MUSIC

2026 – 2027



SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

FALL 2026 PERFORMANCES

All concerts are held at the Green Music Center

SEP 13	12:00 p.m	Saxophone Day	Schroeder Hall
SEP 20	2:00 p.m	Navarro Trio	Schroeder Hall
SEP 25	7:30 p.m.	Symphony Orchestra	Weill Hall
OCT 1	7:30 p.m.	Symphonic Wind Ensemble & USAF Band of the Golden West	Weill Hall
OCT 5	1:00 p.m.	Department Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
OCT 13	7:30 p.m.	SSU Community Concert Band & BD Winds	Weill Hall
OCT 17	2:00 p.m.	Jazz Orchestra	Weill Hall
OCT 18	10:00 a.m.	Day of Strings	Schroeder hall
OCT 20–21	All Day	SSU Choral Festival	Weill Hall & Schroeder Hall
OCT 22	7:30 p.m.	Concert Jazz Ensemble & Latin Band	Schroeder Hall
NOV 7	7:30 p.m.	Concert Choir & SonoVoce	Weill Hall
NOV 9	1:00 p.m.	Department Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
NOV 20	7:30 p.m.	Symphony Orchestra	Weill Lawn
NOV 22	2:00 p.m.	Brass Ensemble	Schroeder Hall
DEC 2	7:30 p.m.	Chamber Ensembles	Schroeder Hall
DEC 3	7:30 p.m.	Symphonic Wind Ensemble 25th Anniversary	Weill Hall
DEC 4	7:30 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 5	2:00 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 5	7:30 p.m.	Music Theater - Opera Scenes	Schroeder Hall
DEC 6	3:00 p.m.	Jazz Orchestra	Weill Hall
DEC 8	7:30 p.m.	Guitar Ensemble	Schroeder Hall
DEC 9	1:00 p.m.	Vocal Repertory Recital	Schroeder Hall
DEC 10	7:30 p.m.	Concert Jazz Ensemble & Latin Band	Schroeder Hall
DEC 12	7:30 p.m.	Rock Collegium	Schroeder Hall
DEC 15	7:30 p.m.	SSU Community Concert Band & Piner High School	Weill Hall
DEC 16	7:30 p.m.	Noma Winds	Weill Hall

Tickets:
$20 General
$8 Students / Youth
$12 Seniors
FREE for SSU Students, Staff and Faculty

Box Office:
707-664-4246
tickets.sonoma.edu

Sonoma State University Department of Music

presents

The Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra

Alexander Kahn, Music Director

&

The Young People's Chamber Orchestra

Aaron Westman, Music Director

Friday, November 20, 2026

7:30 p.m.

Joan and Sanford I. Weill Hall

PROGRAM

Symphony No. 1 in C — **Emilie Mayer (1812-1883)**

I. Adagio – Allegro energico
II. Adagio
III. Allegro vivace – Minuetto (Moderato) – Allegro vivace
IV. Finale: Adagio – Allegro

Intermission

Symphony No. 1 in C — **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio
II. Andante cantabile con moto
III. Menuetto (Allegro molto e vivace)
IV. Finale: Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace

The Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra

MUSIC DIRECTOR
Alexander Kahn

ASSISTANT CONDUCTORS
Alex Roig
Mitchell Thompson

FLUTE/PICCOLO
Theo Hayse
Jasmine Myers
Lizeth Torres-Valencia
Charlotte Yalch

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN
Ray Goodenough
Aidan Williams

CLARINET/BASS CLARINET
Diego Borges
Keoni Dean
Ryan Flores

BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON
Julia Borin
Maxwell Jorgenson
Kaylee Laird

SAXOPHONE
Evan Zaitz

HORN
Peter Altamura
Eric Anderson
Emma Lunsford
Carly McVicker
Evan Zaitz

TRUMPET
Miriam Bozman
Gus Juhl
Sean Taburazza
Mitchell Thompson

TROMBONE
Kevin Mills
Jose Palacios
Anthony Lam

TUBA
Elijah Lopez

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION
Ethan Dierauf
Adam Lance
Will Schettler
Julian Scullard

