

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 18, 2015

New York Youth Symphony Announces its 53rd Season

New York, NY - The **New York Youth Symphony (NYYS)**, composed of orchestra, chamber, jazz, conducting, and composition programs—heads into the 2015/16 season having provided over 5,000 music students between ages 12 and 22 unparalleled opportunities to perform at world-class venues including **Carnegie Hall** and **Jazz at Lincoln Center** and to study with world-renowned artists, all tuition-free. Beyond the instruction from accomplished musicians, students gain valuable life skills—commitment, discipline, focus, collaboration—and friendships that last a lifetime.

Performances for the 2015/16 Season include:

Orchestra

Joshua Gersen, *music director*

Three performances at **Carnegie Hall** featuring music by **Gershwin**, **Rachmaninoff** and **Mahler**

Sunday, November 22, 2015 at 2 PM with **Gabriel Cabezas**, *cello*

Sunday, March 6, 2016 at 2 PM with **Steven Lin**, *piano*

Sunday, May 29, 2016 at 2 PM with *soprano*, **Sarah Shafer** and *mezzo-soprano*, **Jazimina MacNeil**

First Music world premières by **Gabriella Smith**, **Tonia Ko** and **Brendan Faegre**

Jazz

Matt Holman, *director*

Three performances at **Jazz at Lincoln Center**

at **Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola**:

Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at 7:30 & 9:30 PM with **Robin Eubanks**, *trombone*

Monday, March 14, 2016 at 7:30 & 9:30 PM with **Jon Faddis**, *trumpet*

at the **Appel Room**:

Monday, May 16, 2016 at 7:30 PM with **New York Voices**, *vocal ensemble*

First Music world premières by **Mariel Austin**, **Brian Krock**, and **Christopher Zuar**

Chamber Music

Lisa Tipton, *director*

Two performances:

Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 7:30 PM at **Leonard Nimoy Thalia, Symphony Space**

Weill Recital Hall on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 7:30 PM*

**First Music* world première by Michael Schachter

Composition

Dr. Kyle Blaha, *director*

Composition Date 2016 on Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 7:30 PM

at **Leonard Nimoy Thalia, Symphony Space**

features original student compositions performed by members of all **NYYS** programs.

The *Orchestra*, led by **Joshua Gersen**, kicks off the season on November 22, 2015 with the first of three performances at Carnegie Hall, highlighted by cellist **Gabriel Cabezas** performing the world premiere of Gabriella Smith's *Lost Coast* for cello and orchestra. Pianist **Steven Lin** will make his debut with the Orchestra and at Carnegie Hall performing Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, which will be paired with Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances. Mahler's Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection" with soloists **Sarah Shafer**, soprano and **Jazimina MacNeil**, mezzo-soprano will close the season on May 29, 2016. World premières by **Gabriella Smith**, **Brendan Faegre** and **Tonia Ko** will be performed on each program through the *First Music* Commissioning Program. The orchestra will return to Washington Heights at the United Palace performing the Carnegie programs in free community concerts on November 8, 2015 and February 21, 2016, both beginning at 5pm, sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

The *NYYS Jazz*, led by artistic director **Matt Holman**, will swing into the 2015/16 season showcasing both classic & contemporary arrangements of big band mainstays. Trombonist **Robin Eubanks** will join the ensemble on a program titled *Classically Inspired* at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* on December 8, 2015. Next up, trumpeter **Jon Faddis** will join the band at Dizzy's on March 14, 2016. World premières by **Mariel Austin**, **Brian Krock**, and **Christopher Zuar** will be performed on each program through the *First Music* Commissioning Program. The season will end on May 16, 2016 at The Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center featuring the vocal quartet **New York Voices**.

Now entering its 34rd season, the *Chamber Music* program, led by director **Lisa Tipton**, offers young musicians an opportunity to explore the often complex dialogue between instruments as a metaphor for learning skills that emphasize open communication, harmony, and compromise. *An Evening with Friends* is the underlying theme of each performance. With an exceptional concert at Symphony Space on April 19 and one final recital at Weill Recital Hall on May 4, 2016, we will witness first-hand the rewards of collaborative music making. **Michael Schachter's** *First Music* composition will receive its world premiere at Weill Recital Hall.

