

Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Masuk High School  
3:00 PM



# PAN AMERICAN

*Featuring*  
**Gjorgj Kroqi, cello**

This concert was sponsored by:  
The Block Family  
*and*  
Ravi & Sudha Veeraraghav.

<https://www.monroectorchestra.org/>

Avinash Veeraraghav  
Co-Chairman

Anthony Granata  
Music Director

Anand Veeraraghav  
Co-Chairman

# Welcome!

Dear audience,

We are delighted to welcome you to our summer concert and main show of our second season! This concert, *Pan American*, features music that commemorates the semiquincentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. You will hear throughout our concert how each piece ties into the theme, and why we chose *Pan American* as a name in particular.

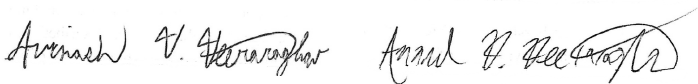
The Monroe Summer Orchestra has grown immensely from where it was in 2025. Our first concert - *Humble Beginnings* - had a roster of just over 40 musicians. The second concert - *Holiday Lights*, our special show in December - claimed over 50. While we anticipated that the MSO would grow again for this concert, we did not foresee how our roster would more than double from where it was last year at this time. There are now over 90 musicians in the MSO, thus allowing it to perform more ambitious works like what you will hear this afternoon.

Growth and development of the MSO has led to many other opportunities, including a podcast interview over public radio in January and benefit performances in May. It's also allowed the MSO to develop relationships with other ensembles and musicians around and outside the state.

The MSO's mission is to serve the community by putting on these performances and spread joy throughout the area. Of course, we also want our members to have fun and we can confidently say that they are doing just that. Members of the MSO come from all sorts of backgrounds; there are middle schoolers, undergraduates, retirees, and everyone in between. Our members perform all over the place, both within and outside Connecticut.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone involved, including those who work in the Monroe Public Schools system. We are grateful to all of you, the family and friends who support our musicians by nurturing their love of music and come to watch them perform. And of course, thank you to the rest of the board - especially Anthony - for all they do to keep the MSO running.

Now, fasten your seatbelts - because this airplane is about to take off and present *Pan American*!



## ***Monroe Summer Orchestra Leadership***

Avinash Veeraraghav  
Co-Chairman

Anthony Granata  
Music Director

Anand Veeraraghav  
Co-Chairman

Sarah St. Pierre  
Financial Consultant

Tracy Bosley  
Secretary

Robin Rockwell  
Librarian

Amritha Chivukula  
Elective Director

Monroe Summer Orchestra  
Anthony Granata, Music Director

*~Concert Program~*

The Lord of the Dance

Ronan Hardiman  
(1961 - )

*arr. Richard Saucedo*

Élégie, Op. 24 (Elegy)

Gabriel Fauré  
(1845 - 1924)

*Gjorgj Kroqi, cello*

Danzón No. 2

Arturo Márquez  
(1950 - )

*~Intermission~*

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95, B. 178 'From  
the New World'

Antonín Dvořák  
(1841 - 1904)

I. Adagio - Allegro molto

II. Largo

III. Scherzo: Molto vivace - Poco sostenuto

IV. Finale: Allegro con fuoco

Radetzky March, Op. 228

Johann Strauss I  
(1804 - 1849)

*The Radetzky March is an encore performance -  
audience participation is encouraged!*

# Orchestra Personnel

Anthony Granata, Music Director

## Violin I

Kevin Tran,  
Concertmaster  
Kyle Berkoski  
Timothy Shizume  
Kara Traggianese  
Meagan DeBona  
Jen DiZazzo  
Nicha Dvornek  
Huizhen Tan  
Oscar Lin  
Brianna Mejia  
Caden Effrece  
Ryan Laney  
Isabella Sheehan  
Richard Bierut  
Lam Pham

## Violin II

Avinash Veeraraghav  
Sarah St. Pierre  
Amritha Chivukula  
Catherine Arrango  
Aryan Ramnaress  
Eva Burroughs  
Patrick Lien  
Max Lien  
Daniel Wilenski  
Ryan Panella  
Cherri-Anne Tull  
Anna Hesketh  
Veronika Rodriguez  
Audrey Chang  
Ava Schroeder  
Adriana Korczeniewski  
Kavya Jani

^also plays Piccolo parts  
#also plays English Horn  
in *Symphony No. 9*  
\*only in *The Lord of the*  
*Dance*