PIANO/CELESTA
Alex Roig

HARP
Vincent Pierce

FIRST VIOLIN
Gracie Benham (concertmaster)
Alexander Yoon
Samuel Strong
Kalea Ritz Takeuchi
Nicole Emi Smith
Diane Peterson
John Thompson

SECOND VIOLIN
Aiden Chan (principal)
Sarai Camarena
Erin Garcia-Norris
Joshua Darr
Alexa Hensel Dominguez
Mily Saavedra
Alyson Mar

VIOLA
Noa Malone (principal)
Aaron Allen
Ben Robbins

Milo Tecco
Susan Lauenstein

VIOLONCELLO

Chris Fromm (principal)
Sumithra Smith
Ella Hoffman
Jacob Garzon
Vickie Sutton
Juan Garcia
Carol Vines
Andrew Willbanks

BASS

Leif Dering (principal)
Olivia Buettner

The Young People's Chamber Orchestra

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Aaron Westman

CONCERT MASTERS

Irving Grassi (Redwood Violin Recipient)
Shayla Orozco

FIRST VIOLIN

Andrew Hoverman
Timothy Lee
Megan Liew

SECOND VIOLIN

Suah Park
Lienna Strong
Benjamin Yoon

VIOLA

Jacob Yoon

VIOLONCELLO

Juan Garcia
Max Haemel
Yumin Yi

BASS

Zander Bergman

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Laura Leipzig

Program Notes



Symphony No. 1 in C

Emilie Mayer (1862-1918)
Composed | Duration: 30’

In 19th-century Europe, the symphonic stage was overwhelmingly a male domain. In spite of this, Berlin-based composer Emilie Mayer defiantly carved out a monumental career, publishing eight symphonies, numerous chamber works, and an opera. Often dubbed the “female Beethoven” by her contemporaries, Mayer’s music fell into near-total obscurity after her death, with most of her orchestral scores preserved only as un-engraved manuscripts in state libraries. Today, a major musicological renaissance is rightfully restoring her voice to the global canon.

Mayer’s **Symphony No. 1 in C minor** marks her grand entry into large-scale orchestral writing. Composed in Stettin (modern-day Szczecin, Poland) under the strict mentorship of Carl Loewe, the piece serves as her professional declaration of independence. For a young composer choosing a debut key, C minor carried a heavy symbolic weight—it was the tragic, storm-and-stress realm of Beethoven’s Fifth. Rather than shrinking from the comparison, the 35-year-old Mayer leaned directly into it.

The symphony follows a traditional four-movement architecture, though Mayer infuses it with adventurous, early-Romantic harmonic modulations reminiscent of Felix Mendelssohn and Franz Schubert.

I. Adagio – Allegro energico: The symphony opens with a somber, dark *Adagio* introduction that carries the heavy weight of a funeral march. This brooding atmosphere is suddenly broken by the *Allegro energico*, a highly driven, propulsive sonata-form movement driven by sharp rhythmic motifs and dramatic dynamic shifts.

II. Adagio: The second movement shifts to the lush, lyrical key of A-flat major. It provides a peaceful, deeply expressive oasis, highlighting Mayer’s gift for elegant, singing woodwind lines and warm string textures.

III. Allegro vivace – Minuetto. Moderato – Allegro vivace: Instead of a traditional scherzo, Mayer crafts a structurally playful hybrid. The outer sections leap forward in F minor with a biting, rhythmic intensity, while the central *Minuetto* trio steps into a gentler, dance-like space in D-flat major.