The *Composition* program, led by **Dr. Kyle Blaha**, has broken new ground in its acclaimed sessions for younger composers to examine orchestration styles, techniques, and skills. The annual Composition Date 2016 performance, to be held at Symphony Space on May 19, 2016, will include original student compositions performed by members of the Orchestra, Chamber Music, Jazz, and Apprentice Conducting programs.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS:

Rapidly gaining recognition as one of the most promising and exciting young American conductors, **Joshua Gersen** began his tenure as Music Director of the **New York Youth Symphony** in the 2012/2013 season. He was previously the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation Conducting Fellow for the New World Symphony, where he served as the assistant conductor to the symphony's Artistic Director, Michael Tilson Thomas. He was the winner of the 2011 Aspen Conducting Prize and the 2010 Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival. Gersen served as the principal conductor of the Ojai Music Festival in 2013, and has conducted the Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, San Francisco, and Jacksonville symphonies. **Mr. Gersen** is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he studied conducting with Otto-Werner Mueller, and the New England Conservatory of Music, where he studied composition.

Trumpeter/composer/educator **Matt Holman** has performed with such diverse artists as Fred Hersch, John Hollenbeck, Darcy James Argue, and Bob Newhart. He has earned national and international performance awards including the International Trumpet Guild's Jazz Improvisation Competition, the Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition, the National Trumpet Competition, Downbeat, and ASCAP. His 5-piece chamber jazz group, **Matt Holman's** Diversion Ensemble, released their debut recording "When Flooded" in March 2013 on Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records. A dedicated and passionate educator, **Mr.**

Holman has taught at the Birch Creek Performance Center, the British School of Chicago, and the Manhattan School of Music. He holds a M.M. from Manhattan School of Music and a B.M. from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he was awarded the Performer's Certificate.

Lisa Tipton, violinist and co-founder of the award-winning Meridian String Quartet, has toured internationally and held residencies at Queens College, Bard College, and the Turtle Bay Music School. She has won distinctions from the Evian International Competition, Artists International, and Chamber Music America. As a devoted interpreter of new music, **Ms. Tipton** established the "Made in America" series at Weill Recital Hall with pianist Adrienne Kim and has performed on the "Interpretations" series at Merkin Concert Hall. She performs regularly with Amici New York and the American Symphony Orchestra, and is a co-founder of NY Chamber Music CoOp. **Ms. Tipton's** recording of Ives' violin sonatas with Ms. Kim was released in 2006 on Capstone Records. She earned a B.A. from Cornell University, an M.A. from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, and is currently a DMA candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center.

Dr. Kyle Blaha received his D.M.A. and M.M. from Juilliard and his B.M. from Eastman School of Music with high distinction in composition, clarinet, and German. He has studied composition with Darrell Handel, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, Carlos Sanchez Gutierrez, Samuel Adler, Philip Lasser, and Robert Beaser and Solfège with Mary Anthony Cox. He is faculty at the European American Musical Alliance Program in Paris and Ear Training faculty at The Juilliard School in the College, Evening, and Pre-College divisions. He has received multiple ASCAP Young Composer Awards and awards for study in German, including a Fulbright grant and a D.A.A.D. (German government) grant as well as Arabic study in Cairo, Egypt. His work has been premiered by the Juilliard Orchestra and multiple performances by the New York City Ballet Choreographic Institute and has received commissions from the **NYYS**, the Eastman Wind Ensemble, the New Juilliard Ensemble, and the American Composers Orchestra.

ORCHESTRA SOLOISTS:

"An intense player who connects to music naturally, without artifice, and brings a singing line to the cello" (The Oregonian), **Gabriel Cabezas** is one of America's most sought after young musicians. He has appeared as soloist with America's finest orchestras, including those of Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Los Angeles, Detroit, Houston, Pittsburgh and Nashville. **Mr. Cabezas** studied at the Curtis Institute of Music with Carter Brey, and is a recipient of the Career Grant by the Rachel Elizabeth Barton Foundation. He is a winner of the 2014 Astral Artists National Auditions, and joins this presenting and promotional organization's roster of America's finest young soloists and chamber musicians. A committed advocate for community engagement and education programs across the country, he is involved with Midori's Partners in Performance, the Sphinx Organization and Chicago's Citizen Musician movement. **Mr. Cabezas** was the first place Laureate at the Sphinx competition twice — in the Junior Division (2006), and in the Senior Division (2012).