## Viola

Anand Veeraraghav  
Catherine McCaffrey  
Ally Bowers  
Gabriel Castro  
John Crand  
Cheryl Secrest  
Lexa Dizon  
Betty Glus  
Miley Belizaire

## Cello

Anya Rescsanski  
Tracy Bosley  
Sachi Patitucci  
Ava O'Leary  
Hannah Alexander  
Ellawood Pullen  
Lindsey Merriman  
Emma Dunham  
Nathaly Angulo  
Manuel Sanchez  
Patrick Korczeniewski  
Gjorgj Kroqi

## Double Bass

Victor Ramirez  
Don Wallace  
Jennifer Bradbury  
Eddie Nicolas  
Elijah Kelly

## Flute

Lisa Pinney  
Sarah Block  
Sienna Jones  
Jessica Peterson  
Denise Graham^

## Oboe

Hilda Ramirez#  
Jim Thoensen  
Oscar Lin\*

## Clarinet

Robin Rockwell  
Martine Shanchuk  
Emma Troesser  
Matthew Colberg  
Anastasia Miller  
Gabriel Castro\*

## Bassoon

Wesley Ruwisch  
Jennifer Beno  
Alex Meade

## Saxophone

Lauren Pavia Cacace  
Ari Ashe

## French Horn

Benjamin Del Franco  
Sheila Doherty  
Frank Drugge

## Trumpet

Michael Ances  
Glenn Josefiak  
Patrick Harris

## Trombone

Peter Holmes  
Will Munro  
Dan Koveleski

## Tuba

Charles Mann

## Percussion

Braeden Shizume  
Jennifer Creigh  
Seku-Baye Kariamou  
Alanis Abreu

## Piano

Thomas Clark



## Meet our Music Director!



**Anthony Granata** is an orchestra teacher living in Fairfield County, Connecticut. After graduating from Western Connecticut State University, he began teaching and has taught at the high school, elementary, and middle school levels, including beginning band, chorus, elementary music and orchestra. As a published composer for Alfred Music, Anthony also enjoys writing music to help

teach challenging concepts to younger string players. An advocate for public school music programs, Anthony Granata received his entire preliminary string education during his years in the Norwalk Public School's music program, and currently teaches elementary and middle school orchestra in Fairfield, Connecticut. He is an accomplished violist and still performs regularly, and he holds advanced degrees in Special Education from Fairfield University and School Administration from Sacred Heart University. A Monroe resident, Anthony Granata is excited to be a part of the Monroe Summer Orchestra and give back to his home community.



*Maestro Granata leads the orchestra through concerts masterfully.*

## Our Soloist

**Gjorgj Kroqi** started playing cello at the age of 6. He attended the Music School “Prek Jakova” in his native city of Shkodra, Albania. Mr. Kroqi earned his degree in cello performance and teaching at the University of the Fine Arts in Tirana, Albania. From 1994 – 1998, he studied in Graz, Austria. During that time he was an active performer with various groups in the Steiermark region, including The Orchestra of the Cathedral of Graz. Mr. Kroqi has performed in many countries in Europe like Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Since arriving in Connecticut, Mr. Kroqi has been a regular member of many orchestras including the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, the Wallingford Symphony Orchestra, the New Britain Symphony Orchestra, the Bridgeport Symphony Orchestra, the Bristol Symphony Orchestra, the Richfield Symphony Orchestra, the Hotchkiss Philharmonic Orchestra and many other groups throughout Connecticut. Recently, Mr. Kroqi has appeared as a soloist with the American Chamber Orchestra. He is the cellist with the “Cornelius” String Quartet.



From 2001 – 2016, Mr. Kroqi was the Music Director and Chamber Orchestra director of the Greater Waterbury Youth Symphony. Currently he is the conductor of the Sinfonia Orchestra and cello coach of the Principal Orchestra at the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras. He is the orchestra teacher at Roger Ludlow Middle School in Fairfield and the cello teacher at Taft School in Watertown. Mr. Kroqi also teaches privately in the Fairfield and Cheshire areas.