IV. Finale. Adagio – Allegro: The final movement returns to the stormy home key of C minor. Beginning with a brief, tense *Adagio* preamble, the music bursts into a fiery *Allegro*. Mayer masterfully ratchets up the tension through cascading imitative counterpoint and relentless driving rhythms. An unexpected turn to C Major in the final section bringing her symphonic debut to an exceptionally powerful and dramatic conclusion.



Symphony No. 1 in C

Ludwig van Beethoven
Composed 1800 | Duration: 23'

Music scholars — in fact, historians of all sorts — love to divide lives and eras into threes, and in Beethoven's case, this practice began when he was still alive and has endured to the present day. But when it comes to his Symphony No. 1, generally categorized as "early Beethoven," we learn more by considering that this important work came at the beginning of a new century. More than just the calendar was changing. Beethoven was 29 when he composed this symphony, in 1799 and 1800, and it represents the start of something new and epochal for him: his foray into symphonic form. His teachers Haydn and Mozart were masters of the symphony, and in his first attempt, Beethoven paid homage to their mastery while daring to innovate.

It's no secret that Beethoven chafed under Haydn's instruction, and we can well imagine that Beethoven's questing, rebellious artistic spirit might have clashed with Haydn's statesmanlike formalism. Beethoven reserved his first efforts at the string quartet and the symphony, the two forms for which Haydn was most noted, for the very end of his "early" period, by which time he was fully confident of his composing skills and his unique voice. In his Symphony No. 1, Beethoven was keen to demonstrate his full command of the symphonic form as Haydn had used it, while broadening the form in scope and artistic ambition.

During his lifetime, Beethoven — along with the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe — became one of the two most celebrated cultural figures in continental Europe. In 1800, though already famous, he had not yet reached that level of celebrity. But his first symphony was definitely a step in that direction. Contemporary critics immediately recognized it as something new and important, hailing its beauty and originality.

One contemporary Viennese critic called the symphony "a masterpiece that does equal honor to [Beethoven's] inventiveness and his musical knowledge. Being just as beautiful and distinguished in its design as its execution, there prevails in it such a clear and lucid order, such a flow of the most pleasant melodies, and such a rich, but at the same time never wearisome, instrumentation that this symphony can justly be placed next to Mozart's and Haydn's."

Considering the sense of grace and courtliness that prevails as we listen, it may be surprising to note that for some ears, Beethoven's innovativeness was a little too bold. For example, the first movement opens with the dominant chord that moves to the subdominant…a little harmonic adventure that piques our curiosity before resolving into the tonic key. No other composer of the day would have dared to begin a symphony in this fashion, and according to one critic, "such a beginning is not suitable for the opening of a grand [concert hall.]"

For today's listeners, this startling introduction has the opposite effect, opening our ears and sweeping us headlong into the onrush of music. And while the second movement begins with more traditional reserve — violins singing an elegant theme — Beethoven soon steps up the energy and then keeps it at a higher-than-customary level, whisking us along with a quick-stepping minuet.

According to one present-day musicologist, it is “a scherzo in all but name.” Beethoven surprises us again with the final movement, which opens with a stately adagio that shows no signs of going anywhere, then suddenly opens onto a brisk and bubbling finale.

“Early” Beethoven? Arguably, yes: This symphony shows the composer’s deference to the Classical style and the teachers who imparted it to him. But it also reveals the boldness of artistic spirit and the originality through which he would eventually leave Classicism behind, reinventing the symphony for future generations. The craft he honed in his “early” symphonies would eventually enable Beethoven to make the great philosophical statements of his later ones.

- Program note by Michael Clive

Biographies



Alexander Kahn is Professor of Music and Director of Orchestral Activities at Sonoma State University. At Sonoma State he directs the Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra and teaches courses in conducting, music history, musicianship, and general education.

Alexander came to Sonoma State from Gettysburg College, where he was Associate Professor of Music and Director of Orchestral Activities at the Sunderman Conservatory of Music. Previous university-level orchestras with whom Alexander has worked include the UC Berkeley Chamber Orchestra (Founder and Music Director) and the UC Berkeley Symphony (Assistant Conductor).

