



WACO
SYMPHONY

Lawrence Loh • Music Director

25 | 26
SEASON



american mosaic

CELEBRATING

250
YEARS

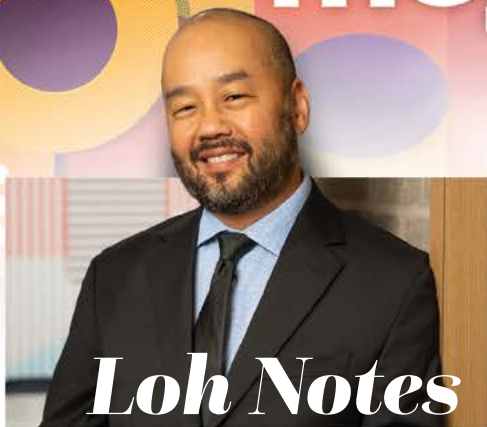


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american mosaic



Loh Notes

A letter from the Music Director

Greetings music lovers, and welcome to “American Mosaic,” the 2025-26 season of the Waco Symphony! I am excited to celebrate the 250th birthday of our country through a rich tapestry of music in every concert. A mosaic is a work of art—a pattern made up of every different color and shape imaginable—and that vivid spectrum is exactly what we will celebrate this season. American icons like Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland as well as the next generation of American composers including Polina Nazaykinskaya, Jessie Montgomery, and Shawn Okpebholo will be featured alongside classical favorites

by Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, pillars of symphonic repertoire embraced by American audiences.

Acclaimed guest artists including Grammy Award-winning violinist Anne Akiko Meyers and Sphinx Medal-winning cellist Sterling Elliott will grace the stage. Our Film in Concert series continues with *Home Alone* on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, so make your plans now to be there!

I’m particularly excited to welcome Aristo Sham to Waco. He is the newly minted Gold Medalist and winner of the “Audience Favorite” prize at the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Aristo will perform Brahms’ Piano Concerto No. 1, one of the most heartachingly beautiful piano concertos ever written, and I know it will be an unforgettable evening. It’s thrilling to feature an artist like Aristo at the beginning of what I know will be a phenomenal career.

Our “American Mosaic” theme will showcase the richness of orchestral music created in and revered by our country. Happy 250th birthday America, and I look forward to seeing you all at the concert hall!

Lawrence Loh
Music Director
Waco Symphony



Key Notes

A letter from the Executive Director

You may wonder what is new and different about the 2025-26 season? We are expanding our season subscription from four to five concerts, adding a pops concert called “An Emerald City Evening,” featuring songs from *Wicked*, *The Wiz*, and other all-time Broadway favorites. In addition, we’re offering two special holiday concerts – *Home Alone* in Concert in partnership with the Youth Chorus of Central Texas and the Central Texas Choral Society and *The Nutcracker* in partnership with Ballet Frontier of Texas.

Both are perfect for families looking to make holiday memories together.

The WSO is on the move in our community in impactful ways with outreach programs like Healing Harmony, funded this year by the Bernard & Audre Rapoport Foundation. Small ensembles perform at area hospitals, memory care centers, and counseling sessions, bringing joy, comfort, and inspiration to those who need it most.

Join us again for a season of stellar soloists surrounded by the accomplished musicians of the Waco Symphony Orchestra and experience the inspiring power of symphonic music!

Carolyn Bess
Executive Director
Waco Symphony Association, Inc.

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to this year’s
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Grant funds provided by



CREATIVE
WACO

Season Highlights

October 2
◀ Made in America with
Anne Akiko Meyers

November 30 ▶
Home Alone
in Concert

April 16 ▶
An Emerald City Evening: *Wicked* &
All-Time Broadway Favorites





Made in America

Violinist
Anne Akiko Meyers

Thursday, October 2, 2025
7:30 p.m. / Waco Hall

Antonín Dvořák *Carnival Overture*
Samuel Barber *Violin Concerto*
Anne Akiko Meyers, violin
Sergei Rachmaninoff *Symphonic Dances*
Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

Our opening concert, “Made in America,” will showcase Grammy Award-winning violinist **Anne Akiko Meyers** in Barber’s *Violin Concerto*—one of the great lyrical American classical concertos, complete with technical fireworks. The orchestra will be featured in Rachmaninoff’s *Symphonic Dances*, his final symphonic work written entirely in America and premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra. We open with Dvořák’s *Carnival Overture*, written just before Dvořák traveled abroad from Prague to live in the US to teach in New York City. This overture was seen as both a farewell to his native country and as a hello to New York.