**Save the Date**  
Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> - 7:30 PM

A Place For Us

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*Harmony Grange #92*

*Representing the communities of  
Shelton, Monroe and Trumbull*

Harmony Grange Hall, 103 Hurd Ave Monroe CT 06468 [HarmonyGrange@outlook.com](mailto:HarmonyGrange@outlook.com)

**Best Wishes to The Monroe Summer Orchestra!**

**Betty Blackwell, President of Harmony Grange #92**

**Michael P. Murray, Harmony Grange #92 Member**

# Program Notes

Few stage productions have captured the excitement and energy of Irish dance as successfully as *The Lord of the Dance*. Premiering in 1996, the spectacular show was created by dancer Michael Flatley following the worldwide success of *Riverdance*. Irish composer **Ronan Hardiman** was commissioned to write the score, blending traditional Celtic influences with contemporary rhythms and dramatic orchestral colors.

Richard Saucedo's concert band arrangement features the show's title theme, a driving and energetic melody inspired by Celtic musical traditions. Propulsive percussion, soaring melodic lines, and powerful ensemble writing evoke the excitement of Irish step dancing and the spirit of Ireland's rich musical heritage. The music builds steadily in intensity, capturing the athleticism, precision, and exuberance that made the stage production an international phenomenon.

Filled with rhythmic vitality and audience appeal, *The Lord of the Dance* remains one of the most recognizable and exciting works to emerge from the Celtic music revival of the 1990s.

**Gabriel Fauré** proved a significant influence on other composers of the era. Born on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1845 in Pamiers in southern France, the young Fauré was talented to the point that he was sent to the École Niedermeyer de Paris, a music college led by Louis Niedermeyer. He was all of 9 years-old when this happened. Niedermeyer and his successor, the famous Camille Saint-Saëns, were greatly impressed by Fauré throughout his time at the school. After graduating, Fauré served as a professional organist and really started taking to composing. He served in the French Army during the Franco-Prussian War; the violence that befell Paris after this in 1871 prompted Fauré to take a more somber tone in his compositions. It was in 1877 when his composing career really took off with the publication of his *Violin Sonata No. 1*. He would marry Marie Freimet in 1883 and have two sons. Although successful, Fauré would experience bouts of depression for the rest of his life and would have affairs with several women. Fauré's standing would grow around France throughout his life, becoming the head of the Conservatoire de Paris in 1905. While this paid him well, he gradually lost time for composing. Still, his music became popular all around Europe through the eve of World War I. He retired from the Conservatoire in 1920 at the age of 75, and would die 4 years later.

Some of Fauré's most famous works include his *Dolly Suite* and his *Pelleas et Melisande*, the latter featuring the famous and mournful *Sicillienne*. His *Élégie* is a similarly somber work. Composed in 1880 and published in 1883, the work was intended to be a movement of a cello sonata but instead became a standalone piece. Initially published for cello and piano, it was Édouard Colonne who asked Fauré to orchestrate it. This version premiered in 1901, where Spanish-Catalan (and eventually American) cellist Pablo Casals debuted on it. As its name suggests, the work is deeply melancholic.



# Program Notes

French musicologist Jean-Michel Nectoux remarked that the piece was a prominent example of Fauré expressing himself emotionally through music. In quite a change, Fauré's music written after this piece would be far more introverted and discreet.

**Arturo Márquez** (born 1950) is a Mexican composer. Born to a musical family, wherein his father and grandfather were performers, Márquez had a strong exposure to music when young. He trained in music when attending primary school in California, and subsequently at both the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico City and the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia. Originally, Márquez's music did not attract attention outside Mexico, but after he incorporated jazz and Latin ballroom music into his *danzónes*, his fame began spreading.

*Danzón No. 2*, finished in 1994, is Márquez's most celebrated work. Márquez used the popular Cuban dance form – the *danzón* – while also incorporating rhythms from Veracruz. The piece's popularity in Mexico spread around the world in 2007, when renowned conductor Gustavo Dudamel programmed it for the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela's European and American tour that year. Dudamel will begin his tenure as the New York Philharmonic's Music & Artistic Director later this year. Márquez is still an active composer, even collaborating with his daughter, Lily, to whom he dedicated *Danzón No. 2*. In 2024, *Danzón No. 2* was the world's third-most performed contemporary classical piece.

**Antonín Dvořák** is often hailed as the most famous composer from what is today the Czech Republic. Born on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1841, Dvořák was born outside Prague in the Kingdom of Bohemia within the Austrian Empire as the oldest of 14 children. The young boy showed a keen interest and talent in playing the violin while a student in primary school. Impressing his parents, he was sent to nearby Zlonice at the age of 13 for further education and to study German. Dvořák's music education would continue throughout secondary school, ranking second in his organ studies in 1859. He started playing professionally in the year prior and composed his *String Quartet No. 1* in 1862. He started giving piano lessons on the side; this was how he met his wife, Anna Čermáková as she was the sister of one of his students. They married in 1873.