In addition to his work with college-level orchestras, Alexander has worked with professional and community orchestras across the United States and throughout Europe. Currently he serves as Assistant and Cover Conductor for both the Santa Rosa Symphony and the San Francisco Symphony and as Guest Conductor for the Napa Valley Chamber Orchestra. Previous positions he has held include Principal Guest Conductor for the Bay Philharmonic, Music Director of the Metta Ensemble (Gettysburg, PA), Cover Conductor for the Baltimore Symphony, Staff Conductor for the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC, Assistant Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony, and Music Director of the Bamberg Collegium Musicum.

A champion for music education, Alexander regularly works with young musicians in his role as Music Director of the Napa Valley Youth Symphony, and as Orchestra Director at Encore Coda Performing Arts Camp (Sweden, Maine) and Cazadero Performing Arts Camp. He is a frequent guest conductor for middle school and high school honor orchestras throughout California. He also serves on the Board of the California Orchestra Directors Association (CODA) and on the Wellness Committee for the American String Teachers Association (ASTA).

Alexander earned a PhD in Music History from UC Berkeley and remains active as a scholar. His book on mindfulness and music, Caring for the Whole Musician, was published by Routledge Press in 2023. He lectures and offers workshops on the subject of mindfulness for musicians throughout California and beyond.

Alexander's love of music was inherited from his father, Eugene Kahn, a conductor and educator on Long Island. His primary conducting studies were at UC Berkeley with David Milnes and at the Peabody Institute with Marin Alsop, Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar. He has also participated in workshops with teachers including Larry Rachleff, Kenneth Kiesler, Daniel Lewis and Peter Gülke.



GRAMMY® nominated violinist and violist **Aaron Westman** was a "metal-head" growing up in Santa Rosa. He now plays the electric guitar of the 17th-century. Described as "expressive and virtuosic" (—San Francisco Classical Voice) and a "brilliant virtuoso violinist" (—Early Music America Magazine), he has performed since 2005 as a chamber, principal player, or soloist with all of the major gut string ensembles on the West Coast, and toured extensively. As a principal player, Aaron has worked with American Bach Soloists, Bach Collegium San Diego, Harmonia Stellarum Houston, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Pacific Chorale, Musica Angelica, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra (since 2006), Portland Baroque Orchestra, and Tesserae, as well as the Carmel and Oregon Bach, Hawaii Performing Arts, Whidbey Island, Classicann, and New Hampshire Music Festivals, Opera Neo, Ars Minerva, Musica Pacifica, and El Mundo. He has toured extensively with Orchester Wiener Akademie, including internationally for four seasons with the actor John Malkovich.

Aaron founded and co-directs the chamber ensemble AGAVE, about whom Textura writes, "There's nothing musically AGAVE can't do." Their recent album *American Originals: A New World, A New Canon* was nominated for the 64th Annual GRAMMY® Awards in the Best Classical Compendium category. AGAVE regularly performs, tours, and records with star singers including mezzo-soprano Cecilia Duarte, soprano Michele Kennedy, and countertenor Reginald Mobley, with whom they have three albums, and has upcoming projects with Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble and composer Jonathan Woody, with IlluminArts Miami tracing the story of the resonator guitar, and Latin American music with Mobley and Duarte at the 2027 Boston Early Music Festival. Gramophone Magazine (UK) calls American Originals "brilliant and knowing," BBC Music Magazine says it is "wonderfully cheeky," The Whole Note lauds AGAVE's "vivid colors and stylish phrasing," and EMAg notes that it features "a stunning playlist of neglected works by composers of color." It was also recently featured in a New York Times article about Florence Price. Their most recent album is *Harmony Unchained: Biber, Schmelzer, and the 17th century avant-garde*, released on the Acis label in the Summer of 2026.