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From Bernstein to Copland

Harpist
Emily Levin

Thursday, November 6, 2025
7:30 p.m. / Waco Hall

Leonard Bernstein *Three Dance Episodes*
Alberto Ginastera *Harp Concerto*
Emily Levin, harp
Polina Nazaykinskaya *Elegy XXII*
Aaron Copland *Appalachian Spring*
Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

“From Bernstein to Copland” explores music by these two friends who truly defined American music in the 20th Century. Bernstein’s *Three Dance Episodes* from “On the Town” and Copland’s *Appalachian Spring* are filled with dance, joy and nostalgia. The Waco Symphony welcomes Emily Levin, the principal harp of the Dallas Symphony in Ginastera’s colorful *Harp Concerto*. Maestro Loh is a champion of the music of Polina Nazaykinskaya and will open the second half with her brand new work, *Elegy XXII*, a work that yearns for peace amongst conflict, loss and despair. This concert truly showcases the power of music.

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Aristo Sham, the Gold Medalist and “Audience Favorite” of the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, will join Maestro Loh and the Waco Symphony in playing the first piano concerto of Johannes Brahms. This competition was named for American pianist Van Cliburn who, in 1958 during the Cold War, won the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. In tribute to that monumental feat in artistic diplomacy, the WSO will perform Tchaikovsky’s final 6th Symphony. We open this concert with music by American composer Jessie Montgomery. She wrote *Starburst* in 2012 for The Sphinx Virtuosi, the flagship ensemble of the Sphinx Organization. Montgomery writes the following to describe this work: “Exploding gestures are juxtaposed with gentle fleeting melodies in an attempt to create a multidimensional soundscape.”

Thursday, January 22, 2026
7:30 p.m. / Waco Hall

Jessie Montgomery *Starburst*
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 6*
Johannes Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 1*
Aristo Sham, piano

Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

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 The Honorable and Mrs. Lyndon Olson, Jr.

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Thursday, March 19, 2026
7:30 p.m. / Waco Hall

Shawn Okpebholo *Stellar Fanfare Prelude*
for Orchestra
Joseph Haydn *Cello Concerto No. 2 in D Major*
Sterling Elliott, cello
Ludwig van Beethoven *Symphony No. 5*

Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

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Additional sponsors will be recognized in concert programs and on the website.

Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is the centerpiece of the final classical concert of the 25-26 season, a symphony that is universally known and truly knows no boundaries. We will open with an exciting new work by American composer Shawn Okpebholo, *Stellar Fanfare Prelude for Orchestra*, written in 2024 for the Chicago Symphony. We are proud to welcome the young American cellist Sterling Elliott, a 2021 Avery Fisher Grant recipient and winner of the Senior Division of the 2019 National Sphinx Competition.



Maestro Loh and the Waco Symphony welcome stars from Broadway for an unforgettable night in the Emerald City and beyond! Enjoy powerhouse renditions of iconic songs, from classic Broadway standards to modern hits.

Sensational vocalists **Mamie Parris** (*Cats*, *School of Rock*, *Ragtime*), **Shayna Steele** (*Rent*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hairspray*), and **Nathaniel Hackmann** (*Back to the Future: The Musical*, *Les Misérables*, *Jekyll and Hyde*) will perform music from *Wicked*, *The Wiz*, and *The Wizard of Oz*, plus other showstoppers from *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *West Side Story*, and more. Mamie starred as Elphaba in the first national tour of *Wicked*, and Shayna sang on the soundtrack. This concert is a must-see for fans of Broadway and musical theater!

Thursday, April 16, 2026
7:30 p.m. / Waco Hall

Selections from *Wicked*, *the Wiz*,
Les Misérables, and more

Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

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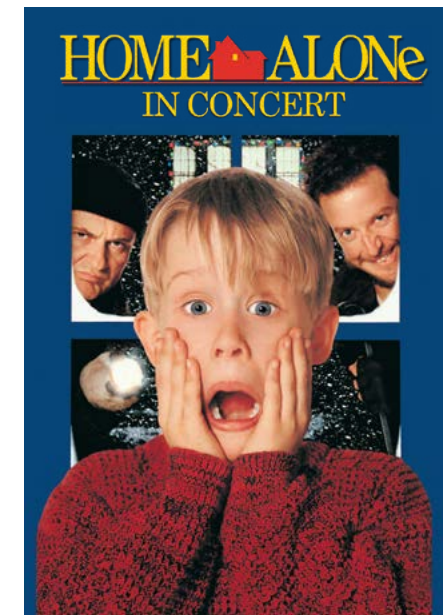
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Special Performance

Home Alone in Concert

NOVEMBER 30 // 2025



This true holiday favorite features John Williams' charming and delightful score performed live to picture by the Waco Symphony Orchestra. Macaulay Culkin stars as Kevin McCallister, an 8-year-old boy who is accidentally left behind when his family leaves for Christmas vacation and must defend his home against two bungling thieves. Hilarious and heart-warming, *Home Alone* is fun for the entire family!

Waco Symphony is pleased to collaborate with Youth Chorus of Central Texas and Central Texas Choral Society for this performance.