That decade would prove fruitful for Dvořák. He would win the Austrian State Prize – impressing Johannes Brahms – on three occasions; the prize came with a generous stipend that allowed him more time for composing. His first set of *Slavonic Dances* in 1878 proved a great success within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Shortly afterwards, his *Symphony No. 6* became his first major internationally-acclaimed work. His following two symphonies were similarly well-received, allowing the composer's reputation to grow all around Europe.

# Program Notes

His reputation would soon take him across the Atlantic Ocean as he was appointed Director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City in 1892. While in the United States, he wanted to study American music; he felt it essential to include music by Black and Native Americans. In addition to New York City, he also spent time in Spillville, Iowa. In this time, he wrote several formidable works including his *Cello Concerto in B Minor*, *String Quartet in F Minor* (fittingly named ‘*American*’), and most prominent of all, his *Symphony No. 9 in E Minor*, ‘*From the New World*’. Dvořák returned to Bohemia in 1895. He would continue to compose, albeit not as much as when he was younger. He was awarded a gold medal for his contribution to the arts by Emperor Franz Josef I in 1899 and conducted his final concert in 1900. His health would soon decline and he died in 1904.

The *Symphony No. 9 in E Minor*, ‘*From the New World*’ is perhaps Dvořák’s most famous work and one of the most popular symphonies by any composer. Dvořák gave it its title to reference the United States, dubbing the piece ‘*Ž nového světa*’ in Czech and ‘*Aus der Neuen Welt*’ in German. Originally referred to as his ‘Symphony No. 5’ due to his first four symphonies not being published in his lifetime, the piece draws heavy influence from Native American music and Black spirituals, starting in the first movement itself. The famous English Horn solo in the second movement is a nod to one of Dvořák’s students, Harry Burleigh, a Black composer whose singing voice Dvořák wished to capture. The second movement is also in part a musical reference to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *The Song of Hiawatha*. This movement was adapted into the lyrical work, *Goin’ Home*, in 1922. Indigenous influence is felt in the third movement as parts of it mimic a Native American dance. The fiery fourth movement has famously lent its style to many other works of music (including in John Williams’s *Main Title* from *Jaws*). Bohemian themes are also present throughout the work, mirroring Dvořák himself. Mostly written in Iowa, the piece premiered at Carnegie Hall as played by the New York Philharmonic in December of 1893; the audience was so enamored by the piece that Dvořák felt compelled to bow to their applause between every movement.

The patriarch of a famous composing family, **Johann Strauss I** was known for writing waltzes, polkas, and other light works which would later allow his sons Johann II, Eduard, and Josef to cement the family’s legacy. A native of the Austrian imperial capital, Strauss began violin and viola lessons while completing an apprenticeship. He joined a local orchestra in 1822 and started a string quartet in 1824. Later in the year, he became assistant conductor of the orchestra; his success allowed him to become the music director of another orchestra and start a band in the following year which he used as an output to write music. This would allow for Strauss to become one of the best-known composers of dance music in Vienna. In time, Strauss was able to take his band to Prussia, the Netherlands (then consisting of the Netherlands and Belgium), Great Britain, and France. Known for taking famous pieces and writing them into newer works to make them more accessible, Strauss even managed to impress Queen Victoria while in Britain.

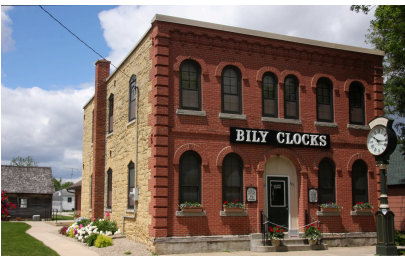


# Program Notes

He married Maria Anna Streim in 1801, and although the marriage produced six children including the aforementioned three composers, it was unhappy. The frequently-traveling Strauss took Emilie Trampusch as a mistress by 1834 and had eight children with her; this led to his divorce with Maria Anna. Because of the divorce, Johann II, Eduard, and Josef were able to pursue careers in music that their father had forbidden them from. In spite of Johann II's admiration for his father, the two had a strained relationship as the younger Strauss became more and more prominent. The elder Strauss died of scarlet fever at the age of 45.

