



Empire State Youth Orchestra
432 State Street
Schenectady, NY 12305
www.Esyjo.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ESYO'S 2022-2023 SEASON BEGINS WITH A SPRINKLE OF SOMETHING NEW!

Empire State Youth Orchestra Explores New Ways of Teaching, Learning, and Performing While Giving Fresh Takes on Classical Masterworks.

Schenectady, NY - - Empire State Youth Orchestra, known regionally and nationally as a leader in ensemble-based music education, announced its 2022-2023 season. The new season, which spans from September through early June, features thirty unique performances, fourteen ESYO ensembles and CHIME, hundreds of young musicians from upstate New York and western New England, and thousands of hours of dedicated rehearsal time. The season begins on Sunday, October 30th at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall with ESYO's flagship Symphony Orchestra performing Beethoven's 7th Symphony, a work Beethoven described as the "glory of light through darkness." The concert also features Gabriella Smith's Field Guide, a percussive musical safari into the natural world.

Marking his first season as Music Director, conductor, creative entrepreneur, and classical pioneer Etienne Abelin sees this season as a new movement in ESYO's four-decade history. "The season builds upon what makes the ESYO experience so unique," said Abelin. "It challenges the most passionate young musicians in the region to see music-making as a joyful pursuit of musical excellence. This new season will carry this hallmark with a sprinkling of something new," he continued.

Abelin, whose musical career has spanned the globe and included performances with famed conductors like Claudio Abbado and Pierre Boulez and cutting edge artists such as Fabrizio Cassol, and Gabriel Prokofiev, sees the vital role youth orchestras play in our communities. "They are connectors and bridges. They are about presencing and being in the here and now," he said. "Orchestras are storytellers," Abelin continued. These ideas are rooted in what Abelin calls MusicNOW, a philosophy curated by Abelin that combines existing and emerging ideas, approaches, and exercises to reawaken and nourish dimensions of music education that are often underdeveloped in musicians today. MusicNOW transforms musicians into movers, connectors, storytellers, improvisers, and creators. These dimensions influence musicianship by being a counterpoint to the rigid perfectionism often seen in orchestras. "It allows for more risk-taking, which is at the heart of creativity," said Abelin. "It connects music to the movement of our bodies and emotions. It brings a sparkle to our eyes while we breathe together and listen intently to each other," he continued. Etienne has earned an international reputation as a classical pioneer, and looks forward to reimagining classical music in a way that connects the

music to the “now” and puts youth in the driver’s seat. MusicNOW expands our understanding of excellence.

Elements of MusicNOW were unveiled at a weeklong residency by Woodstock-based composer and Soundpainting inventor, Walter Thompson. Soundpainting is an innovative composing sign language that connects music with movement using more than 1500 gestures to compose music live, at the moment, with other musicians, dancers, actors and visual artists. Symphony Orchestra Violist Peyton Roach was one of the first ESYO musicians to try her hand at Soundpainting. “Soundpainting at Frost Valley was a very unique experience,” said Roach. “It was like playing a game. Each gesture from the soundpainter directly translates to an action that the musicians perform.” Throughout the year, ESYO will host Soundpainting ensembles and collaborative workshops featuring guest artists and experts in storytelling, creative movement, breathing, and improvisation. Audiences can experience soundpainting at most of ESYO’s concerts, including Opening Day with ESYO Symphony Orchestra on October 30, 2022.

The season also features the return of CBS's Melodies of Christmas after a two-year pause, performances by ESYO's new student-led Chamber Orchestra, ESYO's Annual Young People's Concert on March 8th, and the Lois Lyman Concerto Competition. The season concludes on June 4, 2023 at Carnegie Hall, a fitting finale to an exciting season. Throughout, audiences will experience many elements of MusicNOW with fun and spontaneous encore performances. Young musicians interested in joining ESYO this season, may audition for ESYO by attending an open rehearsal this fall or attending the ESYO’s Open Audition at Proctors on Friday, September 30 or Saturday, October 1, 2022. Auditions are held each fall to fill vacancies in certain ensembles. To learn more about joining esy.org/join.

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2022-2023 FALL CONCERT SCHEDULE

Opening Day Matinee

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Sunday, October 30, 2022, 3:00pm

Troy Savings Bank Music Hall

ESYO PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES

Monday, November 7, 2022, 7:30pm

Brown School, Schenectady

Three Orchestras! One Incredible Afternoon of Music

REPERTORY ORCHESTRA, STRING ORCHESTRA, & CONCERTINO STRINGS

Sunday, November 13, 2022, 3:00pm

Troy Savings Bank Music Hall

YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA & REPERTORY JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Sunday, November 20, 2022, 3:00pm

Carl B. Taylor Auditorium at SUNY Schenectady

THE HOLIDAYS AT ESYO

WIND ORCHESTRA

Saturday, December 10, 2022, 3:00pm

Massry Center for the Arts at The College of St. Rose

Capital Region's Favorite Holiday Tradition is Back!

MELODIES OF CHRISTMAS

Featuring ESYO Symphony Orchestra & the Melodies of Christmas Chorale

Thursday December 15 - Sunday December 18, 2022

MainStage at Proctors, Schenectady

Proceeds benefit the Melodies Center for Childhood Cancer & Blood Disorders at the Albany Medical Center.