Sunday, November 30, 2025
2:00 p.m. / Waco Hall

Lawrence Loh Music Director and Conductor

Virtuoso Sponsors
Lisa and Larry Jaynes

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Home Alone is
not included in season
ticket packages.
Tickets must be
purchased
separately.



BALLET
FRONTIER

The Nutcracker

DECEMBER 14 // 2025


The Nutcracker is
not included in season
ticket packages.
Tickets must be
purchased
separately.

Sunday, December 14, 2025
2:00 p.m. / Waco Hall

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker*

Dr. Beau Benson Guest conductor
Ballet Frontier of Texas

With toy soldiers, dancing snowflakes, and the Sugar Plum Fairy, you won't want to miss *The Nutcracker*—a treasured holiday tradition and the only production with live orchestra in Central Texas. Back by popular demand, **Ballet Frontier** returns to Waco to inspire a childlike wonder in all of us.

With its cast comprised of professional dancers, talented local students, dazzling costumes, world-class choreography, and the Waco Symphony playing Tchaikovsky's beloved score under the baton of Maestro Beau Benson (Music Director/Conductor of the Temple Symphony Orchestra and Director of Instrumental Music at Pepperdine University), the stage is set for an unforgettable experience for all ages!

Visit the **Nutcracker Market** in the lobby to purchase nutcrackers and themed ornaments. Sales benefit the Waco Symphony.

Add a Kingdom of Sweets package for \$25 that includes a professional photo with the **Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier Prince** after the performance, a decorated cookie, and a souvenir ornament.
(limited to 125 purchasers)

Waco Symphony Council

Since 1962, the Waco Symphony Council has supported the Waco Symphony through volunteer service, fundraising, and youth education. It also organizes the Belles & Brass program for sophomore and junior girls and junior boys. The Council welcomes women and men as members and offers many opportunities to socialize with like-minded music lovers, especially at Preview Parties where Music Director Loh shares insights about upcoming



concerts. Joining the Council helps keep the Waco Symphony strong. For more information, visit WacoSymphony.com/Council.

Waco Symphony Youth Orchestra

The WSYO welcomes talented student musicians (most in 8th-12th grades) to audition, rehearse, perform, and appreciate orchestral music under professional guidance under **Music Director / Conductor Rebekah Lambert**. The orchestra performs two free concerts each season, one in the fall and one in the spring. For details visit WacoSymphony.com/wsyo.

Support provided by Waco Symphony Council and Virginia DuPuy.

Tickets & Membership Levels

SEASON TICKETS INCLUDE FIVE CONCERTS — FOUR CLASSICAL CONCERTS AND ONE BROADWAY CONCERT.

October 2, November 6, January 22, March 19, and April 16

Donations are included at these membership levels. Thanks for your support!

Grand Conductor's Circle	\$1,550
Conductor's Circle	\$1,350
Grand Benefactor	\$1,050
Benefactor	\$850
Patron	\$650
Sustainer	\$495
*Belles & Brass parents / sponsors must order season tickets at Sustainer level or higher.	
Concerto Circle (ages 20-40)	\$450

Season Classical & Broadway Tickets

Tickets prices range from\$35-\$340
If you're purchasing season tickets and want to add one or more student season ticket(s), you can buy them at a 50% discount in any section.

Important Information

Current season ticket holders Renewal deadline is August 17

New season ticket and single ticket purchasers—Ticket sales open August 18

Ticket prices do not include handling and processing fees.

Single Classical & Broadway Tickets

Go on sale August 18

Ticket prices range from\$10-\$80

Home Alone in Concert Tickets

Season ticket renewers have exclusive priority access through August 17.

Ticket prices range from\$29-\$95

The Nutcracker Tickets

Season ticket renewers have exclusive priority access through August 17.

Ticket prices range from\$25-\$90
Kingdom of Sweets Add-On Package includes
Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier Prince
Photo Opp, Cookie, & Souvenir Ornament\$25

Bus Tickets

Season ticket holders have priority access to bus seats during renewal period.

Ride the bus to all five season concerts\$60
\$15 per ticket for individual concerts.

Subscriber Benefits

Enjoy a range of exclusive benefits when you subscribe to the 2025/26 Season.