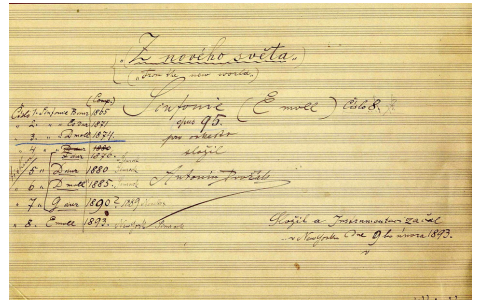
One of the last works that Johann Strauss I wrote was the *Radetzky March*, composed in 1848 to commemorate the victory of the Austrian Empire over various Italian forces during the First Italian War of Independence. Led by the Bohemian (Czech) nobleman Count Josef Radetzky von Radetz, the Battle of Custoza concluded in an Austrian victory on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1848. Unusual for a military march is that the piece is more celebratory than martial. Taking some inspiration from Haydn's *Symphony No. 100*, when the piece was first played before officers of the Imperial Austrian Army, they spontaneously clapped and stomped to it. This clapping and stomping is usually observed in the orchestral version of the piece as prepared by Leopold Weninger; appropriation of that arrangement by the Third Reich compelled a new arrangement to be introduced by the Vienna Philharmonic in 2020. Since it was added to the annual New Year's Concert given by the Vienna Philharmonic by Joseph Kripps in 1946, the piece has always concluded those concerts in a rapturous encore with audience participation. As a result, the march remains as Johann Strauss I's most famous work.

Program notes are by Avinash Veeraraghav, Anand Veeraraghav, and Anthony Granata.



The Bily Clocks Museum in Spillville, Iowa – the building was where Antonín Dvořák resided during much of 1893. This was where he wrote most of his *Symphony No. 9*, completing it in time for its New York premiere.

The title page of Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9* as autographed by him. It is labeled 'z nového světa' in Czech and 'From the New World' in English. Elsewhere in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it was referred to by its German name, 'Aus der Neuen Welt.'



# How has the MSO Grown?

The Monroe Summer Orchestra has grown a lot since its first rehearsal on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025. In pictures, here's a look at just what that was like.



At its inaugural rehearsal, 31 musicians came to join the MSO. It was conducted by Cristian Rodriguez, who was filling in for Anthony. While certainly not without its challenges, the rehearsal went off better than anyone expected it to. The orchestra rehearsed at Jockey Hollow Middle School.

In time, Anthony was conducting rehearsals that were for a group increasing in size. Several woodwind and brass sections started out empty but had members as the concert cycle went along. Not every section was filled - the MSO had no trumpets, tuba, or bassoons, among others - but the orchestra made the most of what it had.



*Humble Beginnings: A Monroe Mixtape* was the name given to the MSO's first concert, aptly describing the start of something new. With two featured soloists, 41 musicians, and an audience of over 150 people, it had become clear that the MSO had a bright future - and bright enough for a bonus concert in 2025 to start its second season.

# How has the MSO Grown?

Just a few weeks after *Humble Beginnings*, the aforementioned bonus concert began to take form. This concert would be centered around the winter holidays: Christmas, Hanukkah, and the holiday spirit in general. The growth of the MSO for this concert season promoted rehearsals to move to Masuk, which had previously hosted its concert. During this concert cycle, every section had at least one member.



The fact that the MSO would grow should not surprise anyone, but the fact that it more than doubled in size from where it was last summer and nearly doubled in size from where it was in the winter would prove mind-boggling. Rehearsing at the Newtown Community Center whenever Masuk is unavailable – there are no other venues in Monroe that can house such a large ensemble – the MSO got off to a very strong start during its first rehearsal of this concert cycle.



*Holiday Lights: Special Winter Edition* proved a success in the same way that its predecessor did. As the first concert of the MSO's second season, it claimed 53 musicians for its roster. The question arose: just how much would the MSO grow for its next concert cycle? Everything was going in the direction that it needed to, so time would tell soon enough on just what the future would hold.

