

www.ecysymphony.com



**250th Anniversary
of the
United States**

2026



Our Mission is to provide free, high quality orchestral education and performance opportunities to young musicians, and share the spirit of classical music with new audiences of adults and children.





Celebrating 250th Anniversary of our history through recognition and promotion of San Diego's young local talent.

This concert season of East County Youth Symphony arrives at a meaningful moment in American cultural life, the nationwide celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States. As the country reflects on two and a half centuries of history, ECYS celebrates this milestone through music written and performed by the youngest generation of American musicians.

As we all know, American history is not only preserved in documents and public memory. It is also carried forward in literature, fine art, sculpture, and performing arts. Each rehearsal and each new work presented on stage contributes to an evolving portrait of who we are as a country.

The highlight of our first concert is a world premier of a work by 20 years-old ECYS alumnus Oluwaloba Salami *Land of the Free*. This composition reflects American spirit, values, and traditions. Sometimes in a serious and sometimes in a playful manner. Salami's music blends classical structure with unique modern story-telling language, representing the diversity and progressive movement of American culture itself.

Later in the season, on November 18th, ECYS will present another new featured work by 18 years-old composer Vonn Vanier. Vanier's composition explores color, texture, and emotional depth in a way that expands the orchestra's sound beyond its traditional boundaries. If Salami's work tells us a story, Vanier's piece leans more toward abstract imagination and exploration. Together, they represent two essential directions of the modern art movement - stories that can be told, and abstracts that must be felt.



Message from Artistic Director

Tonight, we present the world premiere of *Land of the Free* by ECYS alumnus Oluwaloba Salami. There is something very special about introducing a new major symphonic work written by one of our own former students. From young age Loba possessed a rare gift for storytelling through orchestral music. His music material and orchestration are unique, vibrant and powerful. I truly believe we are witnessing the beginning of an artistic journey that is destined to be on international stage.

As Artistic Director, one of the greatest joys of my life is watching young musicians grow into artists with their own voice and vision. Whenever I encounter talent like this, I cannot help but think about all the beautiful music that still awaits somewhere in the future, symphonies not yet written, melodies not yet heard, and greatest masterpieces of 21st century still quietly waiting to be born.

This evening, we also celebrate our performers, whose dedication and love for music bring these new works to life. Their energy, artistry, and talent remind us why the orchestral music is immortal.

Thank you for joining us this evening and for sharing this very special moment with the East County Youth Symphony.

May 13, 2026
7:00 PM
Joan B. Kroc Theater
(6611 University Ave, San Diego)

PROGRAM

ECYS Pre-Orchestra Division

Zeta 1:

- **Jumping Jacks**
- **Mix Em Up**
- **Count Carefully**
- **Essential Elements**

Zeta 2:

- **Walking Song**
- **Essential Elements**
- **Hop Scotch**
- **Morning Dance**
- **Rolling Along**

Epsilon:

- **Melancholy Waltz**
- **Playtime**

Delta:

- **Half Minute Waltz**
- **Classic Bits**
- **Ode to Joy**

Gamma:

- **Waltz**
- **When the Saints go Marching In**
- **Little Tango**

Beta:

- **French Country Dance**
- **Night Shift**

Alpha:

- **Mozart Lacrimosa**
- **Bach Little Fugue**

IRIE MORALES

Program Director / Conductor

DIEGO GUERRA

Conductor

- intermission -

ECYS Advanced Orchestra

World Premier

OLUWALOBA SALAMI

“Land of the Free”

ALEXANDRA KEEGAN

Artistic Director / Conductor



Currently based in Lehigh University, Loba Salami is an emerging composer whose works utilize rich orchestral color and distinct thematic motifs to bring out the narrative potential of any character/story.

His work has been recognized by Lehigh University and the NAACP for its memorable character and cinematic luminosity. A recipient of the Marine Corps' Semper Fidelis Award for Musical Excellence, Loba is dedicated to creating soundscapes that bridge the gap between traditional orchestration and modern storytelling.

In addition to being a composer, Oluwaloba (Loba) Salami is an upcoming author of the fantasy novel: *The Midnight Kingdom*. His experience in crafting narratives translates heavily into his musical compositions, where each piece can nearly explain the entire narrative without a single word spoken.

Read more...



ECYS Pre-Orchestra Division

Zeta 1

Dannae Shailene Dilayre
Zachary Reyes Heaven
Dela Cruz

Zeta 2

Lucca Soto
Bryanna Taylor
Aaron Ayon
Alec Walker

Epsilon

Maya Downs
Amarissa Ramos
Sophia Castro

Epsilon (cont)

Aaron Castro
Athena Campuzano

Delta

Rafael Jorell Roque
Daniella Avalon Dilayre
Arden Wirth
Danhieca Zeth Dilayre
Nubia Downs
Precious Brielle Roque

Gamma

Bella Revak
Mia Brannan
Kyle Morales

Beta

Eli Chan-Velic
Sayuri Sarmiento
Abygail Ayon
Grace Hunter
Crystal Zhou
Avery Fasching
Alyza Ayon

Alpha

Joshua Chan
Avery Nesvig
Ronin Tomeldan

ECYS Advanced Orchestra

Flute

Anabel Torres
Jason Rossi

Oboe/ E.H.

Noah Quessenberry
Jennasea Fisher

Clarinet

Breanna Haemor
Ivy Robinson

Bassoon

Lillian Roberds

Horn

Andrew Young
William Perrine

Trumpet

Corey Wickline
Nakotah Nowak

Trombone

Kayla Aponte
Chris Klacka

Tuba

Joey Ortiz

Percussion

Beverly Dorcy
Jack Wang
Tyler Buu
Malik Thomas
Owen Hertz

Concertmaster

Julia Umarova

Principal Violin

Diego Guerra

Violin 1

Victor McGall
Clare Hatter
Diana Welch
Patty McCormick

Violin 2

Genevive James
Bryce Newall
LinaDicus
Avery Nesvig
Joshua Chan

Viola

Tommy Hines
Thalia Rojas
Ella Federspiel
Dante Villegas

Cello

Isadora Flores
Ronin Tomeldan
Cliff Thrasher
Randall Plate

Bass

Brooks Salloum
Cristian Mejia

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In-Kind

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Garold S Mulder

Upcoming Performance

November 18, 2026

7:00 PM

Joan B. Kroc Theater

(6611 University Ave, San Diego)

Program Includes:

VONN VANIER

Read more...



East County Youth Symphony is tuition-free for all students. They will need their instructors, coaches, and mentors this fall. Donate today.

WAYS TO GIVE:

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Make a check payable to:
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P.O. Box 25

El Cajon, CA 92022

Contact us at:

info@ecysymphony.com

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The Rice Family Foundation

Our Warmest Thank You!

With deepest gratitude, we acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of our major donors, whose belief in the mission of the East County Youth Symphony makes this work possible. Your support does far more than sustain a concert season, it opens doors for young musicians to discover their talent, develop discipline and confidence, and experience the transformative power of music in a nurturing community. Because of you, every child who walks through our doors is given not only access to musical training, but a sense of belonging and possibility. We are profoundly thankful for your partnership, your trust, and your shared commitment to shaping the next generation through music.

East County Youth Symphony
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