

# GMS

## Green Mountain Youth Symphony

*“the music is just the beginning . . .”*

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### STUDENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017

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P.O. Box 384, Montpelier, VT 05601-0384 (802) 888-4470

[www.gmys-vt.org](http://www.gmys-vt.org)

**Green Mountain Youth Symphony**  
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(802) 888-4470  
www.gmys-vt.org  
www.facebook.com/GreenMountainYouthSymphony

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**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2016-2017**

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## **GMYS Contacts**

### **Board of Directors**

Sandra Ferver  
Co-Chair  
(802) 229-5436  
*sandra@gmys-vt.org*

Michael Fiorillo  
Co-Chair  
(802) 276-3826  
*michael@gmys-vt.org*

Jennifer Isabell  
Treasurer  
(802) 888-9329  
*jennifer@gmys-vt.org*

Sarah Madru  
Secretary  
(802) 454-0188  
*sbmadru@gmys-vt.org*

Laura Furber  
(802) 225-6416  
*laura@gmys-vt.org*

Leah-Marie Gagnon  
(802) 522-5409  
*leah-marie@gmys-vt.org*

Oren Kronick  
(802) 229-4503  
*oren@gmys-vt.org*

### **Artistic Staff**

Robert Blais  
Artistic Director  
Conductor, Concert & Senior Orchestras  
(802) 229-9214  
*bob@gmys-vt.org*

Paul Perley  
Conductor, Repertory Orchestra  
(802) 229-1501  
*paul@gmys-vt.org*

### **Manager**

Leah Wilhjelm  
Orchestra Manager  
(802) 888-4470  
*leah@gmys-vt.org*

### **GMYS Mission**

**Our mission is to create a community of young musicians from throughout Central and Northern Vermont through the performance of great music.**

## **Artistic Staff**

### **Robert Blais**

**Robert Blais**, embarked on his current conducting path after a successful freelance career as a concert cellist in New York City and Boston, soloing with numerous orchestras and performing in chamber groups and orchestras such as the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra and the Boston Civic Symphony. Upon arriving in Montpelier, Vermont in 2001, he founded the Green Mountain Youth Symphony; it has since grown to include the Upper Valley of New Hampshire.

Together, Mr. Blais and GMYS have captivated audiences at the Barre Partnership Summer Concert Series, Vermont Statehouse for Farmer's Night, for the Paine Mountain Arts Council, the Vermont Capitol Independence Day Celebration on the Capitol Steps, at Montpelier's First Night celebration, in joint concerts with the Vermont Philharmonic, and regularly at the Barre Opera House and Lebanon Opera House. Robert Blais and the GMYS are champions of contemporary music, having commissioned and performed world premieres of orchestral works by Dennis Bathory-Kitsz, Erik Nielsen, Laura Koplewitz, Pam Marshall, and Lydia Busler-Blais, and in 2005 produced a concert comprised of music written entirely in the last twenty years by female composers. Vermont Governor Shumlin honored the GMYS and Robert by proclaiming August 14-21, 2011 Green Mountain Youth Symphony Week after having been accepted to the Eurochestries Festival in Quebec City, where he and the kids joined five other young ensembles from Europe and Asia.

In addition to his work with GMYS, Robert Blais has conducted for the Monteverdi Music Camp, the Vermont-based School for Strings Camp, the Montpelier Capitol Orchestra, the Vermont Philharmonic, and the current Blazin' Cellos based in Vermont. He recently conducted for the Adirondack Youth Orchestra and New York District 5 All State Festival Orchestra, and is a frequent guest conductor for numerous programs and festivals. He receives rave reviews for his educational outreach concerts from seasoned performers, teachers, and students alike.

### **Paul Perley**

**Paul Perley**, conductor, cellist, composer, teacher, and luthier, began his musical education at age eight. His teachers have included, among others, Elizabeth Endress, Albert Bellson (brother of Louis Bellson) and Helene Gagne. Locally he has performed with the Vermont Philharmonic, the Bartholdy Ensemble, the Gabriel Piano Trio, the cello duo Soavita (with his wife Melissa), and is a founding member of the Montpelier Chamber Orchestra.