*We're looking forward to seeing what our third season brings us!*

# Where else do our musicians play?

As we are a seasonal orchestra, musicians of the Monroe Summer Orchestra are also members of many other orchestras and ensembles. These groups run regularly, and – like the MSO – make our musicians who they are.

|                                                    |                          |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hamden Symphony Orchestra                          | Hamden, CT               |
| Danbury Symphony Orchestra                         | Danbury, CT              |
| Westport Community Band                            | Westport, CT             |
| Berkshire Jazz Orchestra                           | Wilton, CT               |
| Fairfield County Brass Quintet                     | Westport, CT             |
| American Chamber Orchestra                         | Norwalk, CT              |
| Cheshire Symphony Orchestra                        | Cheshire, CT             |
| Colchester Choir and Orchestra                     | Colchester, CT           |
| Southeastern Connecticut Community Orchestra       | Waterford, CT            |
| 1st Company Governor's Footguard Band              | Hartford, CT             |
| Danbury Community Band                             | Danbury, CT              |
| Torrington Symphony Orchestra                      | Torrington, CT           |
| Danbury Community Orchestra                        | Danbury, CT              |
| Westfield Winds                                    | Danbury, CT              |
| Tri-County Musicians                               | Ridgefield, CT           |
| New Haven Chamber Orchestra                        | New Haven, CT            |
| Capitol Symphonic Winds                            | West Hartford, CT        |
| Connecticut Symphony Orchestra                     | Hartford, CT             |
| Manchester Symphony Orchestra                      | Manchester, CT           |
| West Hartford Symphony Orchestra                   | West Hartford, CT        |
| Connecticut Symphonic Winds                        | Fairfield/Stratford, CT  |
| Guilford Town Band                                 | Guilford, CT             |
| Sacred Heart University Orchestra                  | Fairfield, CT            |
| University of Hartford Pit Orchestra               | Hartford, CT             |
| Yale Medical Symphony Orchestra                    | New Haven, CT            |
| Western Connecticut State University Wind Ensemble | Danbury, CT              |
| Wesleyan University Orchestra                      | Middletown, CT           |
| UConn Chamber Orchestra Club                       | Mansfield, CT            |
| Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras               | Fairfield/Bridgeport, CT |
| Jockey Hollow Middle School Orchestra              | Monroe, CT               |
| Masuk High School Band                             | Monroe, CT               |
| Masuk High School Orchestra                        | Monroe, CT               |
| Notre Dame Prep Band                               | Fairfield, CT            |
| Fairfield Ludlowe High School Orchestras           | Fairfield, CT            |
| Kovac Brothers                                     | Norwalk, CT              |
| Trophy Husbands                                    | Bridgeport, CT           |
| Old School: Never Too Old to Rock and Roll         | Norwalk, CT              |
| Kariam Drum and Dance                              | Danbury, CT              |
| Norm Hathaway Big Band                             | North Salem, NY          |
| Excelsior Chamber Orchestra                        | Tarrytown, NY            |
| Northern Westchester Orchestra                     | Cortlandt, NY            |
| Croton Chamber Orchestra                           | Croton Falls, NY         |
| Westchester Chamber Soloists                       | Yonkers, NY              |
| Hoch Chamber Music Series                          | Yonkers, NY              |
| Taconic Opera                                      | Yorktown Heights, NY     |
| Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra                     | Yonkers, NY              |
| Pioneer Valley Symphony                            | Greenfield, MA           |
| Plymouth State University Symphonic Band           | Plymouth, NH             |
| Florida International University Wind Ensemble     | Miami, FL                |
| Parma Symphony Orchestra                           | Parma, OH                |

# Meet the MSO: Anya

For this concert, the Monroe Summer Orchestra is proud to introduce two members who joined at various times in 2025: cellist Anya Rescsanski and flautist Jessica Peterson!



## **1) What got you interested in playing with the MSO?**

I got interested in playing with the MSO after my mom sent me an ad about it in my messages back in May, 2025.

## **2) What other orchestra(s) do you play with?**

I play in the Sacred Heart University Orchestra. I also play in the chamber ensemble and jazz ensemble there.

## **3) How long have you been playing your instrument?**

I have been playing the cello for almost 11 years. I also play the electric bass which I have been playing for about 5 years.

## **4) Where do you go to school, and what do you study?**

I go to Sacred Heart University. I am double majoring in Music Production and Media Arts-Performing Arts.

## **5) Do you have a favorite composition, and do you have a favorite recording of that piece?**

My favorite composition is the *Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikovsky. I also like *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky.

## **6) Do you have a favorite composer or multiple favorite composers?**

My favorite composer is Tchaikovsky.

