

2025-2026 TWA Grant Application

Contact Information

Organization Name:	<u>The Austin Symphony Orchestra Society, Inc. ("ASO")</u>
Contact Title:	<u>Institutional Giving Officer</u>
Contact Name:	<u>Seth Beaugh</u>
Address:	<u>1113 Red River St</u>
City:	<u>Austin</u>
Email Address:	<u>sbeaugh@austinsymphony.org</u>
TWA Sponsor:	<u>Linda van Bavel</u>
TWA Sponsor Email:	<u>lindavanbavel1@gmail.com</u>

Artistic Significance & Project Innovation and Creativity: (Question 3)

Organization's Mission:

Austin Symphony Orchestra's mission is to enhance the cultural quality of life for the adults and young people of Central TX by providing excellence in music performance and educational programming.

Name of Project/Program to be Funded:

ASO Young People's Concerts (YPCs), 2026-27

Project Description:

Thousands of Central Texas grade 4-5 children discover the Austin Symphony each year through our richly engaging, multi-sensory YPCs, bilingual classroom materials and in-person docent visits.

Project Purpose: What are the goals of the project/program?

YPC goals are to: create impactful, interactive and memorable experiences for children that will inspire them to develop a greater understanding and appreciation for the arts through the course of their lives; contribute to strong social-emotional learning development and academic achievement by reinforcing TEKS-aligned content; and expand access to vertically-integrated cultural education across Central Texas.

Is this program offered at a cost to children? If there is a fee for this program, please enter the cost in numerical dollar amount per child to enroll.

No, student fees are paid by an enrolling entity, such as a campus or district. The student, family, parent and guardian(s) are not responsible for payment.

What is the expected number of children to be directly served by project/program?

12500

What is the age range of children served by this project/program?

Ages 9-11

Identify the artistic discipline(s) included in this project/program: Check all that apply.

Music, Theatre

Project Innovation and Creativity: (Question 4)

Describe how this program provides arts access for children.

TCT's State of the Arts notes that children in high-poverty schools have fewer arts teachers and courses. YPCs provide educators (even those not arts-certified) in 90+ local schools with resources to engage children with our in-classroom materials and live orchestra field trips.

Explain what makes this program/project innovative. Program/Project innovation differs for each community. If your program is a traditional arts experience but is unique to your community, please specify. If your program is innovative, relative to traditional arts offerings in your community, please specify.

While many orchestras offer field trips, YPCs are unique in blending live symphonic performance with bilingual TEKS-aligned instruction and pre-concert preparation. Our English and Spanish educator and student materials support 7,200 emergent bilingual children each year (58% of attendees). Pre-concert docent presentations deepen children's learning, bringing the concert directly into classrooms.

What type or level of arts experience do children have as a result of your program? Please select one.

Student Engagement: Children observe and are introduced to knowledge, skills, and content, and are invited to be an active participant in the arts example.

Is this a new program? If the answer is NO, how long has the program been in existence?

40 years in 2025-26

Organizational Management and Capability: (Question 5)

The organization has the following human capital. Check all that apply.

Board, Staff, Project Manager/Director, Volunteers

Describe your organization's staffing structure.

Number of full-time employees	21
Number of part-time employees	86
Number of volunteers	99

Describe the qualifications and experience of the individuals who will provide this programming and work directly with children.

JEREMY BRIMHALL, Director of Education & Community Engagement, leads ASO's education programs. Brimhall has held similar posts for over a decade with the San Antonio Symphony and San Antonio Philharmonic and previously performed as a musician of the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra. Assistant Conductor PABLO ZAMORA MATA has significant experience working with youth orchestras and music education programs. A native of Costa Rica and fully fluent in both English and Spanish, Zamora will conduct YPCs and collaborate with Brimhall on program planning. PHILLIP TAYLOR, an alum of UT Austin, is the Director of Fine Arts for Austin ISD (AISD). Taylor's background is in theater arts, with a strong emphasis on arts integration; he and staff work closely with ASO to integrate the arts into the AISD curriculum. AISD EDUCATORS work directly with children in advance of concerts, using curriculum materials provided by ASO. WOMEN'S SYMPHONY LEAGUE DOCENTS, many of whom are retired educators, visit classrooms to prepare children for the concerts.

