

Mt. Baker Youth Symphony Member Handbook



2015-2016 Concerts		
November 2, Monday 7pm	Fall Concert	Leopold Crystal Ballroom Bellingham, WA
December 8, Tuesday 7pm	Sibelius Celebration Concert	Mt Baker Theatre Bellingham, WA
December 14, Monday 7pm	Holiday Party (with small groups and vocal selections)	Leopold Crystal Ballroom Bellingham, WA
March 12, Saturday 1pm	Spring Concert with Fidalgo Youth Symphony "Hymn to Youth"	McIntyre Hall Mt. Vernon, WA
March 18, Friday 7pm	Spring Concert with Fidalgo Youth Symphony "Hymn to Youth"	Mt Baker Theatre Bellingham, WA
May 23, Monday 7pm	Finale Concert	Leopold Crystal Ballroom Bellingham, WA



Mount Baker Youth Symphony promotes personal growth and self-esteem while teaching the values of teamwork and excellence, through preparation and performance of musical masterpieces.

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I. ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

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The Mt. Baker Youth Symphony (MBYS) is an organization that provides a wholesome and stimulating environment for talented and gifted young musicians. Our goal is to create an atmosphere that encourages, challenges, and develops each participant's potential in the art of musical performance. Participants benefit from a 10-month-long program designed to nurture their enjoyment of music as well as develop their musical skills and self confidence. This program consists of a balance of group rehearsals, sectional coaching sessions, concerts, and a summer music festival/camp.

MBYS Components

MBYS consists of two orchestras; Junior Symphony and Youth Symphony, a beginning Sinfonette, periodic vocal ensembles, and chamber groups. Junior and Youth Symphonies and Sinfonette rehearse each Monday evening except holidays, while the vocal ensembles and chamber groups have specially scheduled rehearsals. All are trained to perform in concerts throughout the academic year. Students must be 21 years of age or younger. College credit is available through Running Start and regular college classes.

Youth Symphony -- Students in this orchestra are the most experienced musicians in our organization. They perform symphonic literature on an advanced level, as well as jazz arrangements and movie medleys. (Pirates of the Caribbean, Spiderman, etc) There is frequent opportunity to solo with the orchestra

Junior Symphony – Students in this orchestra have a minimum of 2 years private study or permission of the conductor. Students experience the opportunity to learn and perform orchestral literature in the form of light classics, novelty pieces, and symphonic arrangements of familiar themes. Each concert, the Junior Symphony joins with the Youth to form the Festival Symphony, which performs the final selection of each concert. The literature is challenging, but adapted to the needs of current players.

Sinfonette – Students in the Sinfonette have a minimum of one year of musical instruction on their specified instrument. This program is an excellent preparation for beginning students as they develop their instrumental skills in preparation for entrance into Junior Symphony.

Vocal Ensembles - open to all interested musicians. No audition is required. These are periodically drawn from the instrumentalists of the symphonies, and frequently are scheduled to perform in the holiday concert. There is no additional fee, and rehearsals are generally during 6-7pm.

Chamber Music Program The Chamber Music Program provides the opportunity for small groups to develop skills and self-confidence and to successfully perform chamber music repertoire. Two top Chamber groups (Strings, Winds) perform throughout the year at community events and in the lobby prior to MBYS concerts. If interested in participating in a chamber group, see Mrs. Peterson after rehearsal.

Sounds of Summer Music Festival Professional musicians lead a week of intensive training for youth ages 11-21 on the beautiful campus of Treacy-Levine Center near Lake McMurray, Mt Vernon. The Festival provides expert instruction for strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, jazz, and vocals. There is a vigorous schedule of rehearsals and coaching, culminating in inspiring final concerts. Tuition includes regular rehearsal instruction, faculty concerts, art and drama classes, recreational activities, room, board, and a T-shirt. Master classes and private lessons are offered for additional fees. See our brochure or website for more details (www.mbys.org).

Music Library MBYS has developed a large orchestral library, and has shared access to Fidalgo Youth Symphony's library. Each year we also add new purchases to our own library. The Librarian, usually a parent volunteer, manages notebooks, filing systems, and collects music at the end of each performance.

Staff Mt. Baker has an excellent staff of professional performing music teachers from the Northwest region.

