDS TICKETS**

All children Kindergarten – 12th grade, may attend any Sunday afternoon concert FREE, with a paid adult ticket. Student discount tickets are also available for $10 for any ASO Masterworks, Pops or Chamber Music Series Concert during the season.

All tickets may be reserved by calling the ASO Box Office at (501-666-1761 ext. 100. A brochure of all ASO performances can be obtained at the ASO Box Office or by calling (501) 666-1761. Ext. 100.
**ASO CONCERT CONVERSATIONS**

One hour prior to each ASO Masterworks Concert on Saturdays and Sundays (6:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. respectively), Maestro Philip Mann provides an informative, educational, and entertaining preview of the concert repertoire. Many times the guest artist will also discuss their portion of the concert. This is a “not to be missed” part of the concert for all ASOYE students who attend the Masterworks Concerts. Bring your entire class, band, or orchestra!

**CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra is committed to providing a safe and protective environment for children participating in ASO programs. The ASO will not tolerate abuse, neglect, or harassment of any child by staff members, volunteers or other children.

**Definitions:**

**Abuse, neglect or harassment** – any act or failure to act that results in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.

**Suspected abuse, neglect or harassment** – involves observation of a child that results in the observer having an uneasy feeling or concern that the child has been or is subject to an act or failure to act that could result in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.

**Responsibilities to parents** – The ASO will provide a safe and protective environment for all children participating in ASO programs. Parents may visit ASO programs in which their children are participating at any time and are encouraged to visit with the ASOYE Manager about any concerns they might have concerning their child’s participation in the ASOYE.

If a parent or volunteer feels that a child has been placed in imminent risk as per the definitions outlined above, they should inform both the Director of Education and the Executive Director of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Society. If the complaint involves either of the above-named individuals, the parent or volunteer may go directly to the ASO Board Chair.

Your complaint will be promptly investigated. You will be advised of the findings and conclusions. All ASO employees and volunteers are expected to cooperate fully in such investigations. To the extent feasible, all internal investigations and/or actions taken to resolve complaints of abuse, neglect or harassment, shall be confidential.

Please help us make your child’s musical experience a positive one and support each conductor not only in his efforts to help your child grow musically, but in strength of character as well.