Race and Ethnicity

Describe the race proportion of your:	Staff	Board
African American	0	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	2
Asian	6	2
Black or African American	0	5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0
White	56	57
Two or More Races	2	2
Other	36	32

Describe the ethnicity of your:	Staff	Board
Hispanic/Latino	7	4
Not Hispanic/Latino	93	96

Outside Support: (Question 5 continued)

List community partners supporting the program:

- Austin Independent School District: collaborates with ASO to create curriculum and learning activities; provides student transportation and administrative support. - Public school districts outside of AISD (Round Rock, Hutto, Manor, Del Valle ISDs): new partnerships; invitations for students to attend concerts at the Long Center, and collaboration to bring YPCs to their districts in the future. - Women's Symphony League of Austin: provides volunteer ushers who lead children directly from buses to Long Center ushers and volunteer docents who visit participating schools ahead of the concerts to prepare children to engage more deeply with the concert experience. - The Long Center for the Performing Arts: provides ushers inside Dell Hall.

Organizational Funding: (Question 5 continued)

Has the organization received a TWA Grant in the past? If so, which years?

Yes, 2009

Budget at a Glance

Total Organization Budget Amount	7129728
Total Program/Project Budget	180892
TWA Grant Request	10000
Grant request's percentage of total organization budget. Cannot exceed 25%.	0.14%

If awarded the full grant request, what amount of TWA funding would support the following categories? Please provide a numerical dollar amount for each area.

Staffing/Salaries	
Operational Expenses	10000
Supplies and Materials	
Facilities (Rent/Mortgage)	
Technology Equipment	
Instructional Resources and Curriculum	
Student Transportation Fees	
Other: Please specify	

Attachments Included

1. Organization's current year budget.
2. Organization's final/actual budget for the previous year.
3. Program/project budget

Other sources of revenue (\$2,000 or more) for the project/program: Provide a list of sponsors, grants, etc., and include dollar amounts.

Funding for the arts has decreased significantly over the life of the program, particularly from government sources. With artistic and production costs increasing each year, YPC relies on generous individual and institutional funders to keep the program accessible for schools. External funding sources include a fee-for-service from participating school districts (\$13,000), Texas Commission on the Arts (pending renewal, \$4,500) and foundation funds pending renewal (Betty Kahle Family Foundation, \$5,000; Rea Charitable Trust, \$20,000; Tres Grace Family Foundation, \$50,000). Foundation prospects (estimating \$5,000 in the attached budget) include L'Aiglon Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Mihaylo Foundation, Moody Foundation, Scanlan Foundation and Rachael & Ben Vaughan Foundation. Related and internal funding sources include the Women's Symphony League (\$35,000), endowment fund donations (\$34,000) and agency funds as needed to balance program expenses (\$4,392). In the attached budget file, we have proposed a \$10,000 grant from Texas Women for the Arts.

Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation: (Question 5 continued)

Program Implementation (if new) or Operational Plan: How will/is this project/program administered? Limit 1500 characters including spaces. Please include details such as where the program will be hosted, how children will be enrolled, how students gain access to this program, if transportation is needed or provided, and how the program will be administered.

We host YPCs at the Long Center for the Performing Arts, supported by state-of-the-art acoustics. All AISD grade 4-5 students are automatically enrolled; we invite students from other public, private and home schools. First, children gain access to the program in the classroom, where educators provide instruction using our cross-curricular, bilingual materials. YPC docents visit attending schools to preview music selections, composers, theme and concert etiquette. Then, children attend YPCs during the school day each February/March; we offer multiple concerts to accommodate demand. Districts provide student transportation, with our assistance in planning and logistics. Our Director of Education & Community Engagement administers the program, working closely with district officials and educators to engage children with programming directly before and after the concert. Teams of educators help design evidence-based curriculum to reinforce arts learning. During the concerts, our Assistant Conductor and guest actor(s) lead children in call-and-response, sing-alongs, movement and visual media, providing an immersive concert experience. YPCs are a crucial part of our vertically integrated programming for Pre-K through high school students, beginning with Building Blocks of the Orchestra in Pre-K to grade 3. Cross-curricular themes connect music with TEKS subject areas, helping children learn creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and social-emotional skills.

Evaluation Plan: How will you evaluate the success of this program? Limit 500 characters including spaces.

