



Highland Park Strings

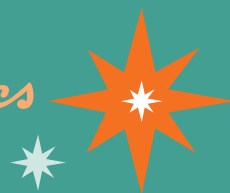
*A Star-Studded Season
of Classics*
46th Season

Dr. Allan Dennis, Principal Conductor
FREE Community Concerts | 2024-2025



A Star-Studded Season of Classics

Our 46th Season



FOUR COMMUNITY CONCERTS

Sundays at 3:00 pm

As we prepare to embark on our 46th season, we take pride in all we have accomplished. Over 450 unique works performed for over 100,000 persons. We are grateful for the support of the Highland Park Community Foundation, the Negaunee Foundation, the M.S. Bauer Foundation and the many individual contributors. Under the direction of Dr. Allan Dennis we look forward to a very special season

The opening concert on October 27 will feature our neighbor **BAIRD DODGE** in his debut performance with the Strings. Baird joined the Chicago Symphony as a violist in 1996. He moved to the second violin section that same year. In 2002, he was appointed principal second violin by Daniel Barenboim, a position he has held with distinction for 22 years. In this all Brahms concert Baird will perform his magnificent *Concerto for Violin*—the only one written by Brahms. The Strings will add the *Academic Festival Overture* and the delightful *Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn*.

For our "Holiday" Concert on December 8, we are thrilled to have another esteemed member of the Chicago Symphony, **JOHN BRUCE YEH**, also make his debut performance with the Strings. John joined the CSO in 1977, the first Asian musician ever appointed to the CSO and now is the longest serving clarinetist in CSO history. Currently serving as Assistant Principal Clarinet and Solo Eb Clarinet. John will perform the *Concerto for Clarinet* by Mozart and the Strings will play, in this "nearly" all strings concert, the *Adagietto* from the Fifth Symphony by Mahler and the brilliant *Serenade for Strings* by Tchaikovsky.

Our Gala Benefit Concert in the acoustically perfect Bennett Gordon Hall at Ravinia on February 2 brings back for his sixth appearance with us the brilliant pianist **ALON GOLDSTEIN**. Considered one of the most original and sensitive pianists of his generation, Alon has played with the Chicago Symphony as well as the Philadelphia, San Francisco, Baltimore, St. Louis, Dallas, Houston, Toronto, and Vancouver symphonies among many others. In this all Russian Program, Alon will play the thrilling *Concerto No. 3* by Serge Prokofiev and the Strings will perform for the first time *Scheherazade* by Rimsky-Korsakov.

The final concert on May 18 will present the amazing phenom, 17 year old **CECILIA O'MALLEY**. An accomplished violinist, cellist, and pianist, she began her musical studies at the age of two! Performing at the highest level on all three instruments Cecilia currently serves as Concertmaster of Midwest Young Artists Symphony Orchestra and previously served as Principal Cello of the Chicago Youth Symphony. In a dazzling display of her talent, Cecilia will play the *Rococo Variations for Cello* by Tchaikovsky and *La Campanella* from Paganini's Violin Concerto. The concert will begin with the *Overture to William Tell* by Rossini and the season will conclude with the great *Symphony No. 5* of Beethoven.

Lawrence Block
Founder and General Manager



"Congratulations and thank you to Larry Block and the incredibly talented members of the Highland Park Strings! May they continue to provide a cultural focal point for our city and beyond."

— Nancy Rotering
Mayor of Highland Park



Dr. Allan Dennis, Principal Conductor



Dr. Allan Dennis brings a rich heritage of experience and energy to the Highland Park Strings. He is the Founder & President and conductor of Midwest Young Artists Conservatory Concert and Symphony Orchestras, with decades of experience motivating, rehearsing and reaching young people. He is formerly the Music Director of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra and was recognized as the 2001 Music Director of the Year by the Illinois Council of Orchestras, as well as awarded the 2001 Heidi Castleman Award by Chamber Music America, given as recognition for "excellence in chamber music

teaching." He studied at the internationally renowned Tanglewood Institute in Lennox, MA in 2000. In 1996, he was also chosen as both an active conductor at the Festival in Sandpoint, ID, and a Fellow at the Conductors' Institute in South Carolina. Dr. Dennis also has extensive experience conducting musical shows, operas and ballets and is highly sought after as a guest conductor for festivals and all-state orchestras. His conducting teachers have included Gunther Schuller, Harold Farbermann, and David Effron. Dr. Dennis received his doctorate, with distinction, from Indiana University in Bloomington, and bachelor's and master's degrees from the State University of New York at Fredonia. He studied at the Eastman School of Music and received a Performer's Certificate from the Royal Flemish Conservatory of Music in Antwerp, Belgium. In 2017, he was awarded the Cultural Leadership Award by the Illinois Council of Orchestras, one of only seven Illinois arts leaders in the past 25 years to be recognized.