As a composer Paul has written music for theater productions, chamber music ensembles, and string orchestras. His works have been performed by several youth orchestras in New England, the Eleva Chamber Players, The Five Corners String Quintet, and the Dillon, Perley, Odinokikh trio. In 1999 he created the Green Mountain Waldorf Orchestra, several members of which are pursuing professional music careers. He conducted the orchestra until the closing of the school. From 2011-2014, Paul and his wife created, conducted, and arranged music for, an orchestra consisting of three cello sections, and a violin and bass section. Since 2002 he has conducted the GMYS Repertory Orchestra. Paul and Melissa own and operate Paul Perley Cellos on Berlin Pond.

## **Rehearsal & Concert Information**

### **Rehearsal Schedule**

Rehearsals take place at U-32 Junior-Senior High School, 930 Gallison Hill Road, Montpelier, unless otherwise indicated.

Rehearsal times are as follows:

- Repertory Orchestra.....9:30 – 10:30am
- Concert Orchestra..... 9:00 – 10:45am
- Senior Orchestra.....11:00am – 2:00pm

All orchestras will rehearse every Saturday during the fall 2016 semester from September 10 through December 10 and during the spring 2017 semester from January 7 through April 1 with the following exceptions; there will be NO REHEARSALS/CLASSES on

- Saturday, November 26 (Thanksgiving break)
- Saturday, March 4 (winter break)

We need to move some rehearsals to an alternate location and you will be advised of the change by email. For the 2016-17 season, we know the following rehearsals will be at alternate locations. We will announce other changes as required.

- September 17 – Twinfield Union School
- September 24 – Twinfield Union School
- October 8 – Christ Episcopal Church, Montpelier - Rehearsal times TBA  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual GMYS PLAY-A-THON
- November 5 – Twinfield Union School

**A full calendar can be found on the last page of this Handbook and on the GMYS website. Feel free to sync the website calendar with your own digital calendar.**

### **Dress Rehearsals**

Dress Rehearsals will take place at the Barre Opera House. (Please note that students *do not* have to wear concert dress for mid-week dress rehearsals).

#### Fall 2016 Dress Rehearsals:

- **Repertory Orchestra** – Sunday, December 11 afternoon time TBA (before the concert)
- **Concert Orchestra** – Tuesday, December 6 from 5:30-6:30pm
- **Senior Orchestra** – Tuesday, December 6 from 6:45-9:00pm

#### Spring 2017 Dress Rehearsals:

- **Repertory Orchestra** – Sunday, April 2 from afternoon time TBA (before the concert)
- **Concert Orchestra** – Thursday, March 30 from 5:30-6:30pm
- **Senior Orchestra** – Thursday, March 30 from 6:45-9:00pm

## **Concerts**

Our 2016-2017 end of semester concerts will take place at the Barre Opera House on ***Sunday, December 11*** and on ***Sunday, April 2***.

- All three orchestras will perform at the same afternoon concert. Exact time will be announced soon.

The **Senior Orchestra** has been invited to play as part of the First Night St. Johnsbury celebration. We will play a mid-afternoon concert on **Saturday, December 31**. Stay tuned for more details!

The **Senior Orchestra** may join the Vermont Philharmonic for the Annual Family Concert on **Sunday, March 12** at the Barre Opera House. This is typically an afternoon concert. Details about will be announced as soon as we have them.

Any additional performances will be announced later in the semester and details will be provided at that time.

## **Concert Dress**

**Repertory and Concert Orchestra** members wear white tops, black bottoms, black shoes (NO SNEAKERS, please), black socks if wearing pants, and black bow ties for boys. Bow ties can be purchased in most local shops which rent formal wear. There are also several online vendors who sell them. Skirts/dresses should be at least knee length when seated or be worn with black tights/stockings.

**Senior Orchestra** members wear black tops, black bottoms, black shoes (NO SNEAKERS, please) and black socks if wearing pants. Ties are not required. Skirts/dresses should be at least knee length when seated or be worn with black tights/stockings.

## **Policies**

### **Attendance**

**Students are expected to attend all rehearsals.** It is important to be in your seat at least ten minutes early so you can be warmed up when the rehearsal starts. Students should bring their instruments, music, pencils, tuners and any other accessories needed to all rehearsals (mutes, reeds, extra strings, etc.). Students will sometimes be asked to bring a music stand to rehearsal – *especially when we meet anywhere except U32*.