Benefits	Season Ticket	Sustainer	Patron	Benefactor	Grand Benefactor	Conductor's Circle	Grand Conductor's Circle
Save up to \$60 when you buy a season subscription instead of individual tickets	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
First-choice seats for subscribers	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Tax deduction for returned tickets, if unable to attend a concert	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Opportunity to buy special performance tickets before the public	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Season tickets in choice main-floor seating		★	★	★	★	★	★
Recognition in season programs		★	★	★	★	★	★
Patron Party on Saturday, September 27, 2025			★	★	★	★	★
Priority parking pass in reserved lot near Waco Hall				★	★	★	★
Encore After Parties with Maestro Loh and guest artists					★	★	★
Conductor's Dinner on Friday, November 7, 2025						★	★
Priority reserved parking adjacent to Waco Hall with personalized sign							★

Reserve Bus Tickets

Don't want to drive at night or search for a parking spot? Reserve your seat on the bus when ordering your concert tickets. **All Waco Transit vehicles are ADA accessible and are equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp.** A season bus pass allows you to ride the bus to all five season concerts for \$60. Bus tickets are \$15 per ticket for individual concerts. **Concert buses will depart at 6:10 p.m. from Gold's Gym parking lot** on Waco Drive next to El Conquistador restaurant and will arrive in time for Opening Notes talks. We will only offer one bus per evening. For questions, call (254) 754-0851. Order online at **WacoSymphony.com**.

Important Ticket Information

Due to the nature of live entertainment, dates, times, performers, repertoire, and prices are subject to change. All patrons, regardless of age, must have a ticket. No refunds. If you can't attend a concert, you can transfer them to friends or return them for a tax-deductible contribution by emailing **whtickets@baylor.edu** or by calling (254) 710-3210.

Waco Hall Seating

Waco Hall is not equipped with an elevator, so patrons with limited mobility should select main floor seats. Wheelchair seating is available. Balcony seats are narrower in width and have limited leg room.

Bus partnership provided by Waco Transit System.



Special Membership for Young Professionals

Concerto Circle (age 20-40)

Socialize with other young professionals at DiamondBack's over appetizers and drinks prior to each Waco Symphony season concert.

\$450 allows you to enjoy the following benefits:

- Season ticket in main floor seating
- Social events before the concerts **included** in ticket price
- Recognition in season programs
- Parking pass in reserved lot near Waco Hall

Dinner Before Concerts

Treat yourself to a quick but delicious dinner prior to each Symphony concert. Each participating restaurant will offer either Prix Fixe menu, small plates, or priority service if you make your reservations and state that you will be attending the Symphony. Arrival at the restaurant between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. should have you leaving the restaurant by 7:00 p.m.

Visit WacoSymphony.com for a list of participating restaurants.



Opening Notes Pre-Concert Talks

6:40 p.m.-7:10 p.m. Before each Season Concert, learn about the lives of the composers and explore their music at Opening Notes, a free pre-concert talk. These can be enlightening and provide insightful information to enhance your concert experience. Location is in **Recital Hall II within Waco Hall.**

Sponsor: Virginia DuPuy

Families with Students

Ideal for families with school-aged children and teens. **If you're purchasing season tickets and want to add one or more student season ticket(s), you can buy them at a 50% discount in any section.** Share the joy of classical music with students in your family, foster their love of music, and experience the WSO together.

Ticketing

Order tickets online 24/7 at WacoSymphony.com. To ensure the lowest price and authorized tickets, **purchase directly from our website.** This protects you from accidentally purchasing scalped tickets at a higher price. Avoid lines at the box office; order online until the moment before the performance begins.



Renewing your ticket(s)

Season ticket renewals should be **completed by August 17.** To renew your existing season tickets, log into the account you created last season and complete your purchase online. To change your seats or your level of giving, please call the **Waco Hall Ticket Office at (254) 710-3210** between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Mondays-Fridays or email whtickets@baylor.edu.



Ordering by phone or getting help with online ticket orders

To order by phone, ask questions, or for help navigating the online ticketing system, call the Waco Hall Ticket Office at **(254) 710-3210** between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Mondays-Fridays.



Paying by check and ordering tickets in person

To pay by check, visit the **Waco Hall Ticket Office inside Waco Hall**, located at 624 Speight Avenue on the campus of Baylor University. The box office will not accept cash payments.



Receiving your tickets

Select one of four options for receiving your tickets:

- Print them at home.
- Save them to your Apple Wallet or Google Wallet.
- Have them waiting at Will Call.
- For a fee of \$5, have them mailed to your home.

To get additional information or assistance

Contact the Waco Symphony Association office at info@wacosymphony.com or call **(254) 754-0851.**



WACO SYMPHONY

Lawrence Loh • Music Director

Waco Symphony Association, Inc.

Post Office Box 1201 ▪ Waco, Texas 76703

Order your tickets now for an exciting 2025–2026 season!

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New season ticket subscribers and single
performance ticket sales open August 18

Season Subscription Concerts

Made in America October 2, 2025

From Bernstein to Copland November 6, 2025

2025 Cliburn Gold Medalist January 22, 2026

Stellar, Sterling & Beethoven 5 March 19, 2026

An Emerald City Evening: *Wicked* &

All-Time Broadway Favorites April 16, 2026

Special Performances

Home Alone in Concert November 30, 2025

The Nutcracker December 14, 2025



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