The Highland Park Strings, 1979-1980 Season

"The Highland Park Strings is loved as much as it was...when a group of musicians first played classical string music for the community."

– Hilary Anderson,
Highland Park Landmark

"Many many thanks to ...the Strings for all the years of truly wonderful concerts. The Strings are a real gem and true asset to the area. Every single concert has always been...of downtown caliber."

– Philip Bechen

OCTOBER 27

All Brahms



3pm | Free Admission | Highland Park High School | 433 Vine Avenue

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, Op. 56

Concerto for Violin in D Major, Op. 77

Baird Dodge, Violin

A New York City native, **BAIRD DODGE** joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a violist in 1996. He moved to the second violin section that same year. In 2002, he was appointed principal second violin by Daniel Barenboim. After studying violin and viola from an early age, Dodge attended the precollege division of the Juilliard School. He received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Swarthmore College in 1990 and a master's degree in music from the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 1994. His teachers have included Helen Kwalwasser, Gregory Fulkerson and Joyce Robbins. An avid chamber musician, Dodge has collaborated with such artists as Daniel Barenboim, Isidore Cohen and Ida Kavafian. He also has appeared as a guest artist with the Chicago and Colorado string quartets. He has performed at the Bravo! Colorado Festival, Taos Chamber Music Festival, Marlboro Music Festival and on Music from Marlboro tours. Baird Dodge has a special interest in contemporary music. He



often has performed works by his father Charles Dodge, including the premiere of his Violin Etudes at Columbia University's Miller Theater in 1994. He recorded his father's Viola Elegy for New Albion Records in 1992. In 2006, he premiered and recorded *Carillon Sky*, a chamber concerto written for him by Augusta Read Thomas, on the CSO's MusicNOW series with Oliver Knussen conducting. He also has championed the works of composer James Matheson and premiered several of his pieces, including the Violin Concerto, with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the CSO in 2011.



"Dodge assumed the solo...with poetic panache. His violin soared through luminous, vast sonic spaces"

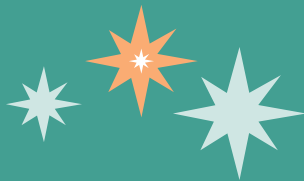
-John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune

"Baird Dodge, the CSO's fine principal second violin, seized on the manic string crossings, power chords and repetitive riffs...brilliantly"

-Lawrence Johnson, Chicago Classical Review

DECEMBER 8

Mostly Strings



3pm | Free Admission | Highland Park High School | 433 Vine Avenue

GUSTAV MAHLER

Adagietto from Symphony No. 5

WOLFGANG MOZART

Concerto for Clarinet in A Major, K. 622

John Bruce Yeh, Clarinet

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Serenade for Strings, Op. 48

JOHN BRUCE YEH joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1977, the first Asian musician ever appointed to the CSO and now the longest serving clarinetist in CSO history. He currently serves as Assistant Principal Clarinet and Solo Eb Clarinet of the CSO and has performed as guest principal of The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Seoul Philharmonic in Korea, and the Quanzhou Symphony in China. A prize winner at both the 1982 Munich International Music Competition and the 1985 Naumburg Clarinet Competition in New York. Yeh continues to solo with orchestras around the globe. An enthusiastic champion of new music, John Bruce Yeh is the dedicatee of new works for clarinet by numerous composers, ranging from Ralph Shapey to John Williams. His more than 20 solo and chamber music recordings have earned worldwide critical acclaim. Yeh is director of Chicago Pro Musica, which received the 1985 Grammy Award as "Best New Classical Artist." With clarinetist Teresa Reilly, erhu

virtuoso Wang Guowei and pipa virtuoso Yang Wei, Yeh performed *Birds and Phoenix*, an innovative quartet dedicated to musical exploration by bridging Eastern and Western musical cultures. John is on the artist-faculties of Roosevelt University's Chicago College for the Performing Arts, and Midwest Young Artists Conservatory in Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He is the proud father of Jenna Yeh, culinary artist and wine specialist in Chicago; Molly Yeh, percussionist and Food Network TV personality in Minnesota; and multi-talented teenager Mia Reilly-Yeh.



"Mr. Yeh is, as always, a joy to hear."

- Allan J. Cronin, New Music Buff

"With such a varied program, the clarinetist must have a wide range of technical ability and emotional intelligence. Mr. Yeh has both these qualities in abundance, as well as reserves of energy when needed. But it is his skill at shaping a phrase and his low notes that most remain with the listener."