We will allow three (3) unexcused absences per semester. Anyone missing more than that must talk to their conductor in advance and gain permission for the additional absence or they may lose their privilege to play in the concert. *Please note that two late arrivals or early dismissals equal one unexcused absence.* Excused absences include bad weather, music festivals or other school music events, and college testing conflicts.

**If you will miss or be late for a rehearsal, please email or call your conductor *and* the orchestra manager in advance to let them know.** For those with sports or other activity conflicts, please talk to your conductor and make special arrangements. Although we don't want students to have to choose between sports or other activities and music, it is our expectation that musicians will split the absences with the other organization.

## **Behavior Expectations**

Reasonable standards of behavior are expected while rehearsing, performing, or participating in any event in connection with the Green Mountain Youth Symphony. Please demonstrate appropriate, respectful behavior toward GMYS staff, fellow orchestra members, and at all performance and rehearsal venues.

**Weapons, controlled substances, and other hazardous materials are prohibited at GMYS events.** *A weapon is any item used in a threatening manner.* The unauthorized use of all potentially harmful items (such as knives, scissors) is prohibited.

Specifically, please adhere to U-32's rules for building use, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use is prohibited.
- All trash must be picked up and disposed of properly.
- No vehicles may be parked or driven behind the school – cars must be parked in the main lot.
- Chairs, tables, and other moveable equipment must be left in/returned to original place.
- Access to the main school facility is denied unless specifically arranged.

Failure to follow these rules may result in immediate suspension of building/facility use. Each student and parent may be asked to sign a statement agreeing to abide by U-32's policies at the beginning of each program year.

## **Discipline**

The conductor of each ensemble sets expectations for rehearsal and concert behavior. Failure to abide by the requirements will result in the following steps:

1. The conductor speaks to the student and parents concerning the problem.
2. If the problem persists, the Conductor, Manager, and Artistic Director will confer and may decide to expel the student from the orchestra. (*Tuition is non-refundable.*)

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

GMYS does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of the GMYS community.

GMYS is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

## **Performance Expectations**

GMYS musicians are expected to practice their instruments and parts, and to work to performance level. Please speak with your conductor if you are having any difficulties with the music. The conductors are there to help! In addition, we encourage all students to study privately with an instructor proficient on his/her chosen instrument. GMYS may be able to provide you with a list of private music teachers in the area.

## **Concert Etiquette**

GMYS members and their families are expected to remain for the entire concert to support their fellow musicians. If this is impossible for the youngest musicians and their even younger siblings because of the length of the program, please stay to hear the group that follows yours on the program. While in the audience, please do not talk, change seats, walk around in the theater, or leave in the middle of a performance. All of our students work extremely hard through-out the semester and deserve our complete and respectful attention when they are performing. Thank you.

## **School Music Programs**

Participation in the Green Mountain Youth Symphony should enhance, *not replace*, school music instruction. **GMYS believes that school music programs are vital to the development of young musicians.** They also provide other important opportunities such as access to All State, All New England, and other music festivals. **Students who enroll in GMYS are expected to participate in their school music program, if one exists.**

## **Communication**

Announcements, rehearsal changes, and concert information will be distributed by email, updated on our website [www.gmys-vt.org](http://www.gmys-vt.org), and posted to our Facebook page whenever possible. **If you do not have email, please let Leah Wilhjelm know so we can reach you by telephone in the event of a rehearsal cancellation.**

Because we communicate via email very frequently, please be sure to let Leah know if your email address changes! You should expect to hear from Leah regularly during the program year. If you don't hear for a few weeks, it's likely that something is not working with the email we have on record. ***We use a very large email list which causes some email programs to identify our emails as spam. Please add "@gmys-vt.org" to your white or safe list in your email program to avoid this problem.***

## **Weather Cancellations**

In case of bad weather we will send emails to all families as well as put announcements on WDEV (FM96.1/AM550) and WNCS (The Point on multiple frequencies) as well as on our website ([www.gmys-vt.org](http://www.gmys-vt.org)), and our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/GreenMountainYouthSymphony](http://www.facebook.com/GreenMountainYouthSymphony)) as soon as possible. **It is each family's responsibility to check these resources for cancellations.** If in doubt, call GMYS at 888-4470. Leah will call the short list of families without emails. If you don't have email or internet access, listen to the radio or let Leah know that you wish to be contacted by telephone.