We evaluate the success of the program by conducting educator surveys, teaching observations and interviews with educators and children. In our 2024-25 educator survey, educators rated the usefulness and effectiveness of the materials and provided feedback on each element of the concert, including the

extent to which children remained engaged. We use data from these evaluations to continually improve program content and delivery, as well as identify and reduce barriers to participation.

Program/Project Timeline: Provide a detailed timeline to implement this program. If you choose to upload a file to answer this question please type, "Project Timeline attached" in the box below. TWA grant funds must be spent between June 1 - May 31. Limit 800 characters including spaces.

Project Timeline attached

Program/Project Timeline: Optional File Upload.

ASO%20YPC_TWA%20Timeline%20(TWA).pdf

Impact: (Question 6)

Demographic Information of Children Served

Demographic description of the children served by this project/program: Check all that apply.

At-Risk of dropping out of school* See explanation in #18

Title I

Low Socioeconomic

Children with disabilities or special needs

Children served represent cultural diversity

What percentage of children served by this program are considered at-risk? The term at-risk is used to identify students or groups of students who statistically have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school.

48

What percentage of the children served by this program are economically disadvantaged?

51

Describe the community served by this program: Check all that apply.

Rural, Urban, Suburban, Inner City, Fringe, Major Metro Area, City- Large, City- Midsize, Town, Distant

Project Need: What need(s) does this project/program fulfill? Limit 200 characters including spaces

Many Central Texas children lack equitable arts education access, even within the same district. Our YPCs introduce evidence-based music education to 12,500 children annually, helping close that gap.

Describe the race percentage of the student population served by the program. Please enter a numerical percentage for each. Percentages must add up to 100%.

American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Asian	5
Black or African American	6
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
White	31
Two or More Races	4
Other	54

What percentage of the children served by this program are Hispanic/Latino? Enter a numerical response totaling 100%.

Hispanic/Latino	54
Not Hispanic/Latino	46

Optional Content Provided

Is there anything else that should be considered about this project/program? (Optional)

At present, YPCs serve every grade 4-5 child in Austin ISD each year; indeed, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reported the total 2024-25 student enrollment in these two grades as 10,898, and we reached 10,850 AISD children that year. Our long-term vision for the program, however, is to greatly expand the scope and reach of our YPCs so every Central Texas child can take part. As Maleesa Gomez of Del Valle ISD mentions in the attached letter of support, many Austin-area students not enrolled in Austin ISD “would never have the chance to hear a live orchestra performance or interact with the instruments and musicians” without our programs. Children in our area are served by 27 public school districts, most of which have no interaction with ASO, their local professional symphony orchestra. Using a model our Director of Education & Community Engagement developed during his time in San Antonio, we would transport the orchestra to area school district performing arts centers. We have begun developing the crucial operational groundwork in nearby districts for this expansion. District administrators and educators have strongly expressed interest in hosting these satellite concerts, particularly given their limited capacity to provide meaningful arts education due to time, venue space and funding. Our next step is to nurture the funding relationships that will help carry out our vision: Our estimate of the first-year expansion cost is \$37,000, a 20% increase to the program budget. Direct (non-salary) education expenses reflect just 1.5% of ASO’s overall organizational budget. With earned concert revenue going toward covering public concert artistic and production costs, our department relies on contributed revenue from funders like Texas Women for the Arts to sustain and grow our

programs. For instance, 80% of our 2026 YPC budget relies on external funders; we are actively fundraising to close a funding gap of \$50,000 in this fiscal year. Our program scale changes each year with the resources we have available. We welcome your members to experience a YPC for themselves to witness the joy and delight of our attending children. The upcoming series will take place at Austin's Long Center, with two concerts per day on February 23-25, 2026. To RSVP and for more information, please contact Jeremy Brimhall at jbrimhall@austinsymphony.org and visit <https://austinsymphony.org/education-community-concerts/young-peoples-concerts>. NOTES: The number of part-time employees in response 33 includes 84 tenured orchestra members. Also, the field in response 34 doesn't allow three digits to be entered; ASO relies on nearly 270 volunteers each year, not 99. In responses 36 and 37, staff and board who identify as Black or African American have been entered in the "Black or African American" line, not the "African American" line, which appears to be a repetition. Also, the "Other" category in responses 36 and 37 includes 29% of staff and 28% of board members who declined to respond to an anonymous survey question about racial identity.