Sharyn Peterson	Youth Symphony Conductor, Violin & Viola coach
Malcolm Peterson	Junior Symphony Conductor, Brass coach
Matthew Rehfeldt	Cello/bass coach
Karla Smart	Sinfonette Director, Violin coach
Nirvana Guernsey	Woodwind coach
Pat Nelson	Lower Woodwinds coach
Anne Hildebrand	String Coach

Sectional coaches provide technical training for the differing families of orchestral instruments.

Legal Status
MBYS is a private, profit organization

non-

incorporated in the city of Bellingham, Washington. The IRS recognizes us as a 501c-3 organization..

Executive Board The Board of Directors meets monthly to conduct the business of the organization. Parents and community members are welcome to attend and assist in the mission of the MBYS. Meetings are usually held on the first Monday morning of each month at in Bellingham, WA.

Anne Hildebrand	President
Jenny Jin	Treasurer
Michelle Lai	Member at-large
Sharyn Peterson	Artistic Director
Andrew Skrinnik	Member at-large
Michael Tilley	Member at-large

Committees for publicity, fund-raising, hospitality and outreach are formed at the start of the new season-please consider volunteering your time to assist the organization in reaching more talented youth.

II. FINANCIAL OPERATIONS MBYS operates on a fiscal year that begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th. At the present time, tuition, donations, grants, and concert admission fees fund all operational expenses. Tuition and donations represent 95+% of our annual budget. Tuition policies are explained in a later section of this guide. The primary expense in operating MBYS is compensation to staff for coaching and conducting. Concert space rental, financial aid, music, and retreat expenses are the next highest costs.

Application Fee All applicants for membership in the advanced orchestra, pay a \$5.00 non-refundable application/audition fee at the time of their audition for Youth Symphony. Junior and Sinfonette do not require an audition.

Tuition Payment Tuition must be paid either in full at the beginning of the season or in two lump sums in September and February. Tuition for all Youth, Junior members is \$330.00 per year for the 2015-2016 season. (\$300 for sibling) Sinfonette members' tuition is **\$250.00**. (\$225 for sibling) Make checks payable to MBYS.

Late Enrollment Students who join any time during the year will be charged for full tuition unless special arrangements are made with the President. The MBYS academic year is divided into four sessions, each

culminating in a concert. New students will not be permitted to join late within any session but may audition to join at the beginning of the next session.

Financial Aid Financial aid is available and will be granted on a case by case basis. When granted, families should expect to assist the organization by performing some of the administrative, publicity, or staging tasks.

III. AUDITION PROCEDURE Auditions are mandatory for new students seeking to enter Youth Symphony, and for returning students moving from Junior to Youth Symphony. Auditions are not required for Junior Symphony or Sinfonette, vocal groups or students returning to their original symphony level. Auditions are held before the first rehearsal of the season and during September, or can be held by special arrangement with the Music Director or a coach. A registration form is mailed to all former members and prospective members in advance of the auditions. Registration forms are also available from Quist Violins (320 W. Champion St, Bellingham, WA 360-647-1984), Piper Music, and most libraries and bookstores. The form is also download-able from the mbys.org website. Applicants must schedule their audition time by mailing their application or calling the phone number on the registration form.

IV. REHEARSALS MBYS rehearsals are held every Monday at **Whatcom Hills Waldorf School, 941 Austin St, Bellingham WA 98229** from September through May. Rehearsals are normally NOT held on school holidays, or snow days. Rehearsal times are as follows:

Sinfonette	6:00 pm-7:00 pm
Junior Symphony	6:00 pm-7:30pm
Youth Symphony	7:00 pm-9:00 pm

Note that Youth and Junior combine from 7:00 pm to 7:30pm to rehearse the Festival piece.

V. CONCERT INFORMATION MBYS holds four concerts each academic year. Other appearances will be added as deemed appropriate by the directors. Our concerts are open to the public and are publicized in local newspapers, entertainment publications, calendars, and occasionally on radio and television. For additional information, please refer to the published schedule and/or our web site (www.mby.org).

VI. REQUIREMENTS OF MEMBERS Commitment! MBYS, especially the Youth Symphony, expects that all members will make a commitment to participate for a full academic year. All concert and rehearsal dates are announced at the first rehearsal of the year, so members should arrange to fulfill this commitment. Of course, unexpected circumstances may arise and we are able to be flexible when really necessary. Advance notice of conflicts with Concert dates is extremely vital: check your school schedules EARLY! However, we expect that exceptions will be rare.

Attendance Attendance is required at all rehearsals and concerts except for school concert conflicts and illness. More than 3 unexcused absences may result in suspension, at the director's discretion.