ESYO PERCUSSION HOLIDAY CONCERT

Tuesday, December 20, 2022, 7:30pm

Brown School, Schenectady

ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCES

ESYO YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 10:30am

MainStage at Proctors

ESYO SENIORS CONCERT

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 1:00pm

MainStage at Proctors

ESYO PLAYATHON

Saturday, March 25, 2022

Crossgates Mall

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AT CARNEGIE HALL

Sunday, June 4, 2022, 2:00pm

Carnegie Hall, New York, NY

To purchase tickets or for more information about ESYO concerts and events, visit esyo.org/tickets

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About Empire State Youth Orchestra: Empire State Youth Orchestra (ESYO) challenges and inspires young people to achieve excellence through music in a progressive learning environment leading to high-level performance opportunities. More than 500 youth from New York's Capital Region and western New England are selected by audition each year to perform in ESYO. With 13 performing ensembles and orchestras suiting a range of playing levels, members receive training from outstanding conductors and coaches, and tutelage from extraordinary guest artists.

In 2015, ESYO launched CHIME (Creating Harmony Inspiring Musical Excellence) in Schenectady to address fundamental inequities preventing universal access to high level music opportunities for youth. Today, this free after school program serves more than one hundred K-12 students in partnership with Capital Region school districts.

Founded in 1979, ESYO is a not-for-profit organization that has been recognized as a premier music education/performance program for youth and has received three ASCAP awards. For more information, visit esyo.org.

About Etienne Abelin: Swiss conductor **Etienne Abelin** has been described as a "post-classical pioneer" in the *BBC Music Magazine* and an "icon of new ways in classical music" by the *Musica Viva Magazine Brazil*. His gripping, emotionally charged performances have been hailed as "always unforgettably fine" by eminent conducting mentor Jorma Panula.

Abelin won the exceptional privilege of being a musical collaborator for 18 years with classical music legend conductor Claudio Abbado, who has been described as one of the three greatest conductors of all time by BBC Music Magazine. As such, Etienne was handpicked by Mr. Abbado to be a founding member of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and the Orchestra Mozart Bologna, where he was the Principal Second Violin for seven years. With these orchestras, he performed in the world's most prestigious concert halls and recorded for labels such as Deutsche Grammophon and Harmonia Mundi.

As a conductor, he has performed with orchestras throughout Europe, including the Beethoven Orchester Bonn, the Musikkollegium Winterthur, the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris and the Orquestra Sinfónica Portuguesa in venues such as the Royal Festival Hall London, Teatro alla Scala Milano, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Teatro São Carlos Lisbon, the the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens and Beethovenfest Bonn. His enthusiasm for new, genre-crossing music led him to conduct world premieres by Gabriel Prokofiev and William Brittnelle as well as Swiss premieres of works by Nico Muhly, Sarah Kirkland Snider, Fabrizio Cassol, and others. Etienne has made headlines in Europe and the United States for co-founding the Ynight-Classical Music in Clubs Series and the Apples & Olives Indie Classical Festival.

A gifted communicator, Etienne Abelin has presented on multiple occasions as a TEDx speaker and performer and has hosted numerous concerts of orchestras such as the Orquestra

Sinfónica Portuguesa and the Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra in Lisbon, Istanbul, Milano and Athens with audiences up to 4500. He is a frequent contributor on Swiss National radio and television on a wide range of topics, from genre-crossing music to new concert formats, conductors, and also blind comparison of recordings, a fun feature of Swiss Radio.

Abelin's passion for entrepreneurship, technology, education and social change through music have, over the years, led him to co-found and co-direct the Pan-European [Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra](#), the Swiss El Sistema-inspired program [Superar Suisse](#), the [Apples&Olives Indie Classical Festival](#) Zurich, the [Ynight-Classical in Club](#) series and most recently [Music: Eyes - See what you Hear](#), a music tech-ed platform based on music animation. Recent Music: Eyes projects include collaborations with such organizations as the Berlin Philharmonic, the European Union Youth Orchestra, Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, Columbia University and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. As an educator, he developed a "7 Dimensions of Musical Excellence" framework for the Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra. With his chamber music ensembles [BachSpace - Bach&Electronics](#) and [Nik Bärtsch's Mobile Extended - Ritual Groove Music](#), Abelin has released albums on the Neue Meister and ECM labels. In 2021 he enjoyed the distinction of being featured as one of five visionary conductors in the Karajan Foundation's documentary series [Conducting the Future](#) alongside Marin Alsop, Paavo Järvi, Lars Vogt, and Miguel Perez Iñesta.

Born in Bern, Switzerland, Etienne Abelin studied the violin at the Musik-Akademie Basel, Oberlin College and Indiana University, executive business administration at the University of St. Gallen and conducting with teachers such as Jorma Panula, Neil Varon, Larry Rachleff, Johannes Schläfli, James Allen Anderson and Don Schleicher at the ZHdK Zurich, the University of Delaware and Eastman School of Music where he's currently on leave of absence from his doctoral studies in conducting.

Etienne Abelin resides in the Capital Region of New York, and outside of music pursues his passion for coffee and gelato all over the world. He particularly enjoys light Ethiopian single origin brews and Stefino Gelato from Bologna, Italy.