District
Director

Person to Contact
EP/EO Correspondence Examiner
Telephone Number
767-6518
Refer Reply to
EP/EO:SPB:4950DAL
Date
6-30-88

Dear Sir or Madam:

Our records show that THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SOCIETY INC is exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This exemption was granted JULY, 1941 and remains in full force and effect. Contributions to your organization are deductible in the manner and to the extent provided by section 170 of the Code.

We have classified your organization as one that is not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code because you are an organization described in section 509(a)(2).

If we may be of further assistance, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown above.

Sincerely yours,



EP/EO Correspondence Examiner



**The Austin Symphony Orchestra Society, Inc.
Budget vs Actual*
Twelve Months Ended August 31, 2025**

Dated 9.12.25

		YTD Actual*	Total Annual Budget
Revenues			
1	Ticket Revenue	2,012,334	2,076,000
2	Fee Engagement	580,271	517,960
3	Other Earned Revenue	280,125	279,375
4	Contributed Revenue	2,327,970	2,655,017
5	Pandemic Assistance	0	0
6	Investment	102,252	51,440
7	Endowment Draw	615,112	600,000
8	Building+ Operating Campaign	239,038	0
9			
10	Total Revenues	6,157,102	6,179,792
11			
Expenses			
12			
13	Fixed Artistic	3,053,618	2,981,697
14	Concert Production	1,064,430	947,693
15	Marketing and Sales	805,159	801,360
16	Development	848,720	857,358
17	Education	178,043	164,182
18	Administration	1,099,110	1,021,069
19			
20	Total Expenses	7,049,081	6,773,359
21			
22			
23	Surplus (Deficit)	(891,979)	(593,567)

* Unaudited

Note: The unaudited deficit above is due to one-time investments and restructuring as part of a five-year deficit reduction plan. A new CEO/Executive Director started midway through the fiscal year (February 2025), following nearly a year of interim leadership. As part of the restructuring, we secured a new VP of Development (starting in September 2025) to lead renewed fundraising efforts, including strong portfolio management practices.



**The Austin Symphony Orchestra Society, Inc.
Board-Approved Budget for the Year Ending August 31, 2026**

FY25-26	Board-Approved Budget*
Earned Revenue	2,895,873
Contributed Revenue	2,194,781
Maestro's Dream Annual Gala	500,000
Investment Income	75,000
Endowment Income	690,000
TOTAL REVENUE	6,355,654
Fixed Artistic*	3,176,524
Concert Production	1,127,220
Marketing and Sales	945,290
Development	719,054
Education	107,087
Admin and Facilities	1,054,553
TOTAL EXPENSE	7,129,728
Surplus (Deficit)	-774,074

***Does not yet include orchestra rate increase; as of November 2025, a tentative agreement for the next three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement has been reached. It is expected that the negotiations will conclude in the coming weeks.**

Note regarding projected deficit:

We are committed to financial transparency and accountability with our funders. At present, ASO operates with a structural deficit that reflects the financial realities of the orchestral field. The core challenge for ASO management, like most other orchestras in the United States, is that our expenses are rising faster than new and sustainable sources of recurring revenue. The operating budget above excludes non-recurring, extraordinary revenue. Further, it estimates a reasonable and achievable revenue goal based on regularly recurring revenues along with a conservative estimate of the required expenses necessary to execute and support the program of work. The deficit is financed using existing balance sheet cash and zero debt.

While our organization has operated with a structural deficit for multiple years, management is working to eliminate this practice and deliver a balanced budget in future years without reliance on non-recurring, one-time revenues. We have a clearly defined plan to close the deficit in six years by increasing revenue by 8-9% annually, which involves 10% contributed revenue growth and 5% in earned revenue, while holding expense growth to under 5% per year. For example, in the 2024-25 season, we achieved record single-ticket sales across all series, including the highest-ever gross revenue for both *Masterworks* and *Pops*. This surge reflects a strategic refinement of our pricing and audience development model, demonstrating strong community demand. In contributed revenue, we are refocusing on individual giving by building strong portfolio management practices, while scaling back emphasis on special events.