School Vacation Policy MBYS schedule follows the Bellingham School District holiday calendar.

Absence If you must miss a rehearsal, please call or email a staff member; sending a message via a friend is NOT acceptable. Call Mrs. Peterson at 360-421-2527 to report absences.

Snow Policy MBYS will hold rehearsals whenever possible during inclement weather, however, Bellingham public schools are closed because of snow, MBYS rehearsal will also be cancelled. We will use the web site as a source in informing members, so please check www.mby.org for current updates.

Preparation and Practice All students are expected to come to rehearsals prepared with their music and instruments in order. It will be necessary to spend time at home practicing for rehearsals since this music is challenging and needs both individual and group preparation.

School Music Program Participation Members are strongly encouraged to participate in their school music program. MBYS is highly committed to supporting school music programs, since daily practice in a group environment is essential to developing performance skills.

Concert Dress: Sinfonette and Junior Symphony			
Girls	White, long sleeve blouse	Boys	White, long sleeved dress shirt (Juniors - uniform shirt with button)
	Ankle-length, black skirt or slacks		Black trousers
	Black shoes and stockings		Black shoes and socks
Concert Dress: Youth Symphony			
Girls	Black uniform dress is preferred, but the following is acceptable:	Boys	White, long sleeve tuxedo shirt with button (uniform)
	Long sleeve ankle-length black dress or		Black trousers
	Ankle-length black skirt and long sleeve black blouse		Black jacket
	Black shoes and stockings		Black shoes and socks

Age The maximum age for membership in Mt Baker Youth Symphony is 21 years. Students will be permitted to join if their 22nd birthday falls after the start of the academic year.

Care of Music Music is provided to students for practice and study purposes. All music must be kept in good condition and returned to the librarian after the concert performance. If additional music is needed or if an original is not returned, the student is responsible and will be charged a fee to replace the music.

Rehearsal Behavior

- Walk in the halls and respect the facility, leaving each room as you found it.
- Play ONLY your own instrument during breaks and rehearsals.
- Food and drink are not permitted in rehearsal space.
- Brass instruments please make arrangements to empty spit valves onto paper or other appropriate receptacle.
- Avoid conversing during rehearsal; stay focused on the task at hand.
- Avoid foot tapping.
- Prepare sections of your music each week, with a plan to have all of the notes mastered well in advance of the concerts.
- Arrive early enough to be ready to play on time. Lateness is very disruptive and does a disservice to you and your colleagues.
- Rehearsals are intended to establish group unity in musical expression, not teach the individual notes. For extra help, take the music to your private lessons, and also make sure you do not miss sectionals, since that is your opportunity to receive technical help.

Performance Behavior

- Arrive early to prepare to come on stage, where you will warm up with full and strong tone, not tentatively.
- Keep posture excellent with spine straight and legs uncrossed.
- Long skirts look elegant and professional; Ladies, no short skirts.
- All musicians wear black stockings and shoes for a unified stage appearance.
- Jewelry should not be distracting, visually or audibly.
- For a Conductor's first entrance, stand together at attention and wait to be seated.

- During a solo section, do not move unnecessarily-it distracts from the performance.
- Never talk to your neighbor during a concert.
- Control your facial expressions as they are obvious and distracting. Do not acknowledge mistakes physically.
- At the end of the piece, remain seated until signaled to stand. Smile when applauded no matter how you feel you performed!
- Congratulate yourself for the hundreds of notes you played right and do not berate yourself for the few you may have missed! Have fun sharing great masterpieces with your family and friends.

VII. STAFF

INSTRUCTORS (coaches) Coaches are professional musicians and teachers who act as independent contractors to MBYS. Coaches are expected to:

- Place accepted students in appropriate orchestras.
- Attend scheduled rehearsals to provide sectional coaching.
- Establish preliminary part assignments and provide part markings as needed.
- Communicate special needs or problems to the music director.
- Arrange seating tryouts for each concert, communicate seating results to music director.

Artistic/Music Director

- Attends board meetings.
- Selects programming for all orchestra groups.
- Selects and trains coaches and conductors.
- Advises Board of Directors on technical and musical matters.
- Purchases, through treasurer, and/or rents music for performance and rehearsal.
- Organizes and schedules auditions and concerto selection process.
- Oversees rehearsal procedures.

Contact Information

Mailing address:
Mt Baker Youth Symphony
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www.mbys.org

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