Aaron is Associate Director of the Live Oak Baroque Orchestra, and was violist in the Sylvestris Quartet, which was a finalist for the American Prize and in residency at Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.

Aaron holds his Master of Music degree from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. His principal teachers were Alan de Veritch, Geraldine Walther, Stanley Ritchie, Elizabeth Blumenstock, and Theodore Arm. In 2021, he joined the faculty of Sonoma State University, and he previously taught at Mills College and CalArts. He has directed the Santa Rosa Symphony's Young People's Chamber Orchestra since 2013, teaches in Italy each summer at the Music Adventure program, and maintains a private studio. In his spare time, he is an audio engineer and producer, and enjoys fixing up his old house. Aaron and his wife, violinist Anna Washburn, have a five-year old daughter.

About the Young People's Chamber Orchestra and the Santa Rosa Symphony's Training Young Musicians Program



The Young People's Chamber Orchestra (YPCO), a string orchestra working without a conductor, is designed to take accomplished young string players and mold them into high-functioning musicians with a complete attentiveness to detail and to each other within the context of the music. The director trains the musicians to interact and collaborate on high-level music-making and nuanced performance. Established in 1998, the Young People's Chamber Orchestra was formed under the direction of Linda Ghidossi-DeLuca, who led this ensemble until 2008. It is modeled after the Bay Area's renowned New Century Chamber Orchestra and is the first youth ensemble of its kind in northern California. Currently under the direction of Aaron Westman, the orchestra has been featured as a guest on a New Century Chamber Orchestra performance and has been a winner of the Berkeley Junior Bach Festival.

The Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Ensembles' mission is to offer young musicians an exceptional educational experience by providing the finest quality orchestral training and performance opportunities in Sonoma County. Young musicians develop an awareness and appreciation of great music in the context of learning responsibility and teamwork, while they participate in their community through public performance. Students can begin instruments as young as five years old at Summer Music Academy, and remain in the SRSYE training programs as they excel, into their first years of college.

Santa Rosa Symphony's vision is to create one of the nation's leading regional symphony orchestras, recognized as a model of artistic vibrancy, educational leadership, fiscal vitality, and community engagement. Founded in 1928, the Santa Rosa Symphony ranks among the oldest symphony orchestras in the western states and looks forward to celebrating it's centennial season next year.

You can learn more about the Young People's Chamber Orchestra as well as all of the Youth Orchestras and Ensembles at srsymphony.org

The Young People's Chamber Orchestra is generously sponsored by Garth Bixler.

About The Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra



Now in its 12th season, the Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra is comprised of the finest string, wind, brass, and percussion students at Sonoma State and of musicians from the broader Sonoma County community. Under the direction of Dr. Alexander Kahn, the Symphony Orchestra performs a diverse array of orchestral literature, ranging from the Baroque period to world premieres and from classical repertoire to film, opera, and educational works. Soloists are regularly featured, including guest artists, faculty soloists, and student soloists chosen through the annual concerto competition.

Membership is through audition only and is open to all students regardless of major as well as community members. Auditions are held during the first week of each semester. For more information regarding the audition process, please visit the orchestra homepage at http://music.sonoma.edu/ensembles/symphony-orchestra or email Dr. Kahn at kahnale@sonoma.edu

SUPPORT US

The Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra is generously funded through the Department of Music at Sonoma State University. However, donations are gratefully received to support our various initiatives, including our annual Concerto Competition, Composition Competition, and our Lesson Scholarship Fund for Non-Majors. Please consider making a gift to support us! Donations can be made online here:

For more information on how to give please contact Dr. Alexander Kahn (kahnale@sonoma.edu).

Thank you to our donors!

The Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra offers its heartfelt thanks the following individuals and organizations who have supported our work in recent years:

Frederick & Carrie Fromm Fund
Stephen Arneson
Kris Berger
Diego Borges
Corrick Brown
Connor Canavan
Laura Canavan
The Dierauf Family
Jack & Marsha Dupre
Erin Garcia-Norris
Danielle Goshert
Alexander Kahn
Perry Karsen
Linda Kruzic
Mary Kruzas
Susan Lauenstein
Jamie Ledner
Amy and Joel Levine
Joe and Elaine Lieber
Jennie McDonald
Susan McDowell
Leigh R. McTaggart
Molly Tallman
Barbara Norris

THE SONOMA STATE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROUDLY ANNOUNCES ITS TWELFTH SEASON!

Alexander Kahn, Music Director

(All dates and repertoire subject to change)

Friday September 25, 2026: French Impressions

Debussy *Premiere Rapsodie for Clarinet and Orchestra* (Diego Borges, soloist and 2026 Concerto competition winner)

Gabriel Fauré, *Dolly Suite* (Alex Roig and Mitchell Thompson, guest conductors)

Eugene Bozza *Ballade for Trombone and Orchestra* (José Palacios, soloist and 2026 Concerto competition winner)

Igor Stravinsky, *Suite from The Firebird* (1919)

Friday November 20, 2026: C Major Moods (Joint concert with the Young Peoples Chamber Orchestra, Aaron Westman, Music Director)

Emilie Mayer, Symphony No. 1 in C

Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony 1 in C

Band and Orchestra Festival (March 17-19, 2027): American Road Trip

Composition Competition winner TBD

Michael Daugherty, *Route 66*

Leonard Bernstein, *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*

Carlos Simon, *Ring Shout* from *Four Black Dances*

Saturday May 1, 2027 Transformations and Transfigurations (Joint concert with Livermore High School Chamber Orchestras, Justin Enright, Music Director)

Works for String Orchestra TBD (Livermore HS Chamber Orchestras)

Engelbert Humperdinck, Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel* (Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra)

Richard Strauss, *Death and Transfiguration* (Sonoma State Symphony Orchestra)

John Williams, *Superman Returns* (combined ensembles)

For tickets and more information please visit us at:
https://music.sonoma.edu/performing-ensembles/symphony-orchestra

FACULTY

Jenny Bent
Director of Choral Activities
Voice Program

Jill Rachuay Brindel
Cello

Eric Cabalo
Classical Guitar,
Guitar Ensemble,

Ian Carey
Jazz Trumpet

Andy Collinsworth
Department Chair
Director of Bands

Ken Cook
Jazz Piano

Jeff Denson
Jazz Bass

Kendrick Freeman
Latin Band

Raffi Garabedian
Jazz Saxophone

Mary Evelyn Hangley
Voice

Andrew Harrison
Classical Saxophone

Victoria Hauk
Flute

Gail Hernández Rosa
Violin

Alexander Kahn
Director of
Orchestral Studies

Mark Kratz
Voice

Douglas Leibinger
Director of Jazz Studies

Thomas Limbert
Composition Program

George Marsh
Jazz Drums

Alicia Mastromonaco
French Horn

Kim Mieder
Music Teacher Preparation

Daniel Norris
Trumpet

Laura Reynolds
Oboe & English Horn

David Ridge
Trombone

Jeff Robinson
Bassoon

Jonathan Seiberlich
Tuba, Euphonium

Kody Thiessen
Double Bass

Marilyn Thompson
Piano, Chamber Music Director

Randy Vincent
Jazz Guitar

Aaron Westman
Violin & Viola

Jennifer Wilsey
Percussion

Brian S. Wilson
Music Theory Program

Roy Zajac
Clarinet

SONOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY

MUSIC

AUDITIONS '26–'27



NOV	FEB	FEB	MAR
6	27	28	13

#1

Ranked #1 in the Nation
Top Earnings for Graduates
with Bachelor's Degrees in Music

- The HEA Group

Schedule Your Audition

bit.ly/SSUaudition

music.sonoma.edu