

JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS PERFORM TWO SPRING CONCERTS

Festival of Strings & Major/Minor

Jacksonville, FL (May 2, 2018) --- The Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras, under the direction of Principal Conductor Deanna Tham, will perform two concerts the week of May 7. The first, *Festival of Strings*, will take place on **Monday, May 7 at 7 p.m.** in Jacoby Symphony Hall. The second, the annual *Major/Minor* program, will take place on **Friday, May 11 at 8 p.m.** Symphony Music Director Courtney Lewis will join Tham in conducting this concert.

The **Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras(JSYO)** serves more than 400 talented musicians from all over Northeast Florida through six levels of ensembles – two full symphonies and four levels of string ensembles – that vary by repertoire and technical advancement. Regional satellite sites now offer beginning to intermediate ensembles for student musicians in the early stages of their musical instruction.

Festival of Strings will feature all of the JSYO's young string ensembles: Jump Start Strings, Foundation Strings, Encore Strings and Premier Strings. The audience will hear well-known tunes from "Ode to Joy" to themes from *Carmen*. *Festival of Strings* will feature a special performance from the students from the Communities in Schools satellites sites at George W. Carver, Pickett, Woodland Acres, Normandy Village and North Shore elementary schools. In addition, the students from the JSYO Clay County site at Wehner School of the Arts will have their debut performance as a stand-alone ensemble. *Festival of Strings* will be performed under the collective batons of JSYO conductors, Helen Morin, Rose Francis, David Song, Naira Cola and John Wieland.

The *Major/Minor* concert will feature performances by the JSYO's top performing orchestral groups, the Repertory Orchestra and the Philharmonic. The students in each of these groups will perform alongside Jacksonville Symphony musicians. The concert will be conducted by Symphony Music Director Courtney Lewis and JSYO Principal Conductor Deanna Tham. The audience will hear symphonic classics such as Reinhold Glière's *Russian Sailor's Dance* and Igor Stravinsky's Suite from *The Firebird (1919)*.

In addition to performances by those two ensembles, the concert will highlight the two winners of the JSYO's annual concerto competition, bassoonist Sam Watson and violinist Maxwell van Hoeij. Sam will be performing Carl Maria van Weber's Bassoon Concerto in F major and Maxwell will perform Édouard Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*.

Sam Watson came to Jacksonville in 2016 from McKinney, Texas, where he began his music education with piano lessons studying under Dr. Mary Humm. He began studying bassoon in sixth grade at Cockrill Middle School under the direction of Gary Williams. He also took up the cello in seventh grade. Sam began high school at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts where he received the Most Improved Freshman award from the DA band program, under the direction of Ted Shistle. He has been a member of the JSYO Philharmonic ensemble for two seasons. Watson has also performed on several occasions with the Jacksonville University Orchestra. In the summer of 2017, Sam attended the Stetson Double Reed Workshop where he was a member of the top chamber group, won the Young Artist Soloist Award and won a National Band Association Outstanding Musician Award. Most recently, Sam was the principal bassoonist for the 2018 Florida All-State Concert Band. Sam is a

student of Stephanie Magnus and will be attending the Interlochen Advanced Bassoon Institute this summer.

Maxwell van Hoeij, a freshman in high school, is concertmaster for the JSYO Philharmonic. He has been with the JSYO for five years and also performs with the JSYO Honors Quartet. Maxwell performed as concertmaster for North Florida All Districts (2017). He is a student of Dr. Shannon Thomas, professor of violin, at Florida State University.

In 2012, at the age of 8, Maxwell was the National Junior Eclectic String Festival first place winner at the ASTA conference. In the summer of 2015, he was the Junior Advance Concerto Competition winner at Interlochen Center for the Arts. In 2016, Maxwell debuted at Stern Auditorium Carnegie Hall in their Honors Performance Series. In May, 2017, Maxwell was awarded first place at the American Protégé International Piano and String Competition and performed at Weill Auditorium, Carnegie Hall. Under the baton of Itzhak Perlman, Maxwell is the only Perlman Music Program Super Strings performer that has performed with them consecutively for five years. Maxwell attended Encore Chamber Music at the Cleveland Institute of Music, summer 2016 and in June 2017, he performed Strauss' *Don Juan* and Mahler's Symphony No. 6 with the FOOSA Festival at Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, California with a professional orchestra led by cellist Lynn Harrell. At Summit Music Festival (SMF) in August 2017, Maxwell received daily guidance from Mr. Aaron Rosand, and graduated from his Violin Intensive Program.

TICKETS: For more information, or to purchase tickets, please call the Ticket Office at 904.354.5547 or visit JaxSymphony.org. You can also visit the Ticket Office Monday-Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida's leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. In addition, the Symphony provides music instruction for youth and operates the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at [facebook.com/JaxSymphony](https://www.facebook.com/JaxSymphony); follow them on @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.