Young People's Concerts, 2026-27

Time period: June 1, 2026 - May 31, 2027

Prepared for: Texas Women for the Arts, November 2025

	Other Project Funding	Texas Women for the Arts Request	Total FY27 Project Budget	Notes
REVENUE				
Earned Revenue				
Fee for service	\$13,000		\$13,000	Annual fee for service paid by participating school systems (often funded through Fine Arts or PTA budgets). Modest per-student ticket fee (~\$1 on average) to help offset artistic and production costs.
Subtotal Earned Revenue	\$13,000	\$0	\$13,000	
Contributed Revenue				
Government: state	\$4,500		\$4,500	Texas Commission on the Arts FY27 Arts Respond Project grant (projected)
Foundation support	\$80,000		\$80,000	<u>Pending renewal</u> : Betty Kahle Family Foundation, Rea Charitable Trust, Tres Grace Family Foundation. <u>Prospects</u> : L'Aiglon Foundation, Meadows Foundation, Mihaylo Foundation, Moody Foundation, Scanlan Foundation and Rachael & Ben Vaughan Foundation
Women's Symphony League (WSL)	\$35,000		\$35,000	Affinity group that fundraises on behalf of the orchestra; annual proceeds are split among education programs (projected)
Endowment fund donations	\$34,000		\$34,000	Annual endowment fund distribution (projected)
Agency funds	\$4,392		\$4,392	Additional funds as needed from ASO general operating revenue
Requested from Texas Women for the Arts		\$10,000	\$10,000	Requesting grant funds go toward orchestra members' pay, as their participation is crucial to the success of the program
Subtotal Contributed Revenue	\$157,892	\$10,000	\$167,892	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$170,892	\$10,000	\$180,892	
EXPENSE				
Artistic and Implementation Expense				
Orchestra scale, overscale, cartage, FICA/MCARE, TWC, Worker's Comp, pension (personnel and benefits)	\$77,235	\$10,000	\$87,235	63 orchestra members for 5 services (2 rehearsals, 3 performance services). Assumes 2026-27 rate with accompanying benefits, per negotiated musician contract
Assistant Conductor time allocation percentage (salary and benefits)	\$8,681		\$8,681	10% of Assistant Conductor total estimated salary and benefits; conducts the YPC performances
Narrator	\$5,000		\$5,000	Actor(s) to narrate YPC performances and encourage student participation
Program-specific supplies/printing	\$850		\$850	
Subtotal Artistic and Implementation Expense	\$91,766	\$10,000	\$101,766	
Concert Production Expense				
Contract labor	\$3,060		\$3,060	Sound engineer and photographer
Stage crew	\$4,371		\$4,371	Venue production crew for lighting, sound, audio, and so on
Music rental/purchase/licensing	\$3,000		\$3,000	Sheet music for orchestra



Young People's Concerts, 2026-27

Time period: June 1, 2026 - May 31, 2027

Prepared for: Texas Women for the Arts, November 2025

	Other Project Funding	Texas Women for the Arts Request	Total FY27 Project Budget	Notes
Venue rental	\$30,773		\$30,773	Four-day rental of Long Center for the Performing Arts (1 day of rehearsals and 3 days of performances)
Auditorium house managers	\$3,570		\$3,570	Long Center front of house staff to organize entrance, seating and exit of approximately 12,500 students and 500 teachers
Security	\$4,590		\$4,590	Long Center venue security for student safety as students move from buses to venue
Subtotal Concert Production Expense	\$49,364	\$0	\$49,364	
Administration Expense				
Education staff salaries and fringe benefits	\$26,159		\$26,159	25% of 1 FTE (Director of Education & Community Engagement)
Program allocation of shared organizational costs	\$3,603		\$3,603	Postage, insurance, printing/copying and other shared organizational costs
Subtotal Administration Expense	\$29,762	\$0	\$29,762	
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$170,892	\$10,000	\$180,892	



**Young People's Concerts (YPCs), 2026-27
Program Timeline
Time period: Spring 2026 - Summer 2027**

Winter/Spring 2026*: Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) education staff and Assistant Conductor decide on YPC program theme, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives, music selections, any additional performing elements and basic script outline, in consultation with Austin Independent School District (AISD) fine arts staff. Begin recruiting volunteer docents from the Women's Symphony League (WSL).

Summer 2026: Curriculum team creates YPC Teacher Guide and supporting curricular materials, including lesson plans to fit the theme and objectives and concert sing-along guide material. ASO education staff contextualizes curriculum through rigorously researched written descriptions and compiles digital versions of curriculum resources; staff also creates the YPC docent presentation.

October 2026: ASO distributes curriculum to AISD music teachers and leads music teacher orientations. ASO begins taking reservations from non-AISD schools based on expected remaining capacity in the performances.