- William Kreindler, MusicWeb International

FEBRUARY 2 ANNUAL BENEFIT

Gala Ravinia Concert – All Russian



3pm | \$40 General Admission | Bennett-Gordon Hall, Ravinia
Call 847.831.3622 for tickets

SERGE PROKOFIEV

Concerto for Piano No. 3 in C Major, Op. 26

Alon Goldstein, Piano

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Scheherazade Op. 35

ALON GOLDSTEIN is one of the most original and sensitive pianists of his generation, admired for his musical intelligence, dynamic personality, artistic vision and innovative programming. He has played with the Philadelphia orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the San Francisco, Baltimore, St. Louis, Dallas, Houston, Toronto and Vancouver symphonies, as well as the Israel Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Los Angeles and Radio France Orchestra. He played under the baton of such conductors as Zubin Mehta, Herbert Blomstedt, Vladimir Jurowski, Rafael Frübeck de Burgos, and others.

Mr. Goldstein was recently honored with the "Society of Scholars" award given to him by his alma mater – the Johns Hopkins University. This was given in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions over the years. Mr. Goldstein is the first Peabody alumnus to receive this award. He serves as the Artistic Director of the "Lieven Piano Foundation" summer school in Vienna, as well as the Artistic Director of the Mt. Angel Abbey Bach Festival in Oregon. He created the Emerald Coast Music Alliance, whose annual festival in Florida is devoted to sharing the beauty of classical music to under-served communities, at no charge. Last year the festival featured 12 musicians performing 63 concerts.



Bonus for Major Contributors

Show how important Strings concerts are to you and the community by making a contribution of \$100 or more. The Strings is exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3). You will receive a minimum of two tickets, preferred seating, listing in the Program Book, and free tickets to a Donor Appreciation Chamber Music Concert at 3pm on Sunday, April 20, at the Highland Park Community House.

MAY 18

All Star – A New Phenom



3pm | Free Admission | Highland Park High School | 433 Vine Avenue

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI
Overture to William Tell

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY
Varations on a Rococo Theme
Cecilia O'Malley, Cello

NICCOLO PAGANINI
La Campanella
Cecilia O'Malley, Violin

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67



CECILIA O'MALLEY is an accomplished violinist, cellist and pianist who began her musical studies at the age of 2. An avid performer and competitor, Cecilia has received numerous awards from the Society of American Musicians, Robert Stanger Concerto Competition, Walgreen's National Concerto Competition, Confucius Fine Arts Competition, and the Oistrakh Concerto Festival on both violin and cello. In 2022, Cecilia was selected as a state-representative in the MINA National Finals held in Reno, Nevada. On piano, she was awarded First Prize at the Sonata-Sonatina Festival and has graduated through Level 12 in the ISMTA Achievement Examinations. Since her orchestral debut with the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra on violin, she has also soloed with the Minnesota Sinfonia and the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra. Possessing a passion for collaborating with fellow musicians, she performs extensively in chamber groups on piano, violin, and cello. Cecilia's most recent ensemble was featured on WFMT's Take Five and Introductions. In spring of 2024, they competed at the 51st Fischhoff International Chamber Competition. As a chamber musician, she has first places at the Rembrandt Chamber Players Competition, the Glass City Chamber Competition, and Chicago's National Chamber Competition, as well as second places at the Barnett Chamber Competition and the Enkor International Chamber Competition. Currently, she is the concertmaster of Midwest Young Artists Conservatory's Symphony Orchestra. In previous years, she was principal cello of Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra's Debut Orchestra.

Cecilia has spent her summers at the Black Oak Ensemble's Cordes en Gascogne Festival in France and studying with the professors at the Meadowmount Institute of Music. She is privileged to study with Professor Gerardo Ribeiro of Northwestern University on violin, Dr. Tanya Carey of Roosevelt University on cello, and Ms. Tatyana Stepanova on piano.

In her free time, Cecilia enjoys reading 1800s British literature, studying French, watching Hollywood Golden Age movies, and spending time with her dog, Jack!

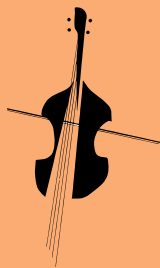


"Oh, what a musical feast we were treated to at Ravinia's Bennett Gordon Hall...! The Highland Park Strings delivered a transcendent afternoon of Dvorak...."

- Paul Clements, Highland Park Neighbors Magazine

"Thank you for a year of memorable music! We loved every concert and every soloist; But the grand finale of Mozart and Mahler was beyond belief!"

- Joan Berger



Highland Park Strings

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46th Season | 2024-2025 | Dr. Allan Dennis, Principal Conductor

October 27 - All Brahms | Highland Park High School

December 8 - Mostly Strings | Highland Park High School

February 2 (Benefit) - All Russian | Bennett-Gordon Hall, Ravinia

May 18 - All Star! A New Phenom | Highland Park High School

Call 847.831.3622 | Visit hpstrings.org