Taiwanese American pianist **Steven Lin** is an immediately engaging and imaginative young artist, applauded by the New York Times for playing that is "...immaculately voiced and enhanced by admirable subtleties of shading and dynamics," and his growing list of awards features the 2012 Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition and the John Giordano Jury Chairman Discretionary Award at the 2013 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. In May 2014, his dynamic playing at Israel's Arthur Rubinstein Piano Competition was recognized when he was awarded the Silver Medal as well as numerous performance prize engagements in Israel and internationally. A two-time winner of the Juilliard Pre-College Piano Competition, he made his debut with the New York Philharmonic in Avery Fisher Hall at the age of 13. Additional concerto performances include the New Jersey Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Tulsa Symphony, Orlando Philharmonic and Sendai Symphony Orchestra. **Mr. Lin** earned both Bachelor's and Master's Degrees at The Juilliard School, studying with Robert McDonald and Matti Raekallio. He is currently pursuing a Performance Diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music, under the guidance of Robert McDonald.

Praised for her "luminous voice" and "intensely expressive interpretations" (The New York Times), and named "remarkable, artistically mature," and "a singer to watch" by Opera News, soprano **Sarah Shafer** is quickly emerging as a sought-after operatic and concert artist. **Ms. Shafer** made her professional operatic debut in 2012 in the role of Barbarina and the cover role of Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Glyndebourne Festival. Last season she sang the role of Nuria in Opera Philadelphia's *Ainadamar*. On the concert stage, **Ms. Shafer** recently made her debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra singing works of Floyd, Bernstein, and Gershwin. She has performed as a soloist at Carnegie Hall, and at the BBC Proms in London's Royal Albert Hall. An avid recitalist and chamber musician, **Ms. Shafer** recently appeared in recitals with legendary pianist Richard Goode, performing at venues including Town Hall in New York City. She will perform with Mr. Goode on a concert of chamber music at Carnegie Hall next spring. A native of State College, PA, **Ms. Shafer** holds degrees in voice and opera from the Curtis Institute of Music, and is currently based in Philadelphia.

Jazimina MacNeil is a recent graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music. Recent and upcoming performances include the roles of Mère Marie in Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, Rinaldo in Handel's *Rinaldo*, Romeo in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Siebel in Faust's *Idamente in Idomeneo*, Carmen in Peter Brook's adaptation *Le Tragedie de Carmen*, Baba the Turk in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, and the alto soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*. Other recent performances include her European solo recital debut with pianist Deirdre Brenner at the Berlin Philharmonic's Curt Sachs Saal, a concert with the Gulangyu Piano Festival on Gulangyu Island in China, concerts at the Ravinia Festival with the Chicago Symphony and the Steans Institute, and the Winners Recital of the Liederkrantz Competition in Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall. **Ms. MacNeil** received her Bachelors of Music from Manhattan School of Music. She spent three summers studying song at SongFest in Malibu, CA and one summer at the Franz Schubert Institute in Baden Bei Wein, Austria. **Ms. MacNeil** is a student of Marlena Malas.

JAZZ SOLOISTS:

Robin Eubanks is the premier jazz trombonist of his generation. **Mr. Eubanks** musical education began at the age of eight and continued through college, when he graduated cum laude from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. As a student, he studied trombone, music theory, harmony, composition, and arranging. Following his graduation, the young trombonist moved to New York City where he began a career that has since yielded an amazing array of collaborations with such notable artists as Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Eddie Palmieri, Sun Ra, Barbra Streisand, The Rolling Stones and Talking Heads. He has won Grammys for his performances on Michael Brecker's *Wide Angles* and Dave Holland's *What Goes Around and Overtime*. **Mr. Eubanks** divides his rigorous performing schedule with an appointment at The Oberlin College Conservatory where he serves as a tenured Professor of Jazz Trombone and Jazz Composition. He is an esteemed professor at Berklee College of Music, and served at the New England Conservatory for two years. In addition, he taught at Prince Claus Conservatoire in The Netherlands for five years. In 2014, **Mr. Eubanks** won the Jazz Times Critics Poll for Best Trombonist and is a multiple winner of Downbeat's Readers and Critics Polls for Trombonist of the Year. He's also won compositional grants from Chamber Music America and an ASCAP Composer's grant.