## **7) What other types of music do you listen to?**

I enjoy listening to 90s rock music, especially alternative rock.

## **8) Is there any music you'd love to play in a concert - classical or not?**

A piece I would love to play in a concert is *Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68 'Pastoral'* by Beethoven.

## **9) Anything else you'd like to share?**

I love learning about audio and I enjoy helping out with running sound at gigs and concerts.



# Meet the MSO: Jessica

## 1) What got you interested in playing with the MSO?

I have played in bands and flute choirs in the past but have never had the opportunity to play in an orchestra, so this was an exciting opportunity to expand not only into a new musical environment but also the opportunity to experience some of my favorite flute choir pieces in their original composition. For this concert I was very excited about the addition of the *New World Symphony* in its entirety.

## 2) What other orchestra(s) do you play with?

This is my first! My previous flute choir disbanded prior to COVID so it's been a few years.

## 3) How long have you been playing your instrument?

A long time... off and on for over 25 years but I think that learning a musical instrument is one of these skills that you never completely forget no matter how long it's been since you last played.

## 4) What do you do for work?

I am a fractional HR consultant for start-up to mid size companies. Prior to that I worked in corporate HR and Talent Acquisition.

## 5) Do you have a favorite composition, and do you have a favorite recording of that piece?

My favorite piece is *Enigma Variations* by Edward Elgar. I don't have a favorite recording but I always thought it was amusing that one of the movements was called *Nimrod*. I recently made the connection that Elgar also composed *Pomp and Circumstance*, which is a piece I am happy to keep in my past educational band experiences.

## 6) Do you have a favorite composer or multiple favorite composers?

I enjoy most music; it's hard to pick just one. However, a core musical memory for me was watching *Fantasia* with my dad and being captivated by *The Dance of the Hours* and being terrified of *Night on Bald Mountain*. I also love *The Planets* by Holst as well as modern composers like John Williams and Ramin Djawadi.

## 7) What other types of music do you listen to?

I will listen to just about everything. However I have two kids - a 7 and a 5 year old - so I try to ensure that they are exposed to all types of music to ensure that they also grow up to love music. With that being said, recently my daughter had insisted we work our way through the musical catalogue of Heart, Joan Jett, Chappell Roan and Lady Gaga. So these artists are in heavy rotation right now.

## 8) Is there any music you'd love to play in a concert - classical or not?

I really like the concept of music that blends classical and popular music together. I think it's a very good way to transition people who "don't like classical music" into classical music.

## 9) Anything else you'd like to share?

My dad was the one who really introduced me and my brother to music. He tried very hard to teach me the trombone, however my heart belongs to the flute. Fortunately my brother picked up the trombone and became a talented, versatile low brass player. Both my dad and brother passed away a few years ago but I know that my dad would have loved to be part of the MSO, so I always feel closer to them both when performing.



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**We are pleased to announce that Another Octave is open to new members! Singers who are interested in joining should attend an open rehearsal.**

Directed by Melinda Walwer, assisted by Kris Montgomery, our 40-voice chorus performs all over the state and has traveled nationally. We are members of GALA Choruses and Sister Singers.

Since 1990, **Another Octave: Connecticut Women's Chorus (AO:CWC)** has given voice to our choices and experiences with an eclectic repertoire that includes standard concert pieces as well as traditional and contemporary music reflecting women's lives.

Must be able to sing on key and memorize music. No music reading ability necessary. Come with your love of choral singing, and join a great group of women.

**Note:** All potential new members will be scheduled for an audition to join Another Octave.

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# How to Support Us

As a volunteer-based community orchestra, we are always looking for ways to grow. We are an orchestra composed **of** the community, done **by** the community, and **for** the community. We also are an orchestra that works **with** the community. As we hope to extend our reach and expand our capabilities, there are plenty of ways that you, the community members, can help.

First, please continue to support us by coming to our concerts and spreading the word about this ensemble. The most basic thing that can help is increased name recognition. This will allow us to recruit more musicians and reach new heights.

Other ways you can help include the following:

- **Donating** to the orchestra.
- **Purchasing an ad** in our concert programs.
- **Sponsoring** a concert.
- Participating in our **chair endowment** campaign.
- Donating items to be **auctioned** at our concerts.
- **Volunteering** at our concerts.

Your support will make a difference. Monetary donations are tax-deductible; donating via Zeffy will automatically give a tax receipt. Receipts will be sent for all check-based donations in early 2027. Please check our website to find all links to our Zeffy portal.