November 2026: ASO education staff meet with YPC Docent Committee to train volunteer docents for school visits and on details related to the specific presentation. Docents begin to schedule presentations with attending schools.

Fall 2026/Winter 2027: Teachers implement curriculum materials directly with children before the concert, using sequential, interactive learning activities to prepare children for concerts.

January 2027: ASO finalizes the number and placement of children for concerts and coordinates with AISD for logistics, including transportation and ushers. YPC docents visit attending schools to preview information about the music selections, composers, theme and concert etiquette.

March 8-10, 2027: Six 45-minute YPC performances take place over three days at the Long Center in Austin, Texas, for 12,500 children.

Spring/Summer* 2027: ASO administers surveys, collects, organizes and analyzes data, and reports results.

**Outside of TWA grant funding period of June 1, 2026 - May 31, 2027; provided for reference.*



**Texas Women for the Arts
ASO *Young People's Concerts*
Program Collateral**

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July 7, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to offer my recommendation for Austin Symphony Orchestra's application for funding in support of their educational *Young People's Concerts* (YPCs).

Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) YPCs provide an invaluable cultural and educational experience for upper elementary students, many of whom would not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with live symphonic music. These concerts present an inspiring introduction to the world of classical music, sparking interest in school-based music programs as students transition through elementary school and into middle school. Participation in these programs supports a wide range of academic growth and socio-emotional development that students carry with them throughout their educational journey.

In March of this year, approximately 140 fourth and fifth grade students from Creedmoor Elementary in Del Valle ISD (where I teach music) attended an ASO *Young People's Concert* performance at the Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin. The program, titled "Midsummer in Marfa: A West Texas Fairy Tale," was designed to engage students with multiple performance disciplines, including classical symphonic and mariachi music, poetry, theatre, Latin dance, opera, and even reggaetón - in a locally-connected, bilingual and culturally-responsive performance.

As a music educator, I know that experiences like attending the ASO *Young People's Concert* make a lasting impact on my students. Being a Title 1 school with a largely Hispanic population, the concert exposed my students to classical music in a relatable and engaging way, with many of them expressing they wish it had been longer! They loved engaging with the pre-concert materials, providing a preview of the story and music and a chance to tie it to previous learning. For many students, this was their first time attending a live concert of any kind, especially a symphony orchestra concert, and they were so excited to see and hear instruments in real life that they had only learned about in music class.

The multi-disciplinary performance with the inclusion of culturally-relevant, Spanish-speaking actors and Hispanic music influences also impacted my students. Almost every student commented on how much they loved hearing reggaetón and mariachi music along with the orchestra. Seeing their culture represented on stage led to a deeper investment in the concert experience with many students and teachers requesting to return next year.

Additionally, ASO's principal percussionist visited our campus in May this year to perform a tailored program for our PK-3 students as part of the ASO *Building Blocks of the Orchestra* program. The interactive presentation exposed students to a variety of orchestral percussion instruments, how they work and how they can make different sounds, in an up close and personal format. Students were enthralled with the performance and enthusiastically engaged with the presentation. This experience exposed students to new percussion instruments and excited them about opportunities to play these instruments in middle school band. It also furthered their music

education by helping them make connections between instruments from the performance and ones they have seen or played before in music class.

The *Building Blocks* percussion presentation was the first of a five-year rotation of ASO *Building Blocks* ensembles that we are slated to receive at no cost in the coming years, including harp (25-26), string quartet (26-27), woodwind quintet (27-28), and brass quintet (28-29). The purpose of this multi-year program is to support and enhance students' learning about various musical instruments, how they work and how they produce sounds, as a lead up to both the full-orchestra YPC experience (in 4th and 5th grade) and the opportunity to participate in school instrumental programs (in middle school).

We are eager to continue and expand our collaboration with the Austin Symphony Orchestra. My hope is that we will once again be able to take students to the Long Center for another set of YPCs this coming February 2026. We also look forward to hosting ASO's principal harpist for a *Building Blocks* Harp Presentation on campus (to be scheduled) this coming year and others in the future.

Without these ASO educational programs, many local Austin area students, like my own, would never have the chance to hear a live orchestra performance or interact with the instruments and musicians. The continuation of these programs directly impacts the future of classical music in our city by exposing a whole generation to its life-changing power in new and exciting ways. These students are not only our future violin and trumpet players; they are our future concert-goers and sponsors who are depending on programs like the ASO *Young People's Concert* and *Building Blocks* to foster and excite their love of music.