Jon Faddis was born in Oakland, California on July 24, 1953, and began playing the trumpet at the age of eight, inspired by an appearance of Louis Armstrong on the Ed Sullivan Show. Three years later, his trumpet teacher, Bill Catahano, turned **Mr. Faddis** on to Dizzy Gillespie, with who he subsequently appeared at the famed Jazz Workshop in San Francisco. Two days before his 18th birthday, he joined the Lionel Hampton Band as a featured soloist, and in the same year was invited to sit in with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band on one of their regular Monday night sessions at the Village Vanguard. **Mr. Faddis** toured and recorded with this band for four years and also studied at the Manhattan School of Music during this period. By the age of 20, he had become widely acclaimed by the critical press; Dizzy Gillespie declared, "...he's the best ever - including me!" Since then, **Mr. Faddis** has become known throughout the world as one of the most innovative and inspiring jazz trumpeters of our time. In 1999, **Mr. Faddis** was appointed Artist-in-Residence in the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College, State University of New York, where he teaches in both the Brass and Jazz Programs.

2013 marked **New York Voices's** 25th Anniversary and they show no signs of slowing down. This critically acclaimed vocal group has refined their musical story to a high art. They are known for their close-knit voicings, inspired arrangements, and unparalleled vocal blend. Their chameleon-like musicianship allows them to move seamlessly from setting to setting, be it orchestral or big band to the intimate trio lineup. With deep interests rooted in jazz, Brazilian, R & B, classical, and pop, their music mixes traditional sensibilities with more than a dash of the unexpected. They are first call from great arrangers and conductors like Don Sebesky, Michael Abene, Keith Lockhart, and Rob Fisher who all know and admire the complexity of what they do and want something out of the ordinary, something extraordinary. Like the great jazz vocal groups that have come before — Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, Singers Unlimited, and The Manhattan Transfer — they are firmly a part of that legacy and are dedicated to passing it on to generations to come.

FIRST MUSIC COMPOSERS:

Edward Hamel graduated *magna cum laude* from Columbia College Chicago receiving a Bachelors of Music in Composition under the guidance of Marcos Balter. Currently, he is acquiring a Master of Arts in Composition at the University of California, San Diego under the guidance of Lei Liang. **Mr. Hamel** takes inspiration from the perceptive control one has in a medium such as painting. All of the information of a work is provided within a static, non-temporal frame. Viewers have the ability to stay with a work for an indefinite amount of time admiring various facets of the piece at will. With a temporal medium such as music, listeners do not have this luxury - most of the work is perceived retrospectively. **Mr. Hamel** was commissioned to write a new work for the MATA 2014 Festival to be played by Talea Ensemble. In 2012, he received Honorable Mention at the Gaudeamus Muziekweek for his work *Countenance*. **Mr. Hamel** has been fortunate enough to work with such groups as Ensemble Dal Niente, Sigma Project, Loadbang, Anubis Quartet, Color Field Ensemble, Insomnio, saxophonist Ryan Muncy, cellist Seth Woods, and Leah Asher of the Bodø Sinfonietta.

Gabriella Smith is a composer from the San Francisco Bay Area whose current projects include upcoming performances by NOW ensemble, Eighth Blackbird, So Percussion, and Ren Martin-Doike.

Ms. Smith's music has been performed throughout the United States and internationally by Eighth Blackbird, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, PRISM Quartet, Ensemble39, and Friction Quartet, among others. She is the recipient of the 2014 ASCAP/Leo Kaplan Award, two ASCAP/Morton Gould Young Composer Awards (2013 and 2009), the Theodore Presser Foundation Music Award (2012), and the winner of the 2009 Pacific Musical Society Composition Competition. She is currently a doctoral fellow at Princeton University, where she has studied with Steve Mackey, Paul Lansky, Dan Trueman, Dmitri Tymoczko, Donnacha Dennehy, and Ju Ri Seo. She received her B.M. from The Curtis Institute of Music where she studied with David Ludwig, Jennifer Higdon, and Richard Danielpour. When she is not making music, she enjoys backpacking, birding, home-brewing, dancing Argentine tango, and working on her backyard farm in Northern California with her six chickens.