Finally, there is one more thing; remember to support music programs and music education in your towns and cities. To paraphrase the former Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Connecticut, maestro Harvey Felder III, “a good arts program is a strong indicator of a town that takes care of its people.” Musicians are not created in a vacuum. All of us here today stand on the shoulders of those who have supported or continue to support our music education. For many of us, it took years and years of training to become as skilled as we are. For others, it will continue to take years and years of training to become even more skilled and be able to give the community shows like this.

**THANK YOU!**

*The Monroe Summer Orchestra would like to thank media partners in WMNR, WSHU, and the Monroe Sun for their free promotion of this concert.*



*Concert programs were printed by Dynamic Printing.*

# Acknowledgements

The Monroe Summer Orchestra would like to thank the following individuals for all they have done to make this concert and our entire second season possible:

- Rehearsal hosts at Masuk High School, in particular Principal **Steven Swensen** and custodian **Derick Payne**.
- Rehearsal hosts at the Newtown Community Center: **Jennifer Cebry**.
- Board meeting hosts: **staff** at **WMNR Fine Arts Radio's studio**.
- Monroe Public Schools Music Program teachers: **Lisa Homann** and **Michael Ances**.
- Monroe Public Schools Superintendent: **Joseph Kobza**.
- Concert hosts at Masuk High School: **Steven Swensen**, **Margaret Woznick**, and **Barbara Soper**.
- WMNR free publicity: **Robin Rockwell**, **Gary Gerard**, and **Will Duchon**.
- WSHU free publicity and piece: **Randy Kaye**, **Julie Fredino**, and **Ann Lopez**.
- Monroe Sun promotional piece: **Bill Bittar**.
- Orchestra advertising: **Vesna Mehinovic**, **Beth Ulman**, **Jen DiZazzo**, **Gabriel Castro**, **Ravenna Michaelsen**, **Greg Williams**, **Keith Johnston**, **Andrew Kolar**, **Ariel Patkin**, **Michael Murray**, and **staff** at the **Creative Music Center**.
- Conducting assistance: **Cristian Rodriguez**.
- Music copying and transposition assistance: **David Lui**.
- Music transcription assistance: **Vesna Mehinovic** and **Senad Mehinovic**.
- Rehearsal carpool driving: **Oscar Lin**.
- Concert volunteers: **Kathie Loehr**, **Greg Loehr**, **Cathy Kohut**, **Bev Doyle**, **Hailey Cacace**, and **Sahana Arasada**.
- Concert volunteer photography/videography: **PJ Pane**.
- Promotional sign production: **Kyle Berkoski** and **Bronte Berkoski**.
- Flower-bearer: **Ellie Bosley**.
- Special thanks to **Michael Ances**.
- All of the individual MSO musicians: thank you so much!

Additionally, thanks go out to all the following people for their financial and material donations (received between August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 and July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026) during our second season:

- |                             |                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Michael and Leigh Ances   | • David Lopez                                                          |
| • Yvonne Ashe               | • Marcelle Muralles                                                    |
| • James Bettincourt         | • Raquell Powell                                                       |
| • Kyle and Bronte Berkoski  | • Raghu Ramamurthy & family                                            |
| • The Block Family          | • Patricia and Sushil Ramnaress                                        |
| • John Crand                | • Dara and Steven Robifker                                             |
| • Marie Dragonette          | • Robin Rockwell                                                       |
| • George Glus               | • Timothy and Bonnie Shizume<br>( <i>in honor of Braeden Shizume</i> ) |
| • Olga Gonzales             | • Sarah and Joseph St. Pierre                                          |
| • Denise Graham             | • Sudha and Ravi Veeraraghav                                           |
| • Anthony and Diana Granata | • Anand Veeraraghav                                                    |
| • Susan and Jay Greenberg   | • Avinash Veeraraghav                                                  |
| • Tyler Hine                | • Carrie Verilli                                                       |
| • Lisa Jones                | • Anita and Michael Werdmann                                           |
| • Tim and Elizabeth Leonard |                                                                        |



Thank you all for attending *Pan American*!

Do you play an instrument? Do you want to play in a classical music concert in the summer?

Please continue to check our website to see what we have planned for our third season! Details for an off-season concert will be announced within the next few months.

Mark your calendars! Our next summer concert will be on **Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2027.**

**JOIN US!**