I wholeheartedly encourage your support of the Austin Symphony Orchestra's funding request. Please feel free to reach out to me should you require any additional information or insight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maleesa Gomez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maleesa Gomez
Music Teacher
Creedmoor Elementary
maleesa.gomez@dvisd.net



THE WATER CYCLE

2025-2026 Young People's Concerts

Educational Field Trip Opportunity for Local Schools!

Join ASO for a program all about condensation, precipitation, transpiration and other water-related scientific concepts. Important works by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Boulanger, Debussy and others will highlight the various stages of the hydrologic cycle.

Cross-Curricular Theme: Science | Target Grades: 4-5 | February 23, 24 & 25, 2026 | Long Center for the Performing Arts

Program Flyer

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY **THE WATER CYCLE**

2025-2026 Young People's Concerts

Educational Field Trip Opportunity for Local Schools!

Join ASO for a program all about condensation, precipitation, transpiration and other water-related scientific concepts. Important works by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Boulanger, Debussy and others will highlight the various stages of the hydrologic cycle.

Cross-Curricular Theme: Science | Target Grades: 4-5
February 23, 24 & 25, 2026 | The Long Center for the Performing Arts


For reservations, contact: Jeremy Brimhall | jbrimhall@austinsymphony.org

Teacher Guide (English and Spanish)

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

THE WATER CYCLE

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THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

EL CICLO DEL AGUA

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Paint to Music Contest

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

THE WATER CYCLE

Paint to Music Contest Information



What is the Paint to Music Contest?
All schools and groups attending ASO’s 2025-2026 Young People’s Concerts: *The Water Cycle* are strongly encouraged to participate in our Inaugural *Paint to Music Contest*. The Contest involves having students grades 3-6 create a work of visual art while conducting deep listening to one of three pre-selected pieces from the concert program. The finished artwork is then submitted to ASO for judging. Roughly 150 winners will be selected, including seven top winners! The winning artwork will be projected above the orchestra at the culminating *Water Cycle* concerts during a performance of the same pieces that inspired them.

How do we participate?
The deadline for entry and DROP-OFF DAY for artwork is **Saturday, January 24, 2026**. Artwork may be dropped off at one of three locations between the hours of 10:00 am and 6:00 pm. Entries can also be mailed in advance.

For full Contest Rules and Guidelines, a Music Selection Guide, forms and Artwork Label Templates, please visit the link below or scan the QR code:
<https://bit.ly/ASO25-26PTMContestForms>
Please read all information carefully.

How can we listen to the music selections?
For free access to a streaming playlist of the 2025-2026 *Paint to Music Contest* selections, please visit the YouTube link below:
1. <https://bit.ly/ASO25-26PTMYouTubePlaylist>
2. 2025-2026 *Paint to Music Contest* selections are (each student should create artwork to only ONE chosen selection):
1. *Nuages (Clouds)* from *Nocturnes* by Claude Debussy
2. *D’un matin de printemps (Of a Spring Morning)* by Lili Boulanger
3. *“Forest Murmurs”* from *Siegfried* by Richard Wagner

Questions?
Please contact:
JEREMY BRIMHALL | EDGE Director | Austin Symphony Orchestra | (512) 617-0489 | jbrimhall@austinsymphony.org

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

THE WATER CYCLE

The Water Cycle Sing-Along / Play-Along


What is The Water Cycle Sing-Along / Play-Along?
All schools and groups attending ASO’s 2025-2026 Young People’s Concerts: *The Water Cycle* are strongly encouraged to participate in our concert sing-along – to the last piece of the program, Smetana’s *Vltava* from *Má vlast*. This piece is about the Vltava River in Bohemia but will be presented with adapted lyrics connecting the music to our local Colorado River of Texas.

Schools also may choose to have students who are learning to play soprano recorder at school participate by preparing and performing a basic recorder part on the notes G-A-G with the orchestra from their seats. Participating students would need to bring their own soprano recorders to the concert but keep them quietly stowed away until the last piece is introduced.

How do we participate?
Please prepare students to perform along with Austin Symphony Orchestra in the concert using the resources available in the google folder linked below (or scan the QR code):
<https://bit.ly/ASO25-26YPC-Sing-Along-Vltava>

NOTE: students will be expected to read from PowerPoint visuals in the folder linked above, which will be projected on screen above the orchestra in the concerts.