Brendan Faegre is a composer, educator, bandleader, and percussionist. His primary goal is to craft a unified voice using elements from the musical traditions within which he was formed: jazz and rock drumming, Hindustani classical music, and contemporary concert music. **Mr. Faegre's** works have been programmed at festivals including Huddersfield, Gaudeamus, November Music, TRANSIT Leuven, Dark Music Days, Beijing Modern, and Bang on a Can. He has received commissions from groups such as Ensemble Klang, Slagwerk den Haag, Debut Orchestra, Third Angle Ensemble, David Kweksilber Big Band and the Huygens-Fokker Foundation. In 2012 he founded the Brendan Faegre Edge Ensemble, a group challenging the boundaries between notation and improvisation. This season they premiered six new works by young composers from around the world. **Mr. Faegre** lives in the Netherlands with his wife, baroque violinist Lucia Giraudo.

Born in Hong Kong and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii, **Tonia Ko** strives to capture the poetics behind small visual details of everyday life. Her music has been performed internationally by Flux Quartet, Orkest de Ereprijs, Ensemble Mise-en, Eastman Wind Ensemble, and featured at festivals including Tanglewood, Aspen, and Santa Fe. **Ms. Ko** has received recognition from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Copland House, and the Lin Yao Ji Foundation, and her parallel explorations in visual art inspire frequent interdisciplinary projects. Currently a doctoral candidate at Cornell University, **Ms. Ko** is the 2015-2017 Young Concert Artists Composer-in-Residence.

At age seven, **Mariel Austin** learned many musical genres through the San Francisco Girls Chorus. After starting trombone at age thirteen, she wrote pieces for her jazz combo in high school. In 2007 she studied Jazz Performance at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), where she composed for the CSUN Jazz "A" Band. In 2011 she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Jazz Performance. Thereafter she wrote her first commission for the Berkeley High School Jazz Program and has premiered her compositions at venues around the country. **Ms. Austin** is currently a graduate student in Jazz Composition at New England Conservatory.

Alto saxophonist, composer and multi-instrumentalist **Brian Krock** began his musical career at an early age. Before discovering his love of jazz music, he studied classical guitar and piano. His first attempts at composing were made in the seventh grade, when he recorded an entire album of original heavy-metal music on a digital recorder. He began seriously studying jazz music in high school, inspiring him to pursue a career dedicated to creating music. A recent recipient of a Master's degree in Composition from the Manhattan School of Music, **Mr. Krock** was a student of world-renowned jazz composer Jim McNeely and classical composer Dr. J. Mark Stambaugh. In 2010 he was awarded the Manhattan Prize in Composition for his *String quartet No. 1* (2010), and in 2012 he was awarded an ASCAP Young Jazz Composer's Award. As Composer-in-Residence at the Bloomingdale School of Music last fall, he wrote a plethora of music which he plans to record in the coming year. **Mr. Krock's** band, Life Size, kicked off 2014 with a tour of the Northeast in support of their debut record, *Bright!*

Christopher Zuar's music has been performed by the Brussels Jazz Orchestra, The Westchester Jazz Orchestra, **NYYS**, and the New York/BMI Jazz Orchestra, among others. Feeling at home writing both contemporary jazz and classical, **Mr. Zuar's** music has been hailed by acclaimed pianist and composer Mike Holober as "...clever, intuitive, engaging, accessible and ultimately beautiful." His compositions explore rich harmonies, lyrical melodies, and atmospheric textures that combine to create a compositional voice that is wholly his own. **Mr. Zuar's** has garnered numerous awards and commissions including three ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Awards. In October of 2013, his composition, *Anthem*, was selected by the Brussels Jazz Orchestra as a finalist in their International Jazz Composers Competition. He spent three days in Belgium rehearsing the orchestra for a final concert at the world renowned Flagey in Brussels. **Mr. Zuar** holds a BM from the New England Conservatory and a MM from the Manhattan School of Music both in Jazz Composition.

Michael Schachter is a composer, theorist, pianist, and educator based in Ann Arbor, MI. His music has been commissioned and performed by ensembles such as the Minnesota Orchestra, the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, the 21st Century Ensemble (the resident new music group at the Smithsonian), the New York Virtuoso Singers, the Vocal Essence Ensemble Singers, and bass-baritone Davone Tines. **Mr. Schachter** is currently a joint PhD candidate in Composition and Music Theory at the University of Michigan, where he has worked with Bright Sheng, Michael Daugherty, Paul Schoenfield, and Evan Chambers. He earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard, where he was awarded a John Knowles Paine fellowship for a year studying South Indian classical music in Chennai, India. Beyond his musical activities, **Mr. Schachter** is a die-hard Boston sports fan and enjoys good food and bad action movies.

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