## **Tuition**

Tuition for 2016-2017 is:

<u>Ensemble</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Full Year</u>
Repertory Orchestra	\$258	\$258	\$ 516
Concert Orchestra	\$361	\$361	\$ 722
Senior Orchestra	\$515	\$515	\$1030

Fall tuition must be paid in full by the first rehearsal, unless other arrangements are made in advance. If the tuition is unpaid, students may not participate. You may also make arrangements to pay fall tuition in two (2) installments by contacting Leah Wilhjem at 888-4470 or by email at [leah@gmys-vt.org](mailto:leah@gmys-vt.org). The first half is due by the first rehearsal; the remainder is due by October 15. Spring semester tuition is due by the first rehearsal on January 7, 2017.

**Please make tuition checks payable to Green Mountain Youth Symphony**, and mail to GMYS, P.O. Box 384, Montpelier, VT 05601-0384 or bring to the first rehearsal.

## **Tuition Assistance**

Tuition assistance is available for orchestra tuition and is granted on the basis of income and family size. To apply for financial assistance, families must complete an application form and return it to GMYS by the August 15 deadline along with a copy of their most recent Federal Income Tax return (pages 1&2). If you do not fit our current income profile for eligibility, but have extraordinary circumstances which will help in considering your application, you may also include a brief statement outlining them. Tuition assistance covers anywhere from 25-100% of the cost of tuition, and awards are determined based on family size, income, and any personal statements submitted.

Mid-year applications will be accepted if family circumstances have changed. Please contact Leah Wilhjem at 888-4470 or by email at [leah@gmys-vt.org](mailto:leah@gmys-vt.org).

The total amount of assistance awarded is dependent on the funds available. *Donations to our tuition assistance fund are always greatly appreciated and are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.*

## **Family Participation**

GMYS relies heavily on the support of musicians' families, other volunteers, and charitable donations to make our programs possible. Our artistic and administrative staff works with GMYS part-time and all staff members maintain other employment, so volunteers are crucial to our mission.

Families will be asked to assist GMYS staff and Board members in a variety of ways including helping with our annual Playathon fundraiser, concert day tasks, spreading the word about GMYS events, and participating in fund raising activities. **We are very grateful for the wonderful support we receive every time we ask! Thank you in advance!**

## **2016-2017 Calendar**

### Fall semester

- September 10 First rehearsals: Tuition due & Parent Meeting with Board 10:30-11:15am  
September 17 Rehearsals @ Twinfield Union School  
September 24 Rehearsals @ Twinfield Union School  
October 1  
October 8 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Playathon @ Christ Church in Montpelier – **rehearsal times will be different!**  
October 15 Final tuition payment due  
October 22  
October 29  
November 5 Rehearsals @ Twinfield Union School  
November 12  
November 19  
November 26 NO REHEARSAL (Thanksgiving)  
December 3  
Tues., Dec. 6 Dress rehearsals @ Barre Opera House  
Concert Orchestra 5:30-6:30pm AND Senior Orchestra 6:45-9:00pm  
December 10  
**Sun., Dec. 11 Concert Day**  
Repertory Orchestra Dress Rehearsal before concert, time TBA very soon  
Concert midafternoon, time TBA very soon  
Sat., Dec 31 First Night St. Johnsbury – Senior Orchestra concert  
Concert will be mid to late afternoon & there will be a rehearsal earlier that afternoon. There will also be a couple of Montpelier area rehearsals between our Barre concert and this one.

### Spring semester

- January 7 1<sup>st</sup> rehearsals & Tuition due  
January 14  
January 21  
January 28  
February 4  
February 11 Final tuition payment due  
February 18  
February 25  
March 4 NO REHEARSAL – Winter Break  
March 11  
Sun., March 12 VPO Family Concert @ Barre Opera House – Senior Orchestra only  
March 18  
March 25  
Thurs., Mar. 30 Dress rehearsals @ Barre Opera House  
Concert Orchestra 5:30-6:30pm AND Senior Orchestra 6:45-9:00pm  
April 1  
Sun., April 2 **Concert Day**  
Repertory Orchestra Dress Rehearsal before concert, time TBA very soon  
Concert midafternoon, time TBA very soon

### **Summer:**

**May/June auditions for 2017-18 season**

**Montpelier or Barre Summer Concert Series in July?**

**GMYS CAMP 2017 August 6-12 @ Johnson State College – registration in February!**