Questions?
Please contact:
JEREMY BRIMHALL | EDGE Director | Austin Symphony Orchestra | (512) 617-0489 | jbrimhall@austinsymphony.org



Sing-Along Resources

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

Young People's Concerts 2025

Photos by Misty Ranae Photography





Midsummer in Marfa: A West Texas Fairy Tale

Educational Resources

From March 3-5, 2025, the Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) held our annual *Young People's Concerts* at Austin's Long Center, reaching an estimated 12,327 students and 983 educators. This year included a special premiere of a new work for children called *Midsummer in Marfa: A West Texas Fairy Tale*.

Based on the story of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* but with a Tex-Mex twist, the multidimensional performance brought the plot to a new setting: the quiet, desert town of Marfa, TX, 60 miles from the Mexican border and famous for its mysterious "Marfa Lights." The concert wove together multiple performance genres in an innovative fashion, including classical symphonic and mariachi music, poetry, theatre, Latin dance and even reggaetón, in a revolutionary, bilingual performance experience for students.

We provided the following resources for educators, students and families to learn more about the program both before and after they attended the concert. Click on any of the resources below to interact with the documents in Google Drive.

Student Walkthrough

¡Bienvenidos! Welcome to West Texas! My name is **Pedro Madera**, and I live in the town of Marfa. By day, my sister Federica and I are carpenters, but by night, we lead a mariachi band! Let's talk more about that later.. For now, I hope you enjoy this introduction to:

Midsummer in Marfa: A West Texas Fairy Tale

I designed it myself! To get started, click the "Slideshow" button on your screen. Then, go to the next slide and follow the directions. See you there!

< 1 > ⋮

Google Slides



Midsummer in Marfa: A West Texas Fairy Tale

Teacher Guide

THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY **Midsummer in Marfa:
A West Texas Fairy Tale**

A Bilingual, Multigenre Performance for Children! ~ Teacher's Guide








Created by:



THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY **Midsummer in Marfa:
A West Texas Fairy Tale**

Young People's Concert Funders and Supporters

This program is made possible in part through generous support provided by:



Women's Symphony League of Austin



**TRES GRACE
FAMILY FOUNDATION**

**James C. Armstrong Youth Education Endowment
Elizabeth L. and Russell F. Hallberg Foundation
Georgia B. Lucas Foundation Fund of the Austin Community Foundation**



Interview with
Texas Public Radio's *Fronteras*

Fronteras: 'Midsummer in Marfa' reimagines Shakespeare for children with a Tex-Mex twist

In a true Austin-San Antonio collaboration, the Austin Symphony Orchestra will premiere the multi-genre take on A Midsummer Night's Dream March 3-5.

TPR / Feb 21

Post-concert review (English and Spanish)



Performance Review

A "persuasive" performance review includes:

- an **eye-catching headline** that reflects the critic's opinion.
- the **critic's name and position**.
- an **introductory paragraph** that identifies the name of the event, the name of the performing group, the time and place of the performance, a brief summary of the presentation, and the critic's general opinion.
- a **persuasive paragraph** that states the critic's opinion on various aspects of the performance, (e.g., musical and artistic execution of the performers, narration, acting, costumes, lighting, props, visuals) and defends this opinion with evidence.
- a **concluding paragraph** that restates the critic's general opinion and either recommends the performance or advises people to avoid seeing it.
- a **final rating** of one to five stars—five stars being the top rating.

Reseña de una presentación

Una reseña de presentación "bien pulida" incluye:

- un **titular llamativo** que refleje la opinión del crítico.
- **el nombre y la posición del crítico**.
- un **párrafo introductorio** que identifique el nombre del evento, el nombre del grupo de presentación, la hora y el lugar de la presentación, un breve resumen de la presentación y la opinión general del crítico.
- un **párrafo persuasivo** que exponga la opinión del crítico sobre varios aspectos de la presentación (por ejemplo, ejecución musical y artística de los intérpretes, actuación, vestuario, iluminación, utilería, escenografía) y que defienda esta opinión con pruebas.
- un **párrafo final** que reafirme la opinión general del crítico y recomiende la obra o aconseje a los lectores que no vayan a verla.
- una **calificación final** de una a cinco estrellas, donde cinco es la